

PREA Auditor Handbook

Version 2.0

March 2021 Update Summary

As described in the PREA Auditor Handbook (Handbook) Version 1.0 released in August 2017, the Handbook is a living document that will be updated and adapted over time to meet the evolving needs of the Department of Justice (DOJ), PREA auditors, and the field. The Handbook Version 2.0 was updated in March 2021 to reflect several important changes to requirements for PREA auditors. As a condition of their DOJ certification, auditors are required to read, understand, and abide the requirements in the Handbook. A summary of updates in the Handbook Version 2.0 is provided below.

- **Chapter 4. Audit Contracts and Compensation.** Pursuant to an FAQ issued by the DOJ PREA Working Group, auditors are required to be a party to the contract or agreement with the facility and/or agency to be audited.¹ Chapter 4 provides additional details regarding auditors' obligation to comply with this requirement.
- **Chapter 7. PREA Auditor Certification Process.** This chapter is updated to reflect changes to auditor candidate qualifications that took affect starting with the September 2020 PREA Auditor Candidate Training. These changes expand the types of experience that will be considered by DOJ for individuals applying to become PREA auditors. Chapter 7 also reflects updates to the auditor training and certification process, including a requirement for auditor candidates to participate in a telephone interview with PREA Resource Center Staff and sign an Auditor Trainee Code of Conduct.
- **Chapter 10. Probationary Certification Status.** Updates to this chapter reflect changes to the probationary certification requirements. Previously, in order to be granted full certification by DOJ, all newly certified auditors were required to submit their draft reports for their first two audits for review by the PREA Resource Center prior to submitting them to the audited facility. Beginning with auditors who attended the September 2020 PREA Auditor Candidate Training, all newly certified auditors now complete a minimum of 8 hours of probationary education (e.g., e-learning coursework, one-on-one coaching) to become fully certified by DOJ. Auditors who entered probationary certification status prior to the September 2020 PREA Auditor Candidate Training and are still on probation will have the option to complete their probationary certification requirement according to the legacy probationary certification report review process or may elect to complete the new probationary education requirement.

¹ See www.prearesourcecenter.org/frequently-asked-questions/can-prea-auditors-engage-support-staff-assist-completing-prea-audits.

- **Chapter 11. Auditor Reporting Requirements.** This chapter is updated to reflect changes to the auditor reporting process and forms. The Pre-Audit Reporting Form was replaced by the Audit Initiation Form, which is now used to initiate all audits, whether they are conducted using the Online Audit System or the paper audit instruments. Updates also reflect the transition to the Online Audit System for completing auditor post-audit reporting requirements starting on March 1, 2021. Chapter 11 also now includes a requirement for auditors to report changes to audit information (e.g., changes to the onsite audit dates, audit cancellations) after an audit has been initiated by submitting an Audit Information Change Form.
- **Chapter 14. PREA Audit instrument.** This chapter now provides a more detailed breakdown of the Audit Instrument components, including the core components and evidence collection components, and provides important information about use of third party auditing software. In addition, Chapter 14 includes updates to reflect the transition to mandatory use of the Online Audit System in spring 2022.
- **Chapter 15. Phase One: Pre-Onsite Audit.** This chapter is updated to provide more detailed information regarding auditors' obligation under Standard 115.401(o) to conduct outreach to advocacy organizations.
- **Chapter 16. Phase Two: Onsite Audit.** This chapter is updated to include more detailed guidance regarding the types of investigative staff interviews (e.g., investigative staff responsible for conducting criminal staff-on-inmate investigations) to be conducted. In addition, this chapter now includes guidance regarding the permissibility of conducting components of the onsite portion of the audit remotely.
- **Chapter 18. Phase Four: Corrective Action and Final Report.** This chapter is updated to provide guidance to auditors on the permissibility of conducting corrective action verification steps remotely.
- **Chapter 27. Auditor Recertification.** This chapter now includes information on a new inactive certification status for auditors up for recertification and also details the requirement for all newly certified auditors to complete their probationary education requirements prior to being recertified.
- **New Statutory Requirements.** The Handbook has been updated to reflect requirements in a 2018 amendment to the PREA statute that was signed into law under the U.S. Parole Commission Extension Act of 2018 (Pub. L. No. 115-274) on October 31, 2018. The amendment requires the PREA Management Office to:
 - Evaluate DOJ-certified PREA auditors' performance and conduct, and to take remedial or disciplinary action (including suspension and decertification) when auditors fail to meet the requirements of their DOJ-issued certification.
 - Publish the names of auditors who have been decertified, and the reason for decertification.
 - Notify impacted agencies and facilities when an auditor is decertified and recommend that the agency repeat any affected audits, if appropriate.

- Establish a system, to be administered by the PREA Management Office, for assigning certified auditors to Federal, State, and local facilities. Information regarding the PREA Management Office's implementation of this requirement is forthcoming.

The amendment requires individuals seeking PREA auditor certification or recertification to undergo a background check and for all DOJ-certified PREA auditors to sign a certification agreement. The amendment also details certain requirements for the Bureau of Prisons related to the disclosure of documentation that auditors should be aware of.