



## The Connection's Community Justice Service Area PREA Annual Report 2025

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### Background

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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 residing in covered facilities. These standards apply to The Connection's community confinement facilities. 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: Cohegan House, Connection House, Eddy Center, Roger Sherman House, Sierra Center Pre-Trial, Sierra Center Work Release, The January Center, and Women's RISE.

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 potential client sexual abuse, client sexual harassment, staff sexual misconduct, and staff sexual harassment in the above listed 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. Any visitor entering the program receives information pertaining to sexual harassment and sexual abuse and their role in the program to report. 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.

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### Year in Review: 2025

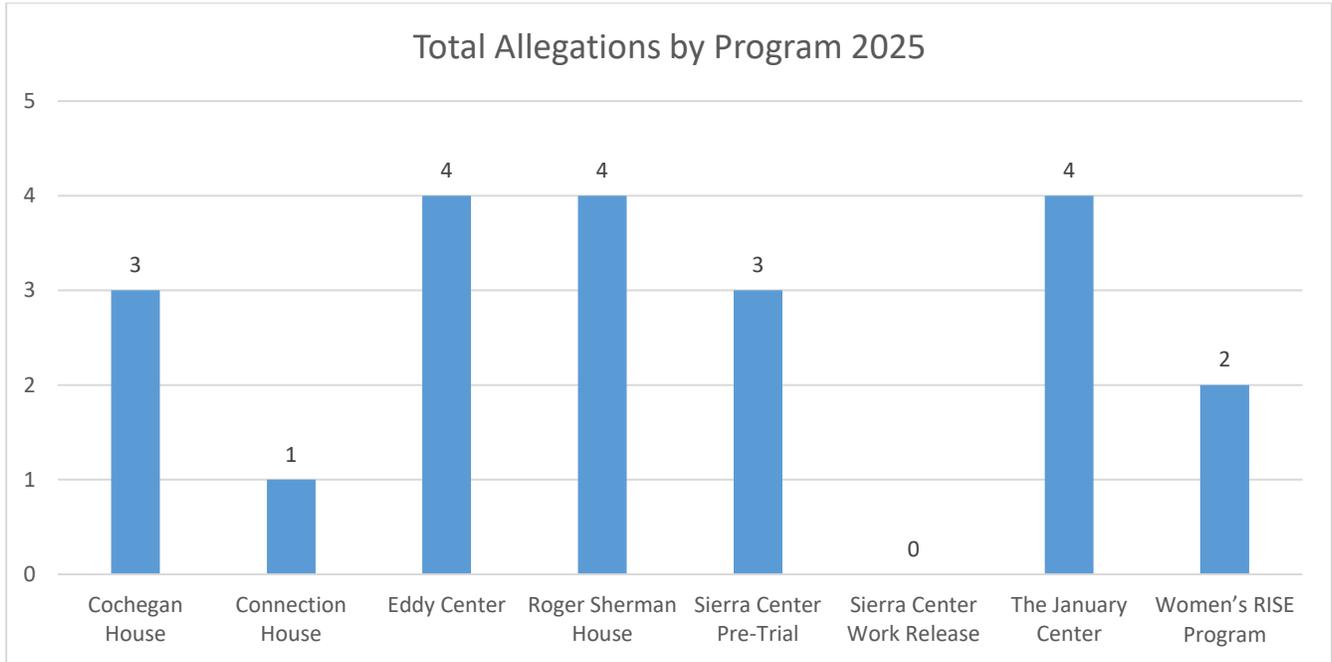
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In 2025, there was one (1) PREA Audit completed. The Eddy Center program was found in compliance with the PREA standards and successfully passed the audit.

In 2025, there were a total of twenty-one (21) PREA allegations in the Community Justice Residential programs listed above. Of the twenty-one, three (3) were at Cohegan House, one (1) was at Connection House, four (4) were at Eddy Center, four (4) were at Roger Sherman House, three (3) were at Sierra Pre-Trial, four (4) were at The January Center, two (2) were at Women's RISE. Seven (7) additional incidents occurred that did not

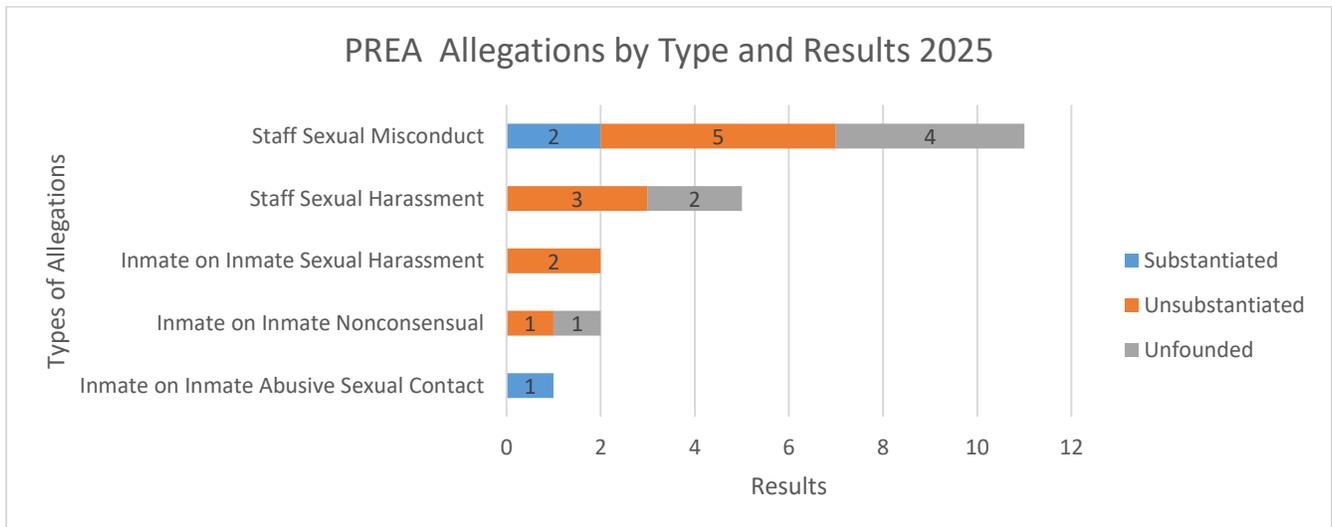
## The Connection’s Community Justice Service Area PREA Annual Report 2025

meet the definitions of sexual abuse or sexual harassment per the PREA standards, but which were reviewed and reported to the funder. No PREA allegations arose at Sierra Center Work Release. The nature of the allegations and findings are summarized in the tables below.



### 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 whether the allegation was true or false.
- **Unfounded allegation:** The allegation was determined not to have occurred.



## The Connection’s Community Justice Service Area PREA Annual Report 2025

The 2025 allegations included five (5) client-on-client allegations and sixteen (16) staff-on-client allegations. Seven additional allegations did not meet the legal definition of sexual abuse or sexual harassment per the PREA standards but were reviewed and reported to the funder (4 involving a staff-on-client and 3 involving a client-on-client).

### 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	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Substantiated	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsubstantiated	0	0	1	0	0	1
Unfounded	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

- **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	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Substantiated	0	0	1	0	1	1
Unsubstantiated	1	0	1	0	0	0
Unfounded	1	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

- **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	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Substantiated	0	1	4	1	2	0
Unsubstantiated	2	3	6	0	1	2
Unfounded	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

## The Connection’s Community Justice Service Area PREA Annual Report 2025

- **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.

Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct						
Finding	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Substantiated	1	1	2	2	3	2
Unsubstantiated	1	1	4	0	1	5
Unfounded	0	1	2	1	3	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>

- **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	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Substantiated	0	0	2	1	1	0
Unsubstantiated	0	0	0	2	3	3
Unfounded	0	0	1	1	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>

### Total Allegations by Program 2020-2025

Connection House		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Category</b>	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	1
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	0	0	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Result</b>	Substantiated	0	0	0	0	0
	Unsubstantiated	0	0	0	0	1
	Unfounded	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

The Connection's Community Justice Service Area  
PREA Annual Report 2025

Cochegan House		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	1	0	2	0	3
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	1	1	1	0
Result	Substantiated	0	0	1	0	0
	Unsubstantiated	0	0	0	1	3
	Unfounded	1	1	2	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

Eddy Center		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	1	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	1	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	1	1	0	1	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	3	1	0	2
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	2
Result	Substantiated	0	1	1	0	1
	Unsubstantiated	1	2	0	1	1
	Unfounded	0	3	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>

Roger Sherman House		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	0	1	0	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	2	0	4	2
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	2
Result	Substantiated	0	0	0	1	1
	Unsubstantiated	0	3	0	0	2
	Unfounded	0	0	0	3	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

Sierra Center Pre - Trial		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Category	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	1
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	2	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	5	0	0	2	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	0	0	0	2
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0
Result	Substantiated	4	0	0	1	0
	Unsubstantiated	3	0	0	0	1
	Unfounded	0	0	0	1	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

The Connection’s Community Justice Service Area  
PREA Annual Report 2025

Sierra Center Work Release		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Category</b>	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	1	0	1	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	1	3	0	3	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	1	2	2	0
<b>Result</b>	Substantiated	2	2	2	2	0
	Unsubstantiated	0	2	1	1	0
	Unfounded	0	0	0	2	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

The January Center		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Category</b>	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	0	0
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	0	2	0	0	1
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	1	0	0	0	2
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	1	1	3	1
<b>Result</b>	Substantiated	0	1	0	1	0
	Unsubstantiated	1	2	1	2	2
	Unfounded	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

Women’s RISE - Program opened on 7/1/2021.		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Category</b>	Client on Client Nonconsensual Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	1
	Client on Client Abusive Sexual Contact	0	0	0	1	1
	Client on Client Sexual Harassment	0	1	0	1	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Misconduct	0	0	0	0	0
	Staff on Client Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Result</b>	Substantiated	0	0	0	2	1
	Unsubstantiated	0	1	0	0	1
	Unfounded	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

### **Identified Problem Areas and Corrective Actions**

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 twenty-one (21) allegations in 2025, seven (7) were unfounded, eleven (11) were unsubstantiated and three (3) were substantiated. Reviews of the fourteen (14) unsubstantiated and substantiated incidents resulted in multiple recommendations. Recommendations included:

- Programs have been advised to ensure all visitors are signing in and out in the Sign In/ Out Log.



## The Connection's Community Justice Service Area PREA Annual Report 2025

- Programs have been advised to notify PREA Coordinators of new contractors in order to educate contractors and ensure PREA compliance.
- Executive Leadership developed staff safety measures as outlined in a memo to specific programs. This memo was sent regarding safety protocols and the steps needed to adhere to them.
- Programs will increase the visibility of the PREA On-Call number in staff offices.
- Program managers should ensure similar operational procedures as much as possible to promote consistency when staff are providing coverage at multiple programs.
- Ensuring cameras are in all staff offices and community areas in each program.
- Areas lacking camera visibility were identified and the program was asked to work towards getting two more cameras installed.
- The use of client restrooms by staff was addressed in a staff meeting, and it was clearly communicated that this was against established policy. This is documented clearly for current staff and new staff during onboarding.
- Staff were reminded of the need to distribute the Visitors' Guide to PREA to all program visitors.
- Program leadership reviewed the following topics with staff in one-on-one supervisions and staff meetings: boundaries, client manipulation, ethical behaviors, mandated reporting laws pertaining to PREA allegations and the importance of immediately reporting to ensure safety of clients.
- Program leadership was encouraged to have staff complete Pat-Down searches closer to a camera.
- Community Justice program leadership updated the Pat-Down Search Policy and/or generate a separate Pat-Down Search Protocol (and/or infographic) to better describe the process to be used by staff as well.
- Finally, it was recommended to update the existing agency online training on Pat-Down Searches to be clearer and include details on patting and shaking the waistband.

### **Assessment of Progress**

Throughout 2025, PREA Coordinators continued to update their bi-weekly PREA training to offer new and impactful content. This training is attended by newly hired staff working at PREA compliant programs. PREA Coordinators also made updates to the yearly refresher training for all staff working in the agency's PREA compliant programs. The training was provided to all community confinement staff by May 2025. In November 2025, an Undue Familiarity Policy & Procedure was created by the Vice President of Community Justice to provide specific guidance for incidents that do not rise to the level of a PREA but include boundary crossings. The PREA Coordinators continue to work with program leadership to refine the process of tracking the completion of PREA training by externally employed contractors (e.g., visiting nurses). All community confinement program staff will continue to adhere to the agency's PREA Policies and Procedures and remain compliant with the PREA standards. The Eddy Center successfully passed their PREA Audit in 2025. Roger Sherman House, Sierra Center Work Release, Connection House and Women's RISE are scheduled for audits in 2026.



The Connection's Community Justice Service Area  
PREA Annual Report 2025

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Kathleen Eldredge, PREA Coordinator

Mar 17, 2026

Date

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Lisa DeMatteis, Chief Executive Officer

Mar 17, 2026

Date