

WHAT CAN I DO TO AVOID INAPPROPRIATE STAFF/INMATE RELATIONSHIPS?

Most inappropriate misconduct occurs when someone crosses seemingly innocent professional boundaries. The general guidelines to consider:

- **Stay Focused on Duties:** Prioritize completing job assignments and responsibilities.
- **Maintain Boundaries:** Avoid forming personal relationships with inmates.
- **Protect Personal Information:** Do not share personal details with inmates.
- **Address Colleagues and Inmates Formally:** When communicating with inmates, always address yourself using your rank and last name, and use the same format when referring to other staff members in conversations with inmates.
- **No Gifts or Favors:** Do not accept anything from inmates.
- **PREA and Misconduct Policies:** Adhere to all policies related to sexual misconduct and the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA).

These guidelines help to promote professionalism, safety, and compliance with institutional policies.

DUTY TO REPORT

All staff, contractors, and volunteers must report *any* incident of sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment.

REPORT INCIDENTS TO:

Facility or Division Commander

All Supervisory Personnel

PREA Sexual Assault Hotline
(832) 927-7732

PREA Manager
(832) 927-7732

HCSO PREA Unit
HCSOPREAINvestigations@sheriff.hctx.net

Staff members are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination when agency sexual misconduct policies have been violated. We will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of the reporting staff member.

Report Incidents (832) 927-7732

HARRIS COUNTY
HCSO
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
SHERIFF ED GONZALEZ
www.harriscountysos.org | www.hcsjobs.com

Harris County Sheriff's Office
1200 Baker Street, Houston, TX 77002
Public Information Office (713)-755-6044



HARRIS COUNTY
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SHERIFF ED GONZALEZ

A GUIDE FOR PREVENTING AND REPORTING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT WITH INMATES

For Staff, Contractors, and Volunteers
of the Harris County Sheriff's Office



PREA Sexual Assault Hotline (832)-927-7732



HCSOPREAINvestigations@sheriff.hctx.net

THE HARRIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

A key goal of the Harris County Sheriff's Office's Detention Command is to enhance the safety of everyone within the Harris County Jail.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this pamphlet is to train and educate staff, volunteers, and contractors on the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA), (Texas Penal Code) § 39.04; Violations of the Civil Rights of Person in Custody; Improper Sexual Activity with Person in Custody; and the agency's standard concerning inmate sexual abuse. It is everyone's duty to report incidents of inmate sexual misconduct.



PREA

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) is a federal law established to address the elimination and prevention of sexual assault and rape in correctional facilities. PREA is applicable to all federal, state, and local prisons, jails, police lock-ups, private facilities, and community settings, including residential facilities.

The Harris County Sheriff's Office has established a policy to adhere to all PREA guidelines. The agency aims to prevent sexual misconduct through education, prevention efforts, and thorough investigations. A zero-tolerance policy is in effect when it comes to sexual misconduct. The Harris County Sheriff's Office does not tolerate sexual abuse of inmates by staff, volunteers, contractors, or anyone else responsible for their care, custody, or control.

STAFF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The HCSO PREA policy CJC-116 outlines procedures for the prevention, detection, response, and investigation of staff sexual misconduct within the Detention Command facilities.

All staff, including volunteers and contractors, are prohibited from subjecting another employee or individual to harassment or retaliation for reporting alleged sexual misconduct with inmates.

TEXAS PENAL CODE

Texas Penal Code § 39.04 Violations of the Civil Rights of Person in Custody; Improper Sexual Activity with Person in Custody or Under Supervision states an official of a correctional facility, an employee of a correctional facility, a person other than an employee who works for compensation at a correctional facility, a volunteer at a correctional facility, or a peace officer commits an offense if the person intentionally:

1. Denies or impedes a person in custody in the exercise or enjoyment of any right, privilege, or immunity knowing his conduct is unlawful; or
2. Engages in sexual contact, sexual intercourse, or deviate sexual intercourse with an individual in custody, employs, authorizes, or induces the individual to engage in sexual conduct or a sexual performance.