

2024 Annual PREA Report

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The North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (ND DOCR) is committed to maintaining the requirements of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 and enhancing safety and security for ND DOCR residents.

North Dakota maintained its steadfast adherence to the Prison Rape Elimination Act throughout 2024. The state's commitment to compliance was affirmed through comprehensive audits conducted within the first year of the fourth cycle; the North Dakota State Penitentiary, Missouri River Correctional Center and the North Dakota Youth Correctional Center all received official validation of their compliance in early 2024. Additionally, the Heart River Correctional Center and the James River Correctional Center completed audits in 2024, the second year of the fourth audit cycle.

Purpose:

This document serves as an annual review to assess and improve the effectiveness of sexual abuse prevention, detection, response policies, practices and training in the ND DOCR pursuant to §115.88 and §115.89 of the national PREA standards. Therein, the ND DOCR is required to:

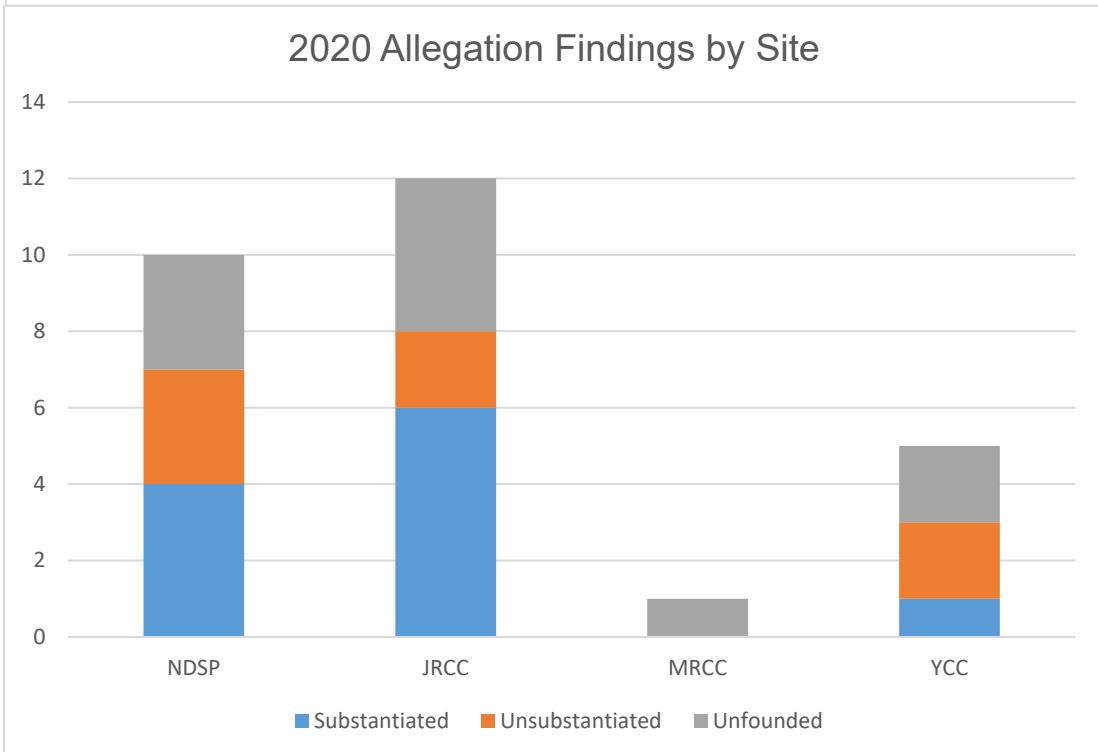
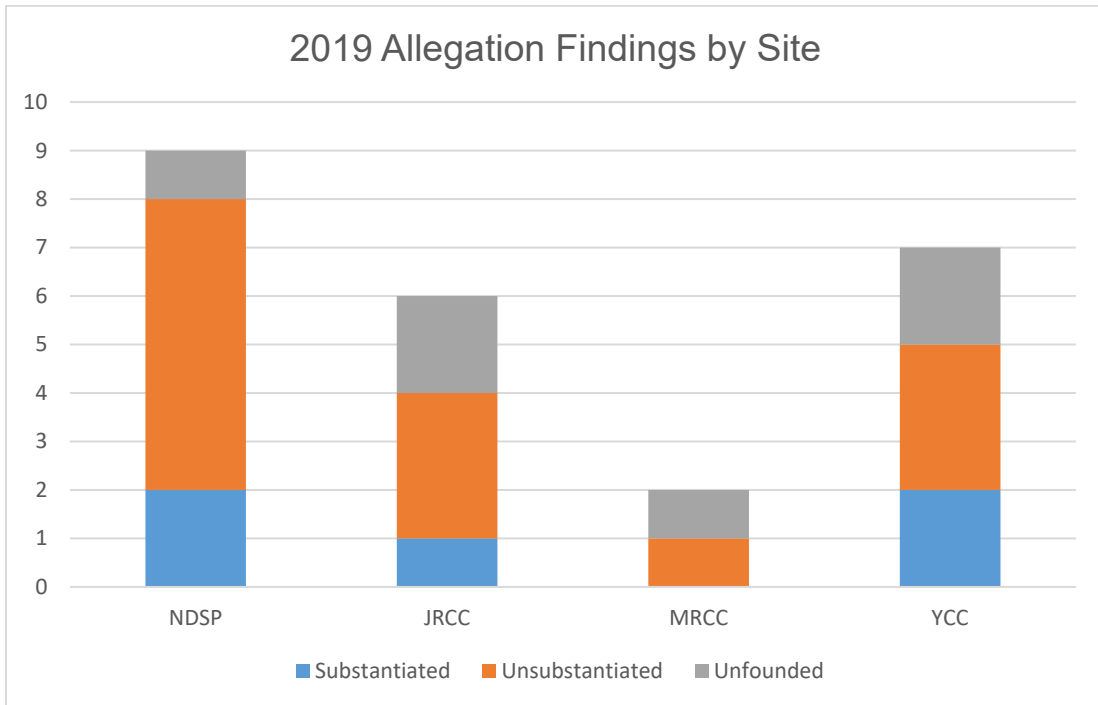
1. Review and aggregate incident-based sexual abuse data annually to improve the effectiveness of sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies, practices and training to include:
 - a. Identifying problem areas;
 - b. Taking corrective action on an ongoing basis; and
 - c. Preparing an annual report of its findings.
2. Compare the current year's data and corrective actions with those from prior years and provide an assessment of the agency's progress in addressing sexual abuse.
3. Publish an annual report on the ND DOCR website of its findings and corrective actions for each facility as well as for the entire agency.

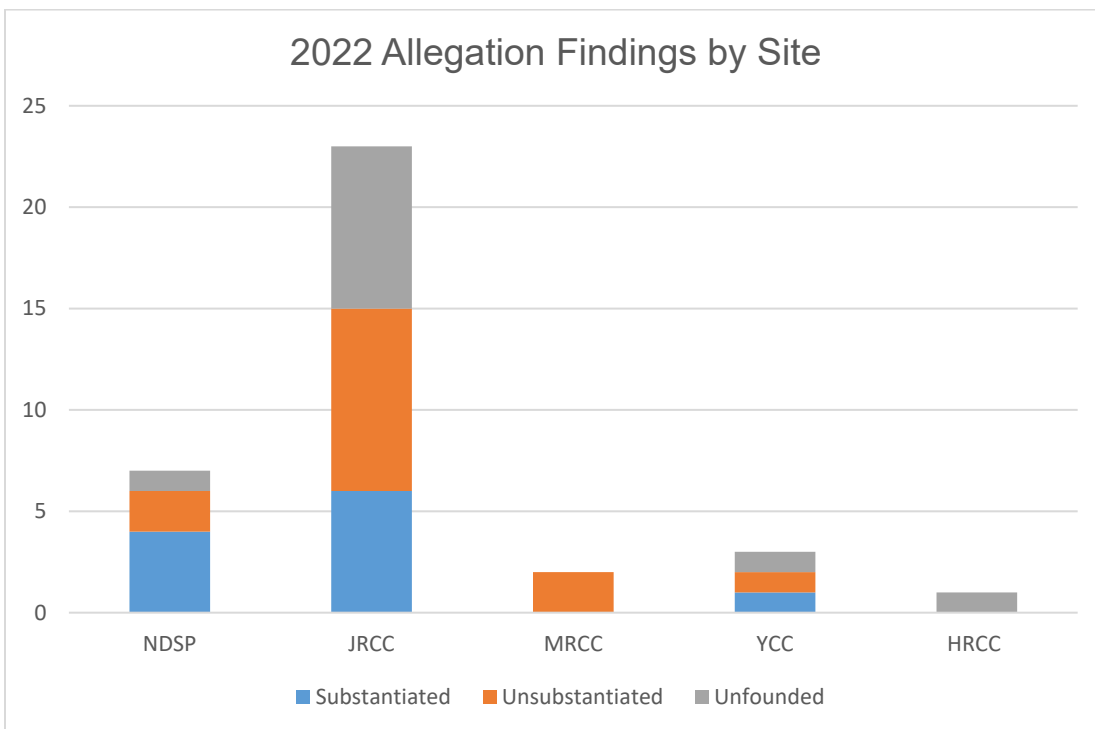
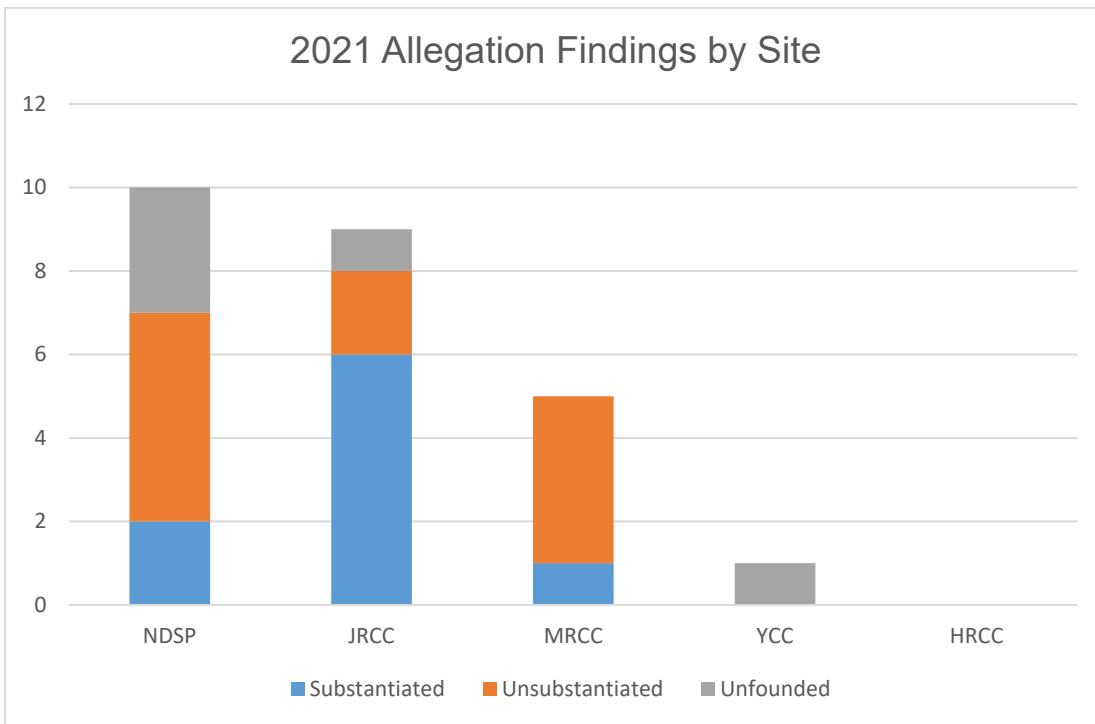
Aggregated Data:

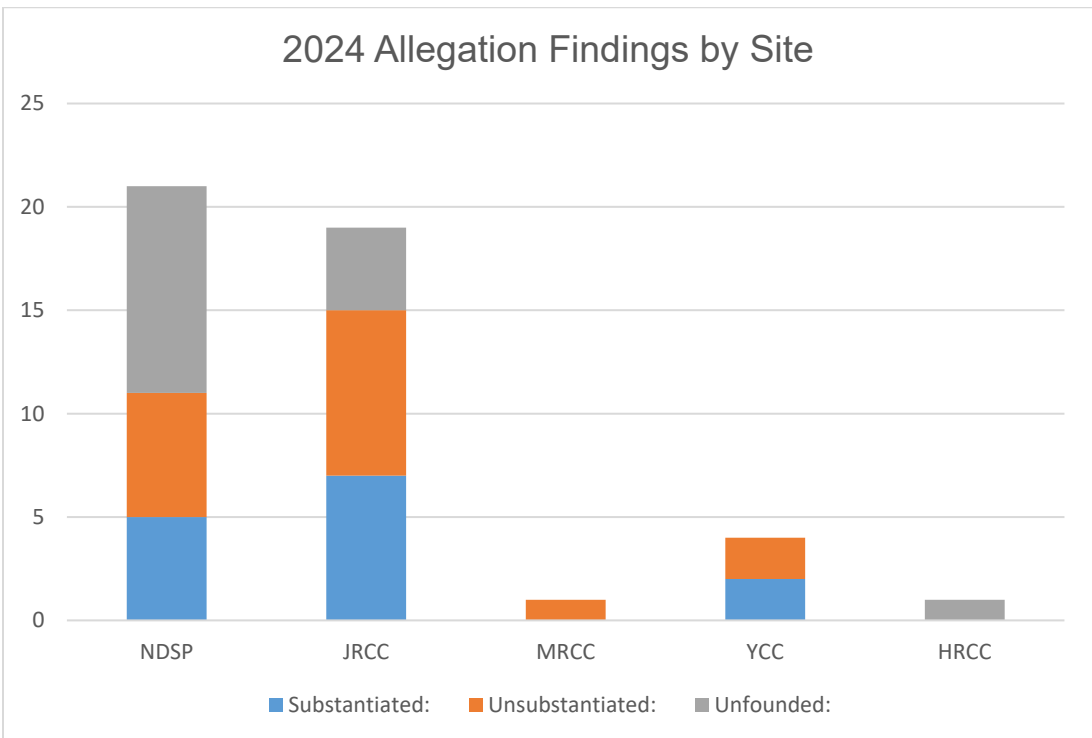
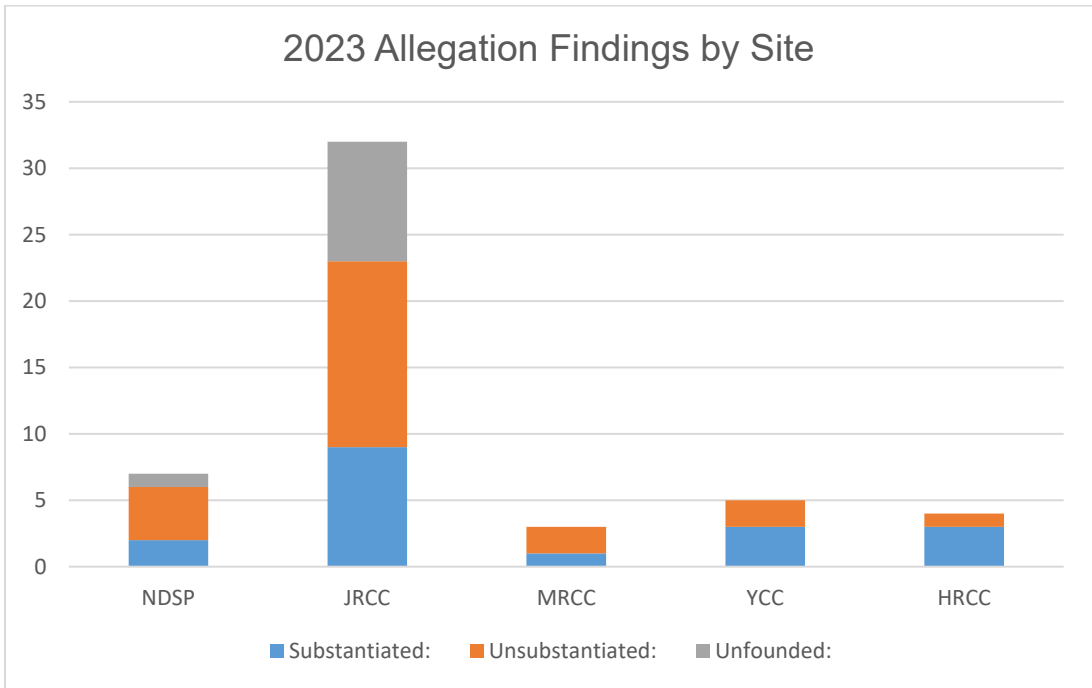
The ND DOCR collects data from the referrals for investigation of sexual abuse and sexual harassment; both resident-on-resident allegations and staff/contractor/volunteer-on-resident allegations. In this section, the data contains the aggregated data as well as a comparison.

From 2023 to 2024 the number of substantiated allegations slightly decreased.



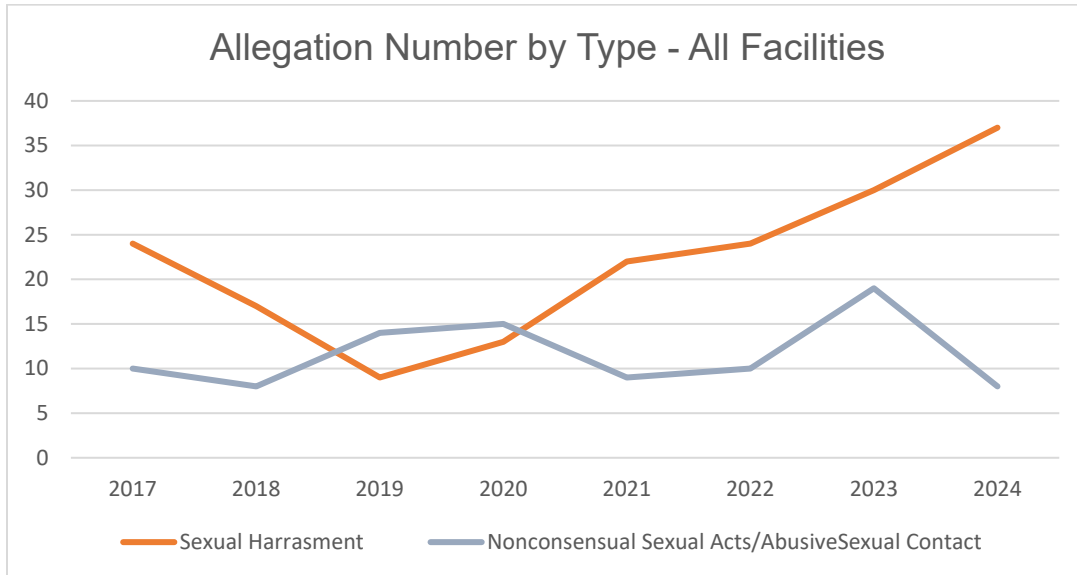






Comparative Data Analysis:

The following graph represents a comparison between reports of sexual abuse and sexual harassment; these totals are all reports received, regardless of their dispositions. We continue to see an upward trend in sexual harassment allegations; nine were substantiated compared to sixteen the previous year. There was a decrease in allegations of non-consensual sexual acts/sexual abuse. There were nineteen allegations in 2023 and only eight in 2024; five of those instances were substantiated.



Problem Areas/Corrective Action:

The ND DOCR remains steadfast in its commitment to implementing best practices and adhering to the requirements of the Prison Rape Elimination Act standards to address allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment of residents. Under the dedicated leadership of the ND DOCR, ongoing monitoring and corrective action are prioritized to ensure full PREA compliance and, most importantly, to maximize the sexual safety of residents in North Dakota correctional facilities.

Since the summer of 2021, the ND DOCR has undertaken systemic changes by integrating PREA standards into all policies and procedures. Following the three audits conducted in 2023, several revisions and updates were implemented based on auditor recommendations. There were continued agency-wide implementations that were recommended in the audits that took place in 2024.

Agency-Level Corrective Actions, New Processes and Updates:

1. Emphasis on training new PREA compliance managers and investigators due to promotions and turnover; this has rolled over from last year.



2. Revision of the screening tool for inter-agency transfers by incorporating additional questions as per auditor recommendations. This recommendation also applied to the final two facilities audited in 2024.

Facility-Level Corrective Actions, New Processes and Updates:

MRCC:

- Installation of additional cameras in the kitchen, dining room and THU housing unit.
- Developed a 14-day follow-up process to ensure sessions are occurring and being properly documented by mental health staff and the 30-day reassessment is completed by case management.
- Added additional PREA signage throughout the facility.

These actions were all completed and MRCC passed their PREA audit with full compliance.

NDSP:

- Provision of additional access for inmate reporting.
- Implementation of physical plant changes in the shower area.
- Staff training initiatives.

These actions were all completed and NDSP passed their PREA audit with full compliance.

NDYCC:

- Developed training programs for staff and students.
- Developed a comprehensive staffing plan.
- Enhanced reassessment frequency for youth.

These actions were all completed and NDYCC passed their PREA audit with full compliance.

HRCC:

The Heart River Correctional Center had their PREA audit from July 22nd to 24th, 2024. They had similar recommendations as the agency-wide corrective actions. They passed their audit and are in full compliance.

JRCC:

James River Correctional Center had their audit from July 25th to 27th, 2024. During their audit, there were additional physical plant modifications requested. Specifically, adding windows to group dorm rooms; this took some time to get accomplished due to the nature of the projects. JRCC is awaiting their final report for full compliance.

Conclusion:

All audits have concluded during the current three-year audit cycle with only JRCC awaiting its final report. The ND DOCR is now actively looking for an auditor to assist with the 2026-2028 audit cycle. The ND DOCR's overarching goal is to ensure the highest possible level of safety for those under its care. Through continuous demonstration of full compliance with PREA standards, we strive to provide residents with a safe and secure environment conducive to their journey towards rehabilitative change and successful reintegration into the community.

