



John Howard Association of Illinois

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Vandalia Correctional Center: Inmate Survey Results from JHA's Monitoring Visit Conducted April 9, 2019

Vandalia Correctional Center is a minimum-security prison that housed 1,219 adult male inmates on the day of JHA's monitoring visit. JHA collected 579 surveys from inmates (47.7% of the population) during our monitoring visit of this prison. Inmate responses to survey questions are reported below.

Responses to Inmate Demographic Questions:

Race		
Black	252	43.6%
White	224	38.8%
Hispanic	49	8.5%
Other	37	6.4%
No response	17	3.0%
Total	578	100%

Age		
Under 26	96	16.6%
26-35	184	31.8%
36-45	153	26.5%
46-55	83	14.4%
Over 55	56	9.7%
No response	6	1.0%
Total	578	100%

What County are you from?		
Cook County	262	45.3%
Not Cook County	299	51.7%
No response	17	2.9%
Total	578	100%

Primary assignment		
Work	164	28.4%
School	144	24.9%
Unassigned	204	35.1%
Other	21	3.6%
No response	45	7.8%
Total	578	100%

Responses to Inmate Survey Questions:

Q1: I feel safe		
Strongly Agree	39	6.7%
Agree	102	17.6%
Neutral	156	27.0%
Disagree	104	18.0%
Strongly Disagree	163	28.2%
No Response	14	2.4%
Total	578	100%

Q2: Most staff treat inmates with respect		
Strongly Agree	11	1.9%
Agree	25	4.3%
Neutral	35	6.1%
Disagree	113	19.6%
Strongly Disagree	390	67.5%
No Response	4	0.7%
Total	578	100%

Q3: Most inmates treat other inmates with respect		
Strongly Agree	20	3.5%
Agree	128	22.1%
Neutral	231	40.0%
Disagree	94	16.3%
Strongly Disagree	100	17.3%
No Response	5	0.9%
Total	578	100%

Q4: Mental Health Treatment is available		
Strongly Agree	39	6.7%
Agree	136	23.5%
Neutral	195	33.7%
Disagree	98	17.0%
Strongly Disagree	92	15.9%
No Response	18	3.1%
Total	578	100%

Q5: Most staff follow rules		
Strongly Agree	10	1.7%
Agree	39	6.7%
Neutral	92	15.9%
Disagree	148	25.6%
Strongly Disagree	285	49.3%
No Response	4	0.7%
Total	578	100%

Q6: My Correctional Counselor is effective		
Strongly Agree	20	3.5%
Agree	51	8.8%
Neutral	112	19.4%
Disagree	102	17.6%
Strongly Disagree	283	49.0%
No Response	10	1.7%
Total	578	100%

Q7: I am satisfied with medical services		
Strongly Agree	18	3.1%
Agree	60	10.4%
Neutral	124	21.5%
Disagree	127	22.0%
Strongly Disagree	241	41.7%
No Response	8	1.4%
Total	578	100%

Q8: I avoid health care to avoid \$5 co-pay		
Strongly Agree	239	41.3%
Agree	98	17.0%
Neutral	80	13.8%
Disagree	67	11.6%
Strongly Disagree	80	13.8%
No Response	14	2.4%
Total	578	100%

Q9: The disciplinary process is fair		
Strongly Agree	11	1.9%
Agree	21	3.6%
Neutral	92	15.9%
Disagree	114	19.7%
Strongly Disagree	330	57.1%
No Response	10	1.7%
Total	578	100%

Q10: This facility is safe for inmates		
Strongly Agree	18	3.1%
Agree	49	8.5%
Neutral	109	18.9%
Disagree	136	23.5%
Strongly Disagree	257	44.5%
No Response	9	1.6%
Total	578	100%

Q11: There is at least one staff member who I could ask for help		
Strongly Agree	57	9.9%
Agree	127	22.0%
Neutral	116	20.1%
Disagree	93	16.1%
Strongly Disagree	177	30.6%
No Response	8	1.4%
Total	578	100%

Q12: The grievance process is effective		
Strongly Agree	8	1.4%
Agree	13	2.2%
Neutral	109	18.9%
Disagree	103	17.8%
Strongly Disagree	331	57.3%
No Response	14	2.4%
Total	578	100%

Q13: I would feel comfortable filing a grievance		
Strongly Agree	16	2.8%
Agree	22	3.8%
Neutral	74	12.8%
Disagree	119	20.6%
Strongly Disagree	337	58.3%
No Response	10	1.7%
Total	578	100%

Q14: This facility is better now than last year		
Strongly Agree	9	1.6%
Agree	13	2.2%
Neutral	171	29.6%
Disagree	62	10.7%
Strongly Disagree	276	47.8%
No Response	47	8.1%
Total	578	100%

Q15: Contraband from outside the facility often gets inside		
Strongly Agree	43	7.4%
Agree	63	10.9%
Neutral	151	26.1%
Disagree	141	24.4%
Strongly Disagree	158	27.3%
No Response	22	3.8%
Total	578	100%

Q16: There is frequent gang activity here		
Strongly Agree	138	23.9%
Agree	95	16.4%
Neutral	131	22.7%
Disagree	111	19.2%
Strongly Disagree	88	15.2%
No Response	15	2.6%
Total	578	100%

Q17: Mail is timely		
Strongly Agree	31	5.4%
Agree	112	19.4%
Neutral	149	25.8%
Disagree	105	18.2%
Strongly Disagree	169	29.2%
No Response	12	2.1%
Total	578	100%

Q18: Temperature is comfortable		
Strongly Agree	17	2.9%
Agree	28	4.8%
Neutral	72	12.5%
Disagree	116	20.1%
Strongly Disagree	341	59.0%
No Response	4	0.7%
Total	578	100%

Q19: Posted schedules are accurate		
Strongly Agree	24	4.2%
Agree	124	21.5%
Neutral	169	29.2%
Disagree	99	17.1%
Strongly Disagree	146	25.3%
No Response	16	2.8%
Total	578	100%

Q20: Ventilation is adequate		
Strongly Agree	10	1.7%
Agree	31	5.4%
Neutral	89	15.4%
Disagree	127	22.0%
Strongly Disagree	304	52.6%
No Response	17	2.9%
Total	578	100%

Q21: When something is broken it is fixed in a timely manner		
Strongly Agree	11	1.9%
Agree	38	6.6%
Neutral	84	14.5%
Disagree	131	22.7%
Strongly Disagree	304	52.6%
No Response	10	1.7%
Total	578	100%

Q22: I am satisfied with food from dietary		
Strongly Agree	12	2.1%
Agree	32	5.5%
Neutral	89	15.4%
Disagree	120	20.8%
Strongly Disagree	317	54.8%
No Response	8	1.4%
Total	578	100%

Q23: Clothing provided by state is adequate		
Strongly Agree	10	1.7%
Agree	15	2.6%
Neutral	37	6.4%
Disagree	101	17.5%
Strongly Disagree	408	70.6%
No Response	7	1.2%
Total	578	100%

Q24: I have adequate access to showers		
Strongly Agree	128	22.1%
Agree	218	37.7%
Neutral	119	20.6%
Disagree	35	6.1%
Strongly Disagree	70	12.1%
No Response	8	1.4%
Total	578	100%

Q25: Enough state hygiene items are provided		
Strongly Agree	30	5.2%
Agree	61	10.6%
Neutral	98	17.0%
Disagree	128	22.1%
Strongly Disagree	250	43.3%
No Response	11	1.9%
Total	578	100%

Q26: There is enough rec		
Strongly Agree	53	9.2%
Agree	114	19.7%
Neutral	117	20.2%
Disagree	105	18.2%
Strongly Disagree	177	30.6%
No Response	12	2.1%
Total	578	100%

Q27: I have adequate access to law library		
Strongly Agree	49	8.5%
Agree	167	28.9%
Neutral	178	30.8%
Disagree	68	11.8%
Strongly Disagree	101	17.5%
No Response	15	2.6%
Total	578	100%

Q28: I have enough access to phones		
Strongly Agree	29	5.0%
Agree	82	14.2%
Neutral	98	17.0%
Disagree	95	16.4%
Strongly Disagree	268	46.4%
No Response	6	1.0%
Total	578	100%

Q29: Helpful reentry info is provided by staff		
Strongly Agree	15	2.6%
Agree	39	6.7%
Neutral	145	25.1%
Disagree	121	20.9%
Strongly Disagree	242	41.9%
No Response	16	2.8%
Total	578	100%

Q30: Education programming is adequate		
Strongly Agree	20	3.5%
Agree	73	12.6%
Neutral	132	22.8%
Disagree	101	17.5%
Strongly Disagree	246	42.6%
No Response	6	1.0%
Total	578	100%

Q31: Rehabilitative programming is adequate		
Strongly Agree	12	2.1%
Agree	25	4.3%
Neutral	106	18.3%
Disagree	93	16.1%
Strongly Disagree	328	56.7%
No Response	14	2.4%
Total	578	100%

- Not all percentages reported for individual survey items add up to 100% due to percentages being rounded.

Comparison Chart: Average Inmate Response to Survey Items, Vandalia Compared to Other IDOC Prisons, 2018-2019



Other IDOC facilities surveyed include the following prisons: Big Muddy, Centralia, Danville, Dixon, Graham, Illinois River, Jacksonville, Kewanee, Lawrence, Logan,

Menard, Menard MSU, Murphysboro, Pontiac, Pontiac MSU, Robinson, Shawnee, Stateville, Vienna, Western.

Methodology:

For the comparison chart, average inmate survey responses were calculated by converting the survey response options “Strongly Disagree” through “Strongly Agree” to a numerical value of -2 through 2 for each survey question, so that “Strongly Disagree” equals -2, “Disagree” equals -1, and so on, and then an average was calculated based on the aggregate responses to each survey item, or question after applying filter: prison x and all prisons other than prison x. The bars indicate the direction from, and the extent to which the average inmate response to each survey item deviates from “neutral,” or 0 as a numerical value for the prison highlighted in this summary of results versus all other prisons included in the sample.

When JHA conducted a monitoring visit of a prison, paper copies of the Inmate Survey were mailed to the prison prior to JHA’s visit and distributed by IDOC staff. Enough surveys were provided so that every inmate had an opportunity to complete a survey if they elected to do so. Each survey was accompanied by an information sheet, explaining to the inmate that participation was voluntary and completed surveys would be held in confidence by JHA staff. The information sheet was constructed based on the Federal Bureau of Prisons guidelines for anonymous surveys for prisoners. On the day of the monitoring visit, completed surveys were collected from the inmates who volunteered to complete a survey by JHA staff.