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Bureau of Justice Assistance  
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# PREA Audit Site Review Instructions

## Community Confinement Facilities

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# PREA Audit Site Review

## Instructions

PREA Standard 115.401(h) states, “The auditor shall have access to, and shall observe, all areas of the audited facilities.” In order to meet the requirements in this Standard, the site review portion of the onsite audit must include a thorough examination of the entire facility. The PREA audit site review is not a casual tour of the facility. It is an active, inquiring process that includes Standards-driven observations, tests of critical functions, and informal conversations with persons confined in the facility, staff, volunteers, and contractors. During the site review, auditors **must** observe all areas and test all critical functions as outlined in this document. If something in the site review instructions is not applicable to the facility or it is not possible to observe or test, auditors must discuss barriers to observations/testing in the relevant Standard specific discussions and the Post-Audit Reporting Information section of the Auditor Compliance Tool. Pursuant to the PREA Auditor Handbook (Handbook), auditors are not permitted to conduct the site review portion of the onsite audit remotely.

As required in the Handbook, auditors must take thorough notes and document their observations during the site review, including any issues identified, tests of critical functions, and any other areas or practices that may require additional discussions with or proof documentation from the facility. Auditors are encouraged, but not required, to take notes using the [PREA Audit Site Review Checklist for Community Confinement Facilities](#).

This document contains three sections:

- The first section outlines general instructions for what an auditor should do during the pre-onsite audit phase to prepare for the site review and general considerations when conducting the site review.
- The second section details what auditors must observe and critically evaluate during the site review, including: signage, supervision practices, cross-gender viewing and searches, record storage, and processes for sending and receiving mail.
- The final section details the critical functions that auditors must test during the site review, including: intake (PREA information and PREA risk screening), internal and external reporting methods, staff reporting, third party reporting, access to outside emotional support services, and interpretation services.

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# General

The following section provides general instructions for what an auditor should do during the pre-onsite audit phase to prepare for the site review and general considerations when conducting the site review. Auditors should refer to the Handbook for additional information and guidance on expectations for the onsite portion of the audit.

- Prior to the site review, the auditor should:
  - Review the schematic of the facility, including the layout/design of the housing area(s), programming and education areas, work areas, etc.
  - Understand the demographics of the population confined in the facility, including targeted populations of confined persons (e.g., those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex (LGBTI); have disabilities; are limited English proficient).
  - Understand staffing at the facility, including:
    - The number of security staff and non-security staff, volunteers, and contractors
    - Work and shift assignments
    - Rank structure, if applicable
    - Services provided by staff, volunteers, and/or contractors on-site (e.g., medical, mental health, investigations).
  - Review the Pre-Audit Questionnaire to ensure a clear understanding of the facility's policies, procedures, and critical functions (e.g., outside emotional support provider(s), internal and external reporting method(s), information on who is responsible for providing interpretation services to the facility and the manner in which the services are provided, such as, in person, via video, via phone).
  - Review the facility's staffing plan.
  - Ask about facility procedures for taking photographs of the facility's physical plant.
- During the site review, auditors must:
  - Inspect all areas of the facility.<sup>1</sup>
    - Auditors are expected to review all areas of the facility where confined persons may have access (with or without a staff person). Auditors must also review other areas of the facility

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<sup>1</sup> As a reminder, "all areas" include the lobby, visitation areas, and other areas where the public may have access in addition to areas where persons confined in the facility, staff, volunteers, and contractors have access.

where only staff may have access for the purpose of determining how these areas are monitored and secured (see bullet below).

- In some instances, facility staff may advise the auditor that persons confined in the facility are not allowed in a particular area of the facility or that there are certain areas where only staff have access (e.g., closets, offices, a warehouse, or other storage areas). Because these are spaces where staff sexual abuse can occur, the auditor must observe these areas of the facility (particularly entrance and exit points) during the site review to determine how the facility ensures only staff enter and how those areas are monitored.
  - The facility staff who are escorting the auditor during the site review should have the ability to unlock or have access to any and all areas of the facility.
  - Auditors may need to re-inspect certain areas of the facility later in the process if information obtained from interviews, documentation review, or other sources raises questions or concerns.
- If allowed by the facility (see note above), take photographs of facility areas that present problems with compliance and/or where the facility demonstrates promising practices.
- Document your tests of critical functions, important information gathered through observations, any issues identified with facility practices, and any other areas or practices that may require additional discussions with or proof documentation from the facility. Auditors are encouraged to use the [PREA Audit Site Review Checklist for Community Confinement Facilities](#) to document findings.
- During the site review, auditors should conduct informal conversations with persons confined in the facility and with staff (references to staff in this document also include volunteers and contractors, where applicable).
  - Auditors are expected to have informal conversations with persons confined in the facility and with staff during the site review, where feasible.
  - Note: Informal conversations do not constitute a formal interview for the purpose of complying with Standard 115.401(k) and meeting the interview requirements set forth in the Auditor Handbook.

# Observations

During the site review, auditors are expected to observe and critically evaluate signage, supervision practices, cross-gender viewing and searches, record storage, and processes for sending and receiving mail. Note: observation and critical evaluation during the site review requires: (1) a clear understanding of the facility's policies and procedures; (2) observing what actually happens inside the facility, including actively reviewing all areas of the facility for evidence of practice and having informal conversations with staff and confined persons where confirmation or additional clarification are needed; and (3) analyzing whether what happens in the facility aligns with the expectations in the Standards.

## Signage

During the site review, the auditor must actively observe any posted or printed signage throughout the facility (e.g., **posters, pamphlets, brochures, electronic signage**). Signage includes audit notices, how to report sexual abuse and sexual harassment, access to outside victim emotional support services, and other relevant PREA information (see table below). The auditor must review the information provided on signage to determine whether it is readable and accessible, consistent, and placed throughout the facility to convey vital sexual safety information specific to the facility. Note: *The expectations of what an auditor must observe regarding signage are outlined below; however, a thorough review of signage documentation for readability and accessibility, consistency, placement, and accuracy must also be conducted as part of the auditor's analysis of the evidence to make a compliance determination.*

During the site review, the auditor must:

- Observe whether signage throughout the facility can be easily read/accessed by persons in the facility, specifically:
  - Signage language is clear and easy to understand.
    - Signage specific to services, such as emotional support services and external reporting, should include language that clearly details what services are available and for what purposes.
  - Signage is provided in English and translated for the other languages most commonly spoken in the facility.
  - The signage text size, formatting, and physical placement accommodates most readers, including those of average height, low vision/visually impaired, or those physically disabled/in a wheelchair, etc.

- The information provided by the signage is not obscured, unreadable by graffiti, or missing due to damage (e.g., part of the signage is ripped off that included the sexual abuse reporting hotline, a person drew a picture over the words which makes them illegible).
- Observe whether the information on the signage is accurate and consistent throughout the facility (e.g., audit notices are relevant to the current audit; contact information is consistent for service provider/organization name(s), addresses, phone number(s)).
- Observe where signage is placed in the facility to assess whether the signage is accessible to staff and/or those confined in the facility and other persons who may need the information or services provided. The auditor must observe the placement of the following types of signage:

Signage Type	Placement
PREA Audit Notices	Posted abundantly and visible to staff, persons confined in the facility, and visitors (i.e., posted in common areas, including program and educational areas, cafeteria/kitchen, facility entrance and visitation areas to include where attorneys visit, and staff areas, such as staff break rooms).
Access to outside confidential (emotional) support services	Posted in all areas frequented by persons confined in the facility, including housing areas and any shared spaces in the facility.  Recommended: It is often helpful for such signage to be located near the phone(s), so persons confined in the facility can easily access the phone number if needed.
How to report sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment (external and internal reporting methods)	Posted in any areas frequented by persons confined in the facility, including housing/living areas, programming areas, work areas, education areas, etc.  Recommended: It is often helpful for such signage to be located near the phone(s), so persons confined in the facility can easily access the phone number if needed.
Third-party reporting	Posted in public areas of the facility that can be accessed by family members, friends, advocates, and attorneys (e.g., family visitation areas, attorney visiting areas, public-facing websites) as well as

	any areas frequented by persons confined in the facility.
Other PREA signage	<p>Posted in areas where staff and persons confined in the facility are able to read and retain the information being provided (e.g., staff dining area, staff break room, locker rooms, housing areas, etc.).</p> <p>For example, is key PREA information continuously and readily available and observed throughout the facility (e.g., posters, handbooks, brochures, or other written formats, etc.)?</p>

Additionally, the auditor should<sup>2</sup>:

- Have informal conversations with staff and persons confined in the facility regarding signage throughout the facility (e.g., readability and accessibility of information, including for confined persons with disabilities; consistency and accuracy of information; signage posted just for the audit or always posted (with the exception of the PREA Audit Notice).

## Supervision Practices

During the site review the auditor must compare the written staffing plan against the following observations:

- Observe the number of staff, contractors, and volunteers present (including security and non-security staff) and staffing patterns during every shift, including:
  - In housing/living areas
  - In programming, work, education, other areas
  - In areas where sexual abuse is known to be more likely to occur according to the staffing plan.
- Observe staff line of sight in shared spaces (for concerns regarding cross-gender viewing, see section titled “Cross-Gender Viewing”).
- Observe areas where persons confined in the facility are not allowed to determine whether movement in and out of that space is monitored (e.g., by cameras or other forms of surveillance), to ensure that confined persons never enter those areas.
- Observe the level of supervision and frequency of room checks in housing areas where confined persons have roommates and in dormitories or other congregate housing settings (if applicable).
- Observe indirect supervision practices, including camera placement.

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<sup>2</sup> Reminder: Auditors are expected to have informal conversations with staff and persons confined in the facility where feasible.

- In addition to observation of camera placement, inquire about and observe the monitoring room, including staffing rotation (i.e., how often is camera feed monitored and by whom). (See also the section titled “Cross-Gender Viewing.”)
- Note any staffing concerns, including understaffing, overcrowding, poor line of sight, etc.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff regarding supervision practices (e.g., staffing norms, understaffing, shortages).
- Have informal conversations with persons confined in the facility regarding the impact of supervision practices and staffing presence (e.g., safety, accessibility or limits to programming, education, work).

## Cross-gender Viewing & Searches

*Note: The Standards use the term “cross-gender,” but for the purposes of clarity in this document we use both “cross-gender” and “opposite-gender” when referring to viewing or searches of persons confined in the facility by staff of the opposite gender.*

### Cross-gender Viewing

During the site review, the auditor must:

- Observe all areas where confined persons may be in a state of undress, such as showering, using the toilet, and/or changing their clothes.
  - All areas include:
    - Inside housing areas/bedrooms.
    - Outside of the housing areas (e.g., bathrooms/shower areas, recreation areas, other shared spaces).
- Observe if any nonmedical staff of the opposite gender are able to view confined persons in a state of undress, including from different angles and via mirror placement.
  - Observe spaces from multiple perspectives and vantage points, as applicable.
  - If mirrors are present, observe the placement and angle of mirrors.
- Observe electronic surveillance monitoring areas such as control rooms or other spaces where staff monitor live or recorded video feeds of confined persons (e.g., via camera feed) and determine if:
  - Opposite-gender staff are assigned to monitor video surveillance (recorded or live) (e.g., male staff viewing female confined persons).

- The video monitoring technology allows for point, tilt, zoom (PTZ) capabilities which could allow staff to see confined persons in a state of undress.
- The facility uses any type of software (e.g., pixelation or blurring) or other mechanisms (e.g., post-its, tape) to obscure cross-gender viewing of confined persons in a state of undress.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff regarding cross-gender viewing, including staff responsible for monitoring camera feed/electronic monitoring (e.g., procedures to prevent cross-gender viewing via electronic monitoring, staff assigned to monitor camera feed, whether live or recorded, frequency of monitoring).
- Have informal conversations with persons confined in the facility regarding changing clothes, using the toilet, and showering without staff of the opposite gender being able to view them in a state of undress.

**Inside housing areas**, the auditor must also:

- Observe the method(s) used to alert individuals confined in the facility that an opposite-gender staff person has entered an area where confined persons are likely to be in a state of undress (i.e., cross-gender announcement).
  - Alert methods might include a verbal announcement, a knock on the door and verbal warning before entering a bedroom, distinct buzzer, bell, or other noise-making device before entering a dormitory.
- Assess whether the alert method(s) is/are sufficient to alert the persons confined in the facility that an opposite-gender staff person will be entering the housing area, if there is one, a particular bedroom, or a shower or exposed bathroom area and allow them to cover-up and determine whether:
  - The alert is loud enough for all of the confined persons in the housing area to hear if the facility has a common living space or the knock on a bedroom or bathroom door is accompanied by an announcement that the confined person can hear.
  - The time between the alert and the staff person's arrival provides enough time for confined persons to cover up before the staff enter the room or area.
  - The alert is provided in such a manner that confined persons with disabilities (e.g., persons who are Deaf or hard of hearing, Blind or have low vision, or those who are cognitively or functionally disabled (including intellectual, psychiatric, or speech disabilities)) are also

properly alerted to staff of the opposite-gender in the housing area/bedroom/bathroom/shower area.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff regarding knock and announce procedures (e.g., verify knock and announce procedures, frequency of knock and announce).
- Have informal conversations with persons confined in the facility regarding knock and announce procedures.
- **Important note:** It may not always be possible to observe a cross-gender announcement if, for example, most or all of the persons confined in the facility are out at work or other programming during the day, or there are no opposite gender staff working in the facility to knock on a bedroom door or the entry to a housing area. In these circumstances, the auditor should rely upon other types of evidence (i.e., documentation, interviews of staff and persons confined in the facility).

## Searches

During the site review, the auditor must:

- Observe areas used to conduct strip searches, visual body cavity searches, and pat-down searches and assess whether opposite-gender staff (i.e., non-medical personnel) can watch the conduct of a strip search or visual body cavity search (absent exigent circumstances).
  - **If opposite-gender supervisors are required to supervise or observe strip searches**, observe the area used to conduct searches and note if a privacy screen or other similar device is used to obstruct cross-gender viewing.
  - **If opposite-gender staff or personnel can be in the vicinity of the strip search area**, observe the area used to conduct searches and note if a privacy screen or other similar device is used to obstruct cross-gender viewing or if the staff or personnel are kept at a sufficient distance where the contours of the breasts, genitalia, or buttocks are not readily distinguishable.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff and persons confined in the facility regarding search procedures (e.g., limits to cross-gender viewing, supervision of searches).

## Record Storage

During the site review, the auditor must:

- Observe the physical storage area of any information/documentation collected and maintained in hard copy pursuant to the PREA Standards (e.g., risk screening information, medical records, sexual abuse allegations) to determine if the area is secured (e.g., key card, lock and key).
- Observe electronic safeguards of any information/documentation collected and maintained electronically pursuant to the PREA Standards (e.g., risk screening information) to determine how access to the information is secured (e.g., password protected, accessible only in certain areas, role-based security).
  - Note, the auditor may have to speak with the agency/facility information technology staff person to understand the secure storage of electronic information and who has access to that information.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff regarding access to secure information, including medical and mental health files, sexual abuse and sexual harassment reports, etc. (e.g., where, how, and security of information is stored electronically and in hard copy, specifically who has access and how access is restricted).

## Processes for Sending and Receiving Mail (Mail drop boxes/Mailroom)

During the site review, the auditor must:

- Assess the accessibility of writing instruments for persons confined in the facility (e.g., paper, writing instruments, sexual abuse and sexual harassment reporting form(s), *if applicable*, envelopes, stamps).
- Observe how mail moves from confined persons to the mailroom.
  - If mail moves via mail drop boxes/receptacles/lock boxes:
    - Assess whether placement of mail drop boxes/receptacles are located in areas accessible to all persons confined in the facility.
      - Ideally, mail drop boxes/receptacles should also be in locations where a person confined in the facility could drop written communication anonymously (e.g., an area where a confined person could drop a form, letter, or note in passing.)

- **Note:** Drop boxes or other receptacles used to collect reports of sexual abuse and sexual harassment should not be used exclusively for reporting sexual abuse and sexual harassment. Other staff and confined persons should not know, from the nature of the receptacle being used, that a confined person is reporting a sexual abuse or sexual harassment.
  - If mail moves via staff (i.e., other than mailroom staff), see “have informal conversations” below.
- Assess the security of written communication
  - Mail drop boxes/receptacles/lock boxes are kept locked/secured.
  - Mail in the mail drop boxes/receptacles/lock boxes is only accessible by a designated agency or facility official(s).

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff responsible for sending and receiving mail (e.g., mailroom staff and/or other staff) and persons confined in the facility regarding the process of sending and receiving mail to/from the external reporting entity, outside emotional support services, legal mail (e.g., the extent to which mail correspondence is kept private, confidential, and/or privileged as allowed by Federal, State, and local laws, perception of privacy/confidentiality/anonymity in sending and receiving mail, and accessibility of writing instruments and required forms).

# Testing of Critical Functions

During the site review, auditors are expected to actively engage in tests of critical functions (including PREA information provided and PREA risk screening conducted during intake, internal and external reporting methods, staff reporting, third party reporting, access to outside emotional support services, and interpretation services). Active engagement in testing critical functions during the site review requires: (1) a clear understanding of the facility's critical functions (e.g., how the facility provides access to outside emotional support services); (2) assessing critical functions (e.g., call outside emotional support service provider), including testing critical functions per the site review instructions and having informal conversations with staff and confined persons where confirmation or additional clarification is needed; and (3) analyzing whether your tests of critical functions aligns with the expectations of the Standards.

## Intake

### PREA Information

As part of the site review, the auditor must ask to observe, during an actual intake process, if possible, the sexual safety information (PREA information/zero-tolerance information) provided at the point of intake or transfer; if no one is being admitted during the onsite audit, the auditor may ask staff to walk through the process and do a mock intake for demonstration purposes.

During the intake or mock demo, the auditor must:

- Confirm who is responsible for conducting the intake process.
  - This information will be important for interviewing the right staff who are responsible for the intake process.
- Test how the facility provides the necessary PREA information to all confined persons, regardless of ability and language, including whether:
  - Written information, if applicable, is clear and provided at an appropriate reading-level and is accessible for all persons confined in the facility, including those who are limited English proficient (LEP)<sup>3</sup> (i.e., the facility provides written information in the languages most commonly spoken in the facility and/or provides translation services on-demand).

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<sup>3</sup> Note: individuals who are "limited English proficient" (LEP) refers to those who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. These individuals may use spoken or sign language.

- The facility provides interpreters, when needed, to assist Deaf and non-English speaking persons confined in the facility (see section *Interpretation Services*).
- Staff are prepared to read written information out loud, if applicable, to make accommodations for persons confined in the facility when necessary (e.g., Blind or have low vision, limited reading skills, etc.).
- Mental health staff or other skilled educators/staff are involved in providing the required information to confined persons with cognitive or functional disabilities.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff (if mock demo) or persons confined in the facility (if an actual intake) regarding initial PREA education provided during intake (e.g., understanding of information provided, access to additional support to understand information provided, if necessary).

## PREA Risk Screening

During the site review, the auditor must ask to observe a confined person being screened for risk of being sexually abused or sexually abusive, if possible; if no confined persons are being screened during the onsite portion of the audit, the auditor may ask staff to walk through the process and do a mock intake for demonstration purposes.

During the PREA risk screening or mock demo, the auditor must:

- Confirm who is responsible for risk screening.
  - This information will be important for interviewing the right staff who are responsible for conducting risk screening.
- Assess whether the screening process occurs in a setting that ensures as much privacy as possible given the potentially sensitive information that could be discussed (e.g., screening takes place out of earshot of other staff and confined persons who would not otherwise participate in the screening process).
- Assess whether screening staff ask screening questions in a manner that fosters comfort and elicits responses.
- Test the method for assessing confined persons for risk of being sexually abused by other persons confined in the facility or sexually abusive toward other persons confined in the facility, including whether:
  - Screening staff use an instrument to collect information during the risk screening process.

- Screening staff affirmatively ask persons confined in the facility about their sexual orientation and gender identity by directly inquiring if they identify as LGBTI (in addition to making a subjective determination about perceived status).
- Screening staff use additional sources of information, outlined in the Standards, to complete the initial risk screening assessment.
- Completion of the risk screening instrument returns a subsequent “score” or determination of risk of being sexually abused or being sexually abusive.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff while conducting risk screening (or mock demo) regarding the risk screening process (e.g., how information is collected/specifics of the screening tool, how privacy is maintained).
- Have informal conversations with persons confined in the facility regarding the risk screening process (e.g., their comfort answering questions in the space where the screening is being conducted, ability to answer the questions asked).

## Testing Internal Reporting Methods for Confined Persons

*Note: Facilities are required to have multiple internal methods for confined persons to privately report sexual abuse or sexual harassment, retaliation by other persons confined in the facility or staff for reporting sexual abuse and sexual harassment, and staff neglect or violation of responsibilities that may have contributed to such incidents. Accordingly, during the site review, auditors must test the methods provided for the purpose of assessing whether persons confined in the facility have regular and timely access to reporting methods and how the facility receives these reports.*

### Reporting in Writing

If internal reporting includes a mechanism or mechanisms for submitting a written report (which might be a note or a form, and usually includes grievance forms) into a drop box or other receptacle, auditors are not expected to complete and submit a written report via hard copy/drop box. However, the auditor must assess access to writing materials (e.g., forms, paper, envelopes, writing implements) and the drop box in the same way as that available to persons confined in the facility.

During the site review the auditor must:

- Test access, or ask a person confined in the facility to test access, to the mechanism(s)/form(s).
  - Determine whether persons confined in the facility do not have to request forms from staff.
  - See section “Processes for Sending and Receiving Mail (Mail drop boxes/Mailroom)” for instructions on what the auditor must observe during the site review regarding access to writing materials (e.g., writing implements, forms, paper, envelopes), drop boxes, etc. and security of written communications.

## Reporting Electronically

If the facility has a system by which persons confined in the facility can report sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment electronically via kiosk, tablet, or computer (whether by internal email, grievance, or some other method), during the site review the auditor must:

- Complete and submit a test report via the kiosk/tablet/computer during the site review, and in the same manner as that available to persons confined in the facility.
- Assess whether the facility receives the test report.
  - Ask to see evidence of having received the test report that the auditor submitted.
- Test accessibility of kiosks/tablets/computers, including whether:
  - Kiosks/tablets/computers are easily and readily available to all persons confined in the facility and are placed in areas frequented by confined persons.
  - Kiosks/tablets/computers are accessible to all persons confined in the facility and have reasonable accommodations, where necessary (i.e., for confined persons who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing, Blind or have low vision, cognitively or functionally disabled, limited English proficient, non-English speaking, and/or have limited reading skills).
  - Kiosks/tablets/computers are placed in areas that afford persons confined in the facility reasonable privacy while submitting a report.
  - Kiosks/tablets/computers are operable (i.e., in working order).
- Assess whether kiosks/tablets/computers require persons confined in the facility to provide their name and/or ID in order to complete and submit a sexual abuse or sexual harassment report (i.e., allows the report to be submitted anonymously). This means that there must be a way for confined persons to access the reporting mechanism without logging into the kiosk/tablet/computer with a traceable login.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff and persons confined in the facility regarding internal reporting electronically (e.g., access to kiosks/tablets/computers, reasonable accommodations for persons confined in the facility who need it, operability of kiosks/tablets/computers, anonymity in reporting).

## Reporting Verbally

For verbal reports of sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment made by persons confined in the facility, during the site review the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with persons confined in the facility, to determine whether they are aware that they are allowed to report verbally and that they can report to any staff in the facility.
- Have informal conversations with staff, to determine whether staff are aware of the process for receiving and documenting verbal reports.
- See section “Record Storage” for instructions on what the auditor must observe during the site review regarding how documented reports are stored and who has access to those documented reports.

## Testing External Reporting Method(s) for Confined Persons

During the site review, the auditor must test access to the external reporting entity or ask a person confined in the facility to test access to the external reporting entity.<sup>4</sup>

### Reporting via Phone

If access to the external reporting entity is provided by phone, during the site review the auditor must:

- Test reporting via phones by calling the external reporting entity in the same manner that a person confined in the facility would be expected to call the external reporting entity (or have a confined person call the service provider), to assess whether:
  - The phones work (e.g., have a dial tone, can call outside the facility, etc.).
  - The phone number listed on the signage actually connects with the outside reporting entity.

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<sup>4</sup> Note: Facilities may not contract with an answering service to perform this function because an answering service is not a “public or private entity or office that is not part of the agency.” An answering service in this context is, essentially, no more than an agent of or a contractor to the agency. See this FAQ for formal guidance: <https://www.prearesourcecenter.org/frequently-asked-questions/can-answering-service-be-used-satisfy-requirement-standard-11551-b>.

- Access to the outside reporting entity does not require a confined person to provide their pin or name (allowing the person to remain anonymous).
- The phone number is local/toll-free.
- The phone is answered by a live person or information about how and when to reach a live person is provided (versus a recording with no access to a live person).
- The reporting entity is prepared to receive reports of sexual abuse and sexual harassment from persons confined in the facility and immediately forward reports to agency officials.
  - This requires a brief conversation with the person who answers the phone on behalf of the external reporting entity regarding responsibilities in regard to reporting. The auditor must ask the person to forward a test report to the agency under the auditor's name.
- The reporting entity allows persons confined in the facility to report anonymously upon request.
  - As above, this requires a brief conversation with the person who answers the phone on behalf of the external reporting entity regarding anonymity, if requested.
- Assess whether all persons confined in the facility have regular access to phones to report sexual abuse and sexual harassment to the external reporting entity and have reasonable accommodations, where necessary (i.e., for confined persons who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing, Blind or have low vision, cognitively or functionally disabled, limited English proficient, non-English speaking, and/or have limited reading skills).
- Assess how the facility allows confined persons to report sexual abuse or sexual harassment anonymously, if requested:
  - Facilities should allow persons confined in the facility access to telephones that are unmonitored or that may provide more privacy.
  - The configuration of the telephone should not make obvious that any confined person using the telephone system is making an allegation of sexual abuse or sexual harassment. For example, if the hotline is a dedicated phone, then the phone should also be used for other purposes besides reporting sexual abuse or sexual harassment.
  - Facilities should have reporting mechanisms in place that allow the identity of the confined person making the report to remain anonymous to facility staff and administrators.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff and persons confined in the facility regarding external reporting via the phone (e.g., access to phones, reasonable accommodations for persons confined in the facility who need it, anonymity in reporting).

## Reporting in Writing

*Note: Auditors are not expected to test access to external reporting entities via mail. See section “Processes for Sending and Receiving Mail (Mail drop boxes/Mailroom)” for instructions on what the auditor must observe during the site review regarding sending and receiving mail, including to external reporting entities.*

## Testing Staff Reporting

During the site review, the auditor must:

- Test by asking a staff person to walk through the staff reporting method(s) provided by the facility.
- Observe whether the staff reporting method is available, on demand, to all staff in the facility.
- Assess whether staff are required to report to their direct colleagues or their immediate supervisor.

## Testing Third-Party Reporting

Either prior to the onsite, during the site review, or post-onsite, the auditor must:

- Complete and submit a test third-party report using the same method(s) provided to the public (e.g., via the agency/facility website).
  - Confirm the method(s) to submit third-party reports is easily accessible and understandable and can be found in reasonably conspicuous and appropriate locations (e.g., facility/agency website).
  - Confirm that the third-party reporting method is not the general contact information for the facility, but is specific to reporting sexual abuse and sexual harassment in the facility.
- Verify the facility has a process for receiving third-party reports.
  - Ask to see evidence of having received the test report that the auditor submitted.

## Testing Access to Outside Emotional Support Services

During the site review, the auditor must test access to outside emotional support services or ask a person confined in the facility to test access to outside emotional support services.

### Outside Emotional Support via Phone

If access to support services is provided by phone, during the site review the auditor must:

- Test access via phones by calling the outside emotional support service provider(s) in the same manner that a person confined in the facility would be expected to call (or have a confined person call the service provider(s)), to assess whether:
  - The phones work (e.g., have a dial tone, can call outside the facility, etc.).
  - The phone number listed on the signage actually connects with the organization providing outside emotional support services.
  - The phone number is local/toll-free.
  - The phone is answered by a service provider (i.e., a live person or information about how and when to reach a live person is provided versus a recording with no access to a live person).
  - The service provider is prepared to offer services to callers from the facility.
    - This requires a brief conversation with the person who answers the phone at the service provider regarding the services offered to persons confined in the facility.
- Assess whether all persons confined in the facility have regular access to phones to contact the outside emotional support service provider(s) and have reasonable accommodations, where necessary (i.e., for confined persons who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing, Blind or have low vision, cognitively or functionally disabled, limited English proficient, non-English speaking, and/or have limited reading skills).
- Assess how the facility provides access to phones that are unmonitored or allow for privacy or otherwise provides a way for persons confined in the facility to correspond with outside emotional support services confidentially.

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff and persons confined in the facility regarding access to outside emotional support services via the phone (e.g., access to phones, reasonable accommodations for persons confined in the facility who need it, limits to confidentiality).

## Outside Emotional Support via Mail

Note: Auditors are not expected to test access to external reporting entities via mail. See section “Processes for Sending and Receiving Mail (Mail drop boxes/Mailroom)” for instructions on what the auditor must observe during the site review regarding sending and receiving mail, including to outside emotional support services.

## Interpretation Services

As part of the formal interview process, the auditor must interview persons confined in the facility who are LEP. As such, those interviews are an excellent opportunity to test the facility’s access to interpretation services. The auditor should not notify or set-up interpreting or language line access in advance of the audit. Instead, the auditor must test the facility’s process for securing an interpreter in real-time. Note, the auditor must access the interpretation services in whatever manner is available to the persons confined in the facility (see General Guidance section).

During the site review, the auditor must:

- Test the facility’s process for securing interpretation services on-demand.
  - If services are provided via a language line, the auditor must test access to services via the language line to assess whether the phones for accessing the language line work properly (e.g., the auditor should pick up the phone to confirm there is a dial tone).
- Determine if persons confined in the facility must self-identify (e.g., enter pin, provide name/ID number) to access interpretation services. This is important to understand related to anonymous reporting or confidential access to emotional support services.
- Assess the availability of interpretation services (e.g., ability to access immediate interpretation services).
- Assess the accessibility of interpretation services (i.e., available to all persons confined in the facility who need an interpreter).
- Observe the location of interpretation services (e.g., are services provided in a location that provides some privacy for the persons confined in the facility?).

Additionally, the auditor should:

- Have informal conversations with staff and persons confined in the facility regarding accessibility of interpretation services when needed (e.g., experiences with interpretation services in the past).