

To: Professor Erica Navalance and Professor Nishi Kumar
From: Lee Gilyot
Date: 12/29/2024
Re: Facility Memo

SABINE PARISH CORRECTIONAL DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

This memorandum seeks to address the main factors and characteristics of the Sabine Parish Correctional Division as they pertain to how the facility operates.

INTRODUCTION

The Sabine Parish Detention Center, which is overseen by the Sabine Parish Sheriff's Office, is located in Many, Louisiana.¹ The jail was constructed as a result of a project initiated by the sheriff and concerned citizens. *Id.* The citizens voted for an increase in sales tax to help fund the construction of the jail that started in October 1993 and ended in October 1994. *Id.*

DEATHS SINCE 2020

Through my public record request sent via email to Sheriff Aaron Mitchell and Amber Gentry, it can be stated that the Sabine Parish Correctional Division has not had any deaths since January 1, 2020.

JAIL CHARACTERISTICS

The Sabine Parish Detention Center is capable of housing over 150 male inmates. Female inmates are housed in the jail located on the third floor of the Courthouse and has a capacity of 30.²

The address of the Sabine Parish Detention Center is 400 S Capitol St, Many, LA 71449. *Id.* This parish is considered to be rural. This facility has a well-organized and informative website. *Id.*

There is not much available information through secondary source research that provides the full history of the sheriffs of Sabine Parish. However, the sheriff office's website provides that the current sheriff is Sheriff Aaron Mitchell. *Id.* Sheriff Aaron Mitchell is a lifelong resident of Sabine Parish. *Id.* He was elected sheriff in 2019. *Id.* "He has many years of experience in law enforcement being that he served as police chief for the Village of Florien and as a deputy

¹ <https://ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/sabine-parish-detention-center>

² <https://www.sabinesheriff.org/corrections>

sheriff who served Sabine Parish as a patrolman, juvenile officer and detective.” *Id.* Sheriff Mitchell maintains an open-door policy and allows citizens to express their concerns. *Id.* The official website provides the location of his office and phone number. *Id.*

Detailed financial information specific to the Sabine Parish Detention Center is not available publicly, but there is publicly accessible information as it pertains to annual budget/financing information of the Sabine Parish Sheriff’s Office. They publish a very extensive financial statement for each fiscal year ending June 30.³ For the year of 2023, the sheriff’s office reported total revenues of \$11,502,565. *Id.* “The annual budget is developed to provide efficient, effective, and economic uses of the Sheriff’s resources, as well as a means to accomplish the highest priority objectives.” *Id.* The sheriff’s office considered the following economic factors when the budget for 2023 was prepared: “sales tax and property revenues are conservatively expected to remain constant over the prior year, the sheriff plans to continue to update the vehicles in the department as well as update equipment but at an increased cost, and other revenues and expenditures are expected to be consistent with the prior year. *Id.*

EVIDENCE OF OVERSIGHT

The Sabine Parish Detention Center is accredited by the Louisiana Accreditation Correction Commission for adhering to the Louisiana Model Jail Standards.⁴ This presumably signifies that this facility meets specific requirements and standards set in place for Louisiana’s jails. *Id.* There is not any other available information through secondary sources that indicate any further national accreditation.

Independent auditors audit the financial statements produced by the Sabine Parish Sheriff’s Office.⁵ An independent auditor’s report from Dees Gardner, Certified Public Accountants, LLC provided that the financial statements referred to in the 2022 fiscal year presented fairly “the respective financial position of the governmental activities and the general fund of the Sabine Parish Sheriff, as of June 30, 2022, and the respective changes in financial position thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.” *Id.*

The research available does not provide any evidence on any hearings on operations of the Sabine Parish Sheriff’s Office or its Detention Center. Additionally, there is no evidence of any judicial orders or consent decrees that could be found in effect currently or previously within the last five years

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[https://app.lla.state.la.us/PublicReports.nsf/0/5D2C622D19DE4A0786258AB4006C19AD/\\$FILE/00003B49.pdf](https://app.lla.state.la.us/PublicReports.nsf/0/5D2C622D19DE4A0786258AB4006C19AD/$FILE/00003B49.pdf)

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https://sabinesheriff.com/louisiana/county-jail/sabine-parish-work-release-facility/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

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[https://app.lla.la.gov/publicreports.nsf/0/712fca6af23846fd8625892c006ae17a/\\$file/00000665.pdf](https://app.lla.la.gov/publicreports.nsf/0/712fca6af23846fd8625892c006ae17a/$file/00000665.pdf)

EVIDENCE OF TRANSPARENCY

The research does not provide any specific public briefings on the Sabine Parish Detention Center operations. The corrections tab on the official website provides information on the several inmate work crews that are available that operate daily throughout the parish to provide critical services.² Some of these critical services include road maintenance, park maintenance, and litter/mowing control for festivals. *Id.* Additionally, the operations tab on the website provides a breakdown of their civil and tax department operations and their responsibilities.⁶ Additionally, there is a Q&A section available under the same operations tab that provides information regarding tax information. *Id.*

The Sabine Parish Detention Center has an inmate locator website that is well organized and runs smoothly.⁷ The locator provides a full jail roster and identifies each inmate by name, date of birth, race, and gender. *Id.* There is a tab for “arrest date,” but it is blank for all inmates. *Id.* Additionally, this locator provides the number of offenders currently. *Id.* There are 170 offenders listed. *Id.*

A 2021 article written by the BDC Radio stated that much-needed improvements at the Sabine Detention Center were in progress under the administration of Sheriff Aaron Mitchell (the current sheriff to date).⁸ The article provides that there were a number of things that needed attention when they took office. *Id.* Some of these advancements included a new second perimeter fence that goes around the whole compound, car wash rack improvements, shooting range improvements, farming improvements, a new camera system installation, etc. *Id.*

The initial filing and receiving process of the PRRs for Assignment #1 as it pertains to the Sabine Parish Correctional Division was the easiest of all of my assigned facilities. They were extremely responsive, friendly, and open. Amber Gentry, who works in the Sabine Parish Sheriff’s Office, handled the emails I sent promptly. She provided me with sufficient and credible documentation indicating that there were no deaths to be reported for the Sabine Parish Detention Center. I have no complaints about this facility as far as my communication with them, and the research that I have conducted through the use of secondary sources supports my opinion. I think this is a very well-run facility under Sheriff Aaron Mitchell and his administration.

⁶ <https://www.sabinesheriff.org/operations>

⁷ <http://www.sabine.lavns.org/roster.aspx>

⁸ <https://bdcradio.com/observations/12226/>

⁹ <https://www.docketbird.com/find-case>

NOTABLE CASES OR COMPLAINTS ON THE JAIL'S CONDITIONS IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

Two notable cases/complaints were found that pertain to the Sabine Parish's conditions in the last five years. The two cases are *Lott v. Sabine Parish Detention Center* and *James v. Sabine Parish et al. Id.*

Westlaw research only provides that in *Lott v. Sabine Parish Detention Center*, the court dismissed the petition for failure to prosecute.¹⁰ There are no facts provided when researching this case. *Id.*

In *Murphy v. Sabine Parish et al.*, a self-represented inmate filed a civil rights action against Sabine Parish Sheriff's Deputy Don Flores and the Assistant Warden Kaylynn Remedies based on claims of false arrest, unconstitutional conditions of confinement, and state law tort.¹¹ For purposes of this project, the only areas of focus will be on the complaint of the unconstitutional conditions of confinement. *Id.* The plaintiff in this case asserted that he was placed in lockdown 23 hours a day during his two periods of incarceration. *Id.* He was arrested for a sexual offense. *Id.* The defense contended that he did not submit a complaint through available methods while he was incarcerated. Also, the defense asserted that the lockdown conditions were for his safety since he was arrested for a sexual offense. *Id.* The lockdown was only for four days until the plaintiff was released on bail. *Id.* This defense went uncontested, and the court awarded summary judgment to the Defendants. *Id.*

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[https://1.next.westlaw.com/Document/I428379e0e08c11eeb2c3b6044a269b45/View/FullText.html?originationContext=typeAhead&transitionType=Default&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://1.next.westlaw.com/Document/I428379e0e08c11eeb2c3b6044a269b45/View/FullText.html?originationContext=typeAhead&transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default))

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[https://1.next.westlaw.com/Document/Iae047ba0859711efa921b9f01acba39b/View/FullText.html?originationContext=typeAhead&transitionType=Default&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://1.next.westlaw.com/Document/Iae047ba0859711efa921b9f01acba39b/View/FullText.html?originationContext=typeAhead&transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default))