



The Connection's Community Justice Service Area PREA Annual Report 2020

Background

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was unanimously passed in 2003 by the United States Congress, creating the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission and charging the Commission with researching and drafting standards for eliminating prison rape. The draft standards were published in 2009 and delivered to the Department of Justice, forming the basis for proposed final rules for PREA compliance. The final PREA standards for implementation became effective on August 20, 2012. The purpose of the PREA and its implementing rules is to provide a set of standards to prevent, detect, and eliminate sexual assault and sexual harassment of individuals in covered facilities. These standards apply to The Connection's community confinement facilities within the Community Justice Service Area. In response to these standards, The Connection developed core policy establishing zero-tolerance for sexual abuse and sexual harassment and additional policies addressing the reporting of, and response to, all such allegations. These policies apply to the following programs: Sierra Center Pre-Trial, Sierra Center Work Release, Roger Sherman House, Cohegan House, Connection House, Eddy Center, and The January Center.

The PREA Coordinator works closely with the Department of Corrections, Community Supervision Support Services, and the Connecticut State Police to respond to all allegations involving client sexual abuse, client sexual harassment, staff sexual misconduct, and staff sexual harassment in our community confinement facilities. Staff and clients are educated on the agency's zero tolerance policy, the multiple avenues for reporting allegations, the appropriate response to allegations, and the agency's zero tolerance policy on retaliation. Additionally, these programs, with the exception of The January Center, have a Memorandum of Understanding with the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence to provide services, support, advocacy, and counseling for clients who report that they have experienced sexual harassment or sexual abuse regardless of the outcome of any investigation. The services provided by the Alliance are free of charge to the client.

As an annual requirement, the PREA Coordinator reports all allegations and findings to the Department of Justice. Below you will find the definitions for the results of allegations. Additionally, the following pages include the Department of Justice's definitions of the allegation category with tables including totals of reported allegations by category.

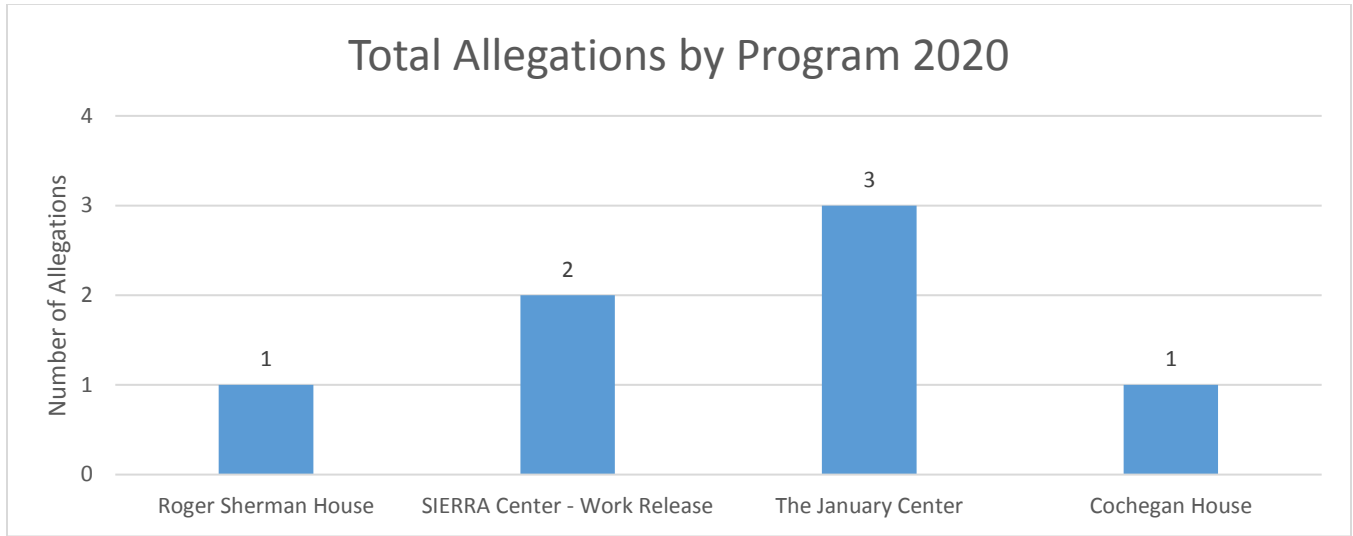
Year in Review: 2020

In 2020, there was 3 PREA Audits scheduled for Roger Sherman House, Sierra Center Work Release, and Connection House. All 3 audits are postponed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions placed on visitors to residential settings.

In 2020, there were a total of seven (7) PREA allegations in the Community Justice Residential programs listed above. Of those seven, three (3) were at The January Center, two (2) were at Sierra Center Work Release, one (1) was at the Roger Sherman House, and one (1) was at Cohegan House. Two additional incidents occurred that did not meet the requirements for sexual abuse or sexual harassment per the PREA standards but were reviewed and reported to the funder. The nature of the allegations and findings are summarized in the tables below.

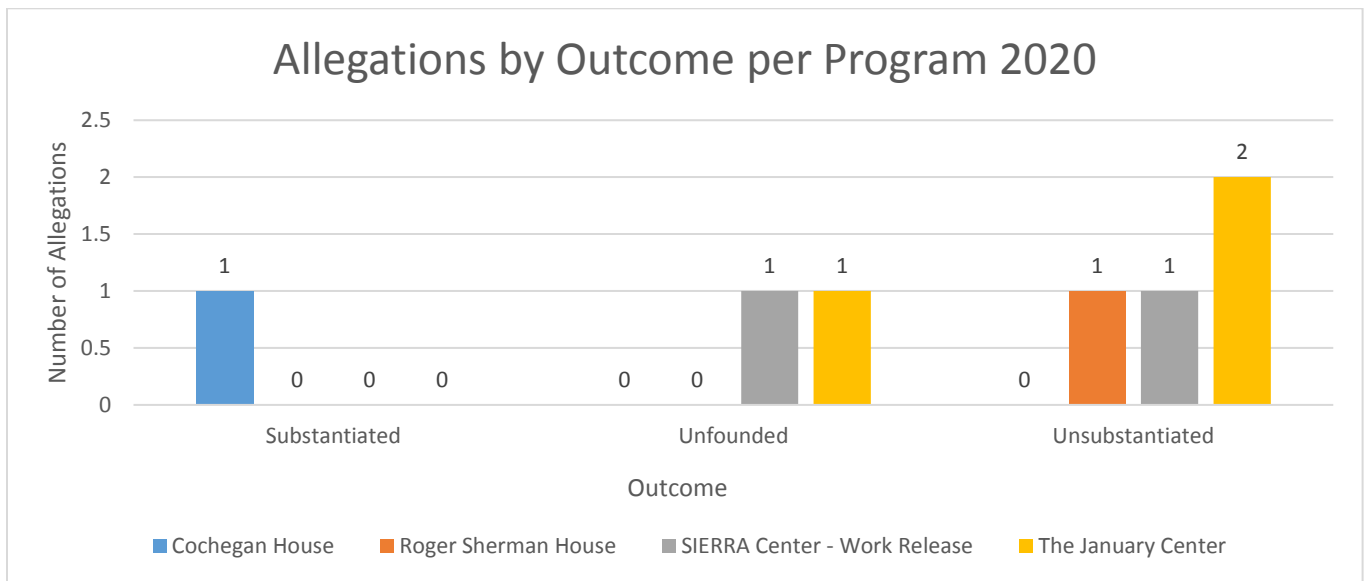


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Outcome Definitions

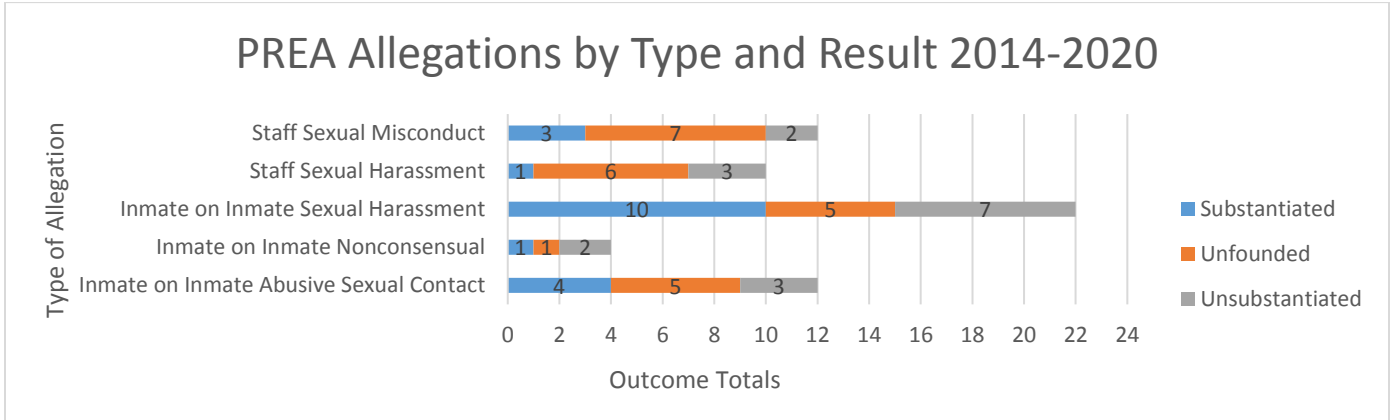
- **Substantiated allegation:** The allegation was determined to have occurred by a preponderance of evidence.
- **Unsubstantiated allegation:** The evidence was insufficient to make a final determination that the allegation was true or false.
- **Unfounded allegation:** The allegation was determined not to have occurred.



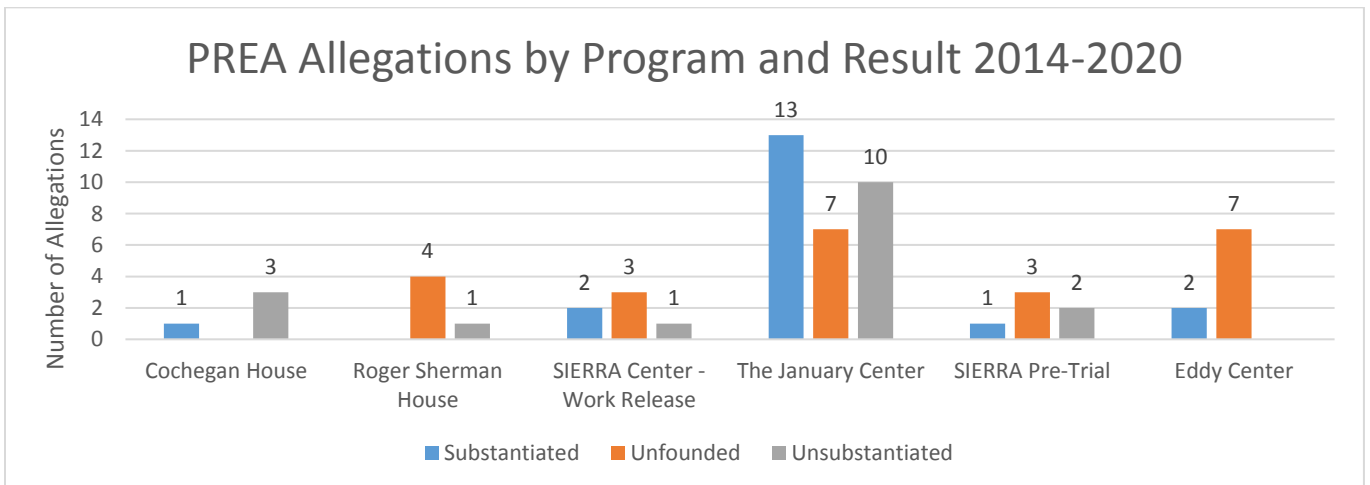
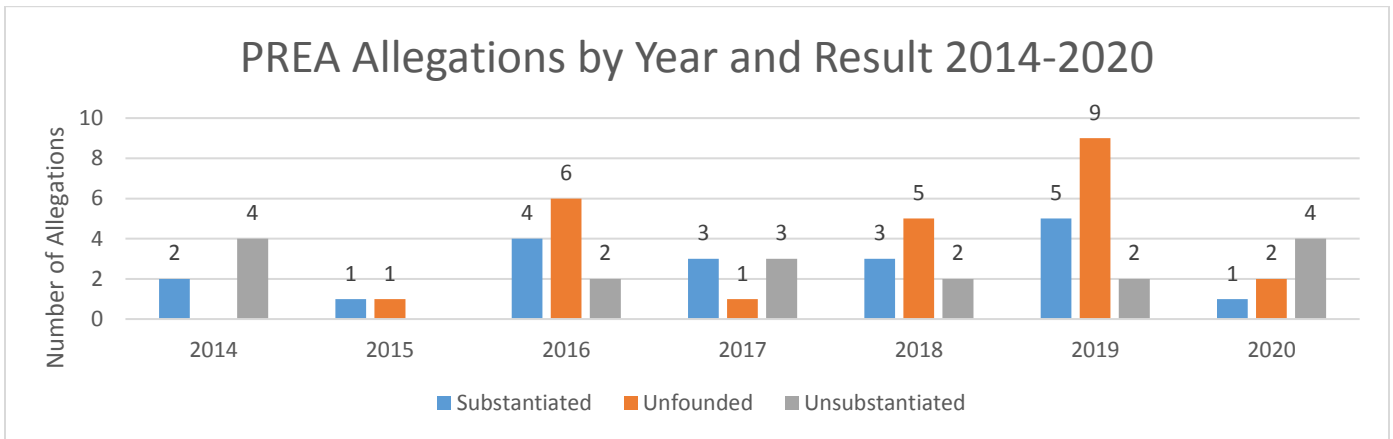


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Total Allegations by Category and Result 2014-2020



The 2020 allegations included five (5) client on client allegations and two (2) staff on client allegations. Two additional allegations did not meet the legal requirements for sexual abuse or sexual harassment per the PREA standards but were reviewed and reported to the funder (1 involving a staff on client and 1 involving a client on client).





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Category Definitions

- **Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Acts**

Sexual contact with any person without his or her consent, or with a person who is unable to consent AND contact between the penis and the vulva or penis and the anus including penetration, however slight OR contact between the mouth and penis, vulva, or anus OR penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person, however slight, by a hand, finger, object, or other instrument.

Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Acts								
Finding	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Substantiated	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Unsubstantiated	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Unfounded	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Total	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	5

- **Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact**

Sexual contact with any person without his or her consent, or with a person who is unable to consent AND intentional touching, either directly or through clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person. Does not include any incident in which the sexual contact was incidental to a physical altercation.

Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact								
Finding	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Substantiated	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	4
Unsubstantiated	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	4
Unfounded	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	4
Total	2	2	2	0	3	0	2	11

- **Client on Client Sexual Harassment**

Repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures, or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature by one client directed toward another.

Client on Client Sexual Harassment								
Finding	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Substantiated	1	0	2	2	2	3	0	10
Unsubstantiated	3	0	1	0	0	2	2	8
Unfounded	0	1	2	0	0	2	1	6
Total	4	1	5	2	2	7	3	24

- **Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct**

Any behavior or act of a sexual nature directed toward a client by an employee, volunteer, contractor, official visitor or other agency representative (exclude family, friend, or other visitors). Consensual and nonconsensual sexual acts include - Intentional touching, either directly or through clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks that is unrelated to official duties or with the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire OR completed, attempted, threatened, or requested sexual acts OR occurrences of indecent exposure, invasion of privacy, or staff voyeurism for reasons unrelated to official duties or for sexual gratification.



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Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct								
Finding	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Substantiated	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	5
Unsubstantiated	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Unfounded	0	0	1	1	2	3	0	7
Total	2	0	2	2	2	4	2	14

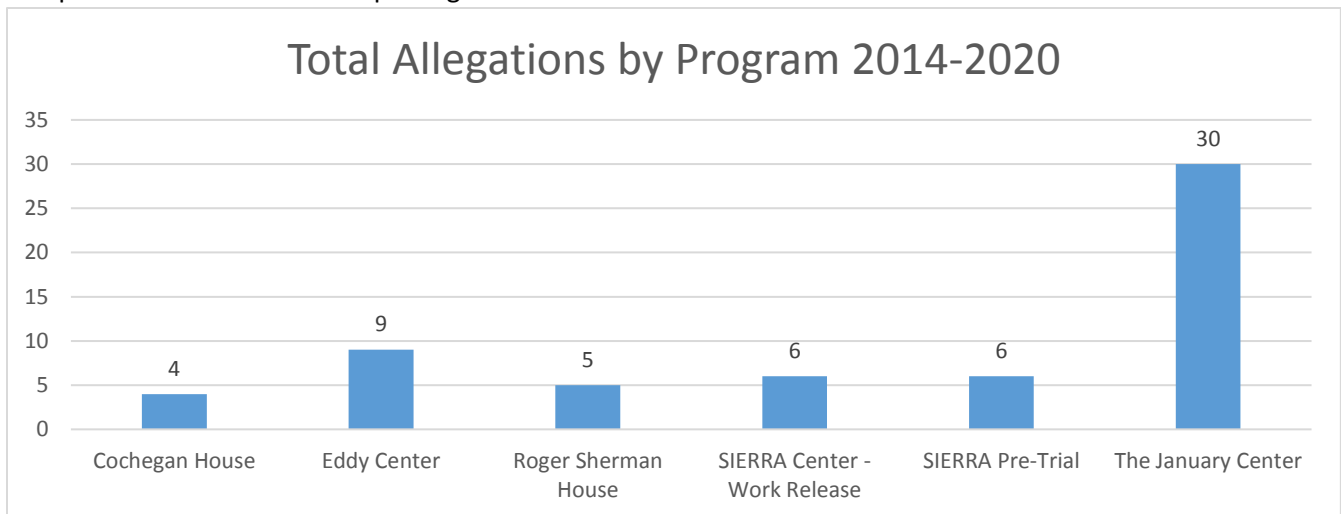
- Staff on Client Sexual Harassment**

Repeated verbal statements, comments, or gestures of a sexual nature to a client by an employee, volunteer, contractor, official visitor, or other agency representative (exclude family, friends, or other visitors) Include - Demeaning references to gender; or sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body of clothing OR repeated profane or obscene language or gestures.

Staff on Client Sexual Harassment								
Finding	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Substantiated	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Unsubstantiated	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	3
Unfounded	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Total	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	6

Total Allegations by Program 2014-2020

It is not surprising that the majority of PREA allegations arise at the January Center, as that program is intended to serve only individuals who have been convicted of crimes of a sexual nature. The single allegation at Cochegan House involved a DOC contracted APRN. Overall, the fact that there have been PREA allegations at the majority of The Connection’s community release programs is also indicative of the development of systems and processes that facilitate reporting.





The Connection

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The January Center		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	2	2	1	0	1	0	1
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	2	1	3	2	1	6	2
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	0	0	1	1	2	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Result	Substantiated	2	1	3	2	1	4	0
	Unsubstantiated	2	0	1	2	1	2	2
	Unfounded	0	2	1	0	1	2	1
Total		4	3	5	4	3	8	3

Eddy Center		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	2	2	1	0	1	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	2	1	3	2	1	6	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	0	0	1	1	2	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Result	Substantiated	2	1	3	2	1	3	0
	Unsubstantiated	2	0	1	2	1	2	0
	Unfounded	0	2	1	0	1	2	0
Total		0	0	2	2	2	0	0

Cochegan House		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Result	Substantiated	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Unsubstantiated	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
	Unfounded	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		1	0	0	1	1	0	1

Roger Sherman House		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	1	0	0	0	1	2	1
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Result	Substantiated	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Unsubstantiated	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Unfounded	0	0	0	0	1	3	0
Total		1	0	0	0	1	3	1



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Sierra Center Pre - Trial		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Result	Substantiated	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Unsubstantiated	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Unfounded	0	1	3	0	0	0	0
Total		2	1	4	0	1	0	0

Sierra Center Work Release		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Result	Substantiated	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
	Unsubstantiated	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Unfounded	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Total		0	0	1	0	1	2	2

Connection House		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Result	Substantiated	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Unsubstantiated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Unfounded	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Connection House was transferred from a female Work Release Program to a male Work Release Program on 9/16/2020.</i>								

Identified Problem Areas and Corrective Actions for 2021

The PREA standards require a "Sexual Abuse Incident Review" to be conducted within 30 days of the determination of the outcome of all substantiated and unsubstantiated allegations. Of the seven (7) allegations in 2020, four (4) were unsubstantiated and one (1) was substantiated. Reviews of these five (5) incidents did not result in any corrective action plans. A few recommendations were made at the time of the review to include ensuring that any externally contracted individuals entering the program receive a PREA training prior to starting in the program and for January Center it was recommended to keep the showers locked and ensure that the showers are used one at a time moving forward.



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Assessment of Progress

The PREA Coordinator will continue to periodically update the training at orientation for new staff and continue completing yearly refresher trainings for all staff working in this agency's community confinement facilities. Additionally, staff will continue to adhere to the agency's PREA Policies and Procedures and remain compliant with the PREA standards. Three (3) PREA Audits were scheduled for 2020 but were postponed to 2021 due to COVID19 for the following programs: Connection House, Sierra Center Work Release, and Roger Sherman House. Additionally, the following programs are due to be audited in 2021: January Center, Sierra Pre-Trial and Cochegan House. Cochegan House's audit was scheduled to be completed in 2018, however, the program was in a temporary location. The funder and the PREA Auditor both approved delaying the Cochegan House audit until the program is in its permanent space. The program moved into the permanent location in 2020.

DocuSigned by:

Elissa Viglione

1/12/2021

PREA Coordinator

Date

DocuSigned by:

Lisa Domattius Lepore

1/12/2021

Chief Executive Officer Signature

Date