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PRESS RELEASE

Adult Correctional Authorities Reported Over 2,600 Inmate-on-Inmate and 2,200 Staff-on-Inmate Substantiated Sexual Victimization in 2016–2018

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Justice Statistics is announcing the release of [*Substantiated Incidents of Sexual Victimization Reported by Adult Correctional Authorities, 2016–2018*](#). For the 3-year aggregate period of 2016–18, adult correctional authorities reported 2,666 substantiated incidents of inmate sexual victimization by another inmate and 2,229 incidents by staff. Most (62% or 1,643) inmate-on-inmate incidents involved abusive sexual contact, whereas most (69% or 1,549) staff-on-inmate incidents involved staff sexual misconduct.

During 2016–18, there were 1,023 inmate-on-inmate substantiated incidents of nonconsensual sexual acts and 1,643 substantiated incidents of abusive sexual contact. Generally, inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization involves nonconsensual sexual acts or abusive contact with a victim without his or her consent or with a victim who cannot consent or refuse. The report contains detailed definitions of the types of sexual victimizations, and it also contains statistics related to inmate-on-inmate sexual harassment, which are presented separately from other types of inmate-perpetrated sexual victimizations.

A third of incidents of nonconsensual sexual acts (33%) and abusive sexual contact (32%) occurred in the evening. Nearly a third of nonconsensual sexual acts occurred in the victim's cell or room (33%), and a third of abusive sexual contact incidents occurred in common areas, such as bathrooms, showers and dayrooms (34%). Half of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization incidents occurred in an area not under video surveillance.

About 9% of substantiated incidents of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization resulted in physical injury to the victim and 4% resulted in major injuries, such as stab wounds, broken bones or internal injuries. The victim was given a medical examination in 61% of nonconsensual sexual acts and in 36% of abusive sexual contacts. The victim was provided counseling or mental health treatment in 64% of nonconsensual sexual acts and 50% of abusive sexual contacts. The perpetrator was placed in solitary or disciplinary custody in 62% of nonconsensual sexual acts and 55% of abusive sexual contacts. Half (49%) of nonconsensual sexual acts resulted in some form of legal action for the perpetrator.

Staff-on-inmate sexual victimization in adult correctional facilities includes sexual misconduct or sexual harassment perpetrated on an inmate by correctional staff. Of staff-on-inmate substantiated sexual victimizations during 2016–18, about 80% of incidents involved perpetrators who were employed full time, while 17% involved those employed as contractors. Correctional officers or supervisory staff perpetrated the majority (64%) of staff-on-inmate incidents, while maintenance or facility support staff (13%) and medical or health care staff (10%) were less likely to be staff perpetrators.

There were 1,598 perpetrators of staff sexual misconduct and 716 perpetrators of staff sexual harassment. Two-thirds (67%) of staff sexual misconduct perpetrators were female and a third (33%) was male. The distribution by sex for staff perpetrators of sexual harassment was the opposite: 69% male and 31% female.

While most (99%) staff-on-inmate sexual victimizations did not result in physical injury to the victim, the victim received a medical examination in 10% of staff sexual harassment incidents and in 26% of staff sexual misconduct incidents.

Legal action against the staff perpetrator occurred in 38% of sexual misconduct incidents and in less than 5% of sexual harassment incidents. Staff sexual misconduct led to the perpetrator's discharge, termination or employment

contract not being renewed in 44% of incidents. Staff perpetrators were reprimanded or disciplined following 43% of sexual harassment incidents.

The findings in the report are based on data from the Survey of Sexual Victimization (SSV), which BJS conducts annually, partly to fulfill mandates under the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA; P.L. 108–79). The SSV is administered to adult correctional authorities in all federal and state prison systems; all facilities operated by the U.S. military and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and representative samples of public and private jail jurisdictions, private prisons and jails holding adults in Indian country.

The report, written by BJS Statistician Emily Buehler, PhD, related documents and additional information about BJS's statistical publications and programs are available on the BJS website at bjs.ojp.gov.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics, a division of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, is the principal federal agency responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating reliable statistics on crime and criminal justice in the United States. Alexis R. Piquero, PhD, is the director. More information about BJS and criminal justice statistics can be found at bjs.ojp.gov.

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