



Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
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MICHAEL REESE
SHERIFF

Exemplary service for a safe, livable community

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Disability Rights Oregon

Ms. Sarah Radcliffe, PAIMI Managing Attorney
610 SW Broadway, Suite 200
Portland, OR 97205

Dear Ms. Radcliffe,

The Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) appreciates Disability Rights Oregon's (DRO) acknowledgment of the progress that our agency and Corrections Health have made over the past year specific to adults experiencing mental health issues. MCSO remains dedicated to continuous improvement by building a comprehensive continuum of care, which encompasses diversion, custody, care and reentry.

MCSO is committed to placing adults in custody in the least restrictive housing possible. To meet this goal, we restructured our operations to allow for a *minimum* of five (5) hours of available out of cell time per day. This effort applies to all adults in custody and puts us in alignment with settlement agreements across the country. As your report highlights, we are receiving positive feedback from adults in custody and our staff about this change.

MCSO expects professionalism from our members. We expect service outcomes to uphold the tenets of procedural justice, ensuring everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Professional development of our members is accomplished through ongoing policy setting and quality training. As noted in the report, MCSO increased staffing at the Training Unit in order to train staff in de-escalation, crisis management and Mental Health First Aid. While common in law enforcement training, we believe these are core competencies for corrections professionals as well. MCSO thanks the County Board of Commissioners for their support and continued funding to make this training possible.

Together with key partners, MCSO is participating in diversion options centered on systemic drivers of our jail population: homelessness, substance use disorders, and mental health conditions. However, if an individual remains in custody, they will experience new facility improvements focused on safety and a therapeutic environment.

As we move forward, we believe a key component in the continuum of care is full implementation of a mental health team in conjunction with Corrections Health to better coordinate access and quality of care. This effort will help individuals to stabilize, participate in the criminal justice system processes, and assist with release from custody.

In addition to carefully reviewing the latest recommendations of DRO, MCSO will continue to expand policy, training, data collection and systems of accountability. We will strengthen our relationships with medical personnel and social service providers, firmly positioning corrections as a platform for public health and human services. MCSO will continue to provide status reports about our progress on our website in the interests of information sharing and transparency.

Thank you again for your efforts, DRO. We look forward to working with you and our criminal justice system partners to further address the basic safety, rights and treatment of vulnerable adults in custody.

Respectfully,



Michael Reese
Sheriff