

OFFICER SAFETY IN CORRECTIONAL  
FACILITIES

Pilot Report



*at the* UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO

## Officer Safety in Correctional Facilities Survey Pilot Report

The Officer Safety in Correctional Facilities Survey (OSCF) pilot was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. Two surveys were piloted during this data collection:

- the Officer Safety in Correctional Facilities-- Correctional Officer Survey and
- the Officer Safety in Correctional Facilities-- Facility Survey.

A NORC Field Manager was responsible for all data collection activities, including contacting potential participants, mailing surveys, receiving surveys and conducting debriefings. Participants from nine correctional facilities were invited to participate in the pilot. Nine facility staff were asked to complete the Facility Survey and nine correctional officers were asked to complete the Correctional Officer Survey. A convenience sample was used based on recommendations from the American Correctional Association (ACA) and supporters of the research project. Participants were asked to complete and return the appropriate survey, based on their position within the correctional facility, and to participate in a telephone debriefing. Seven participants completed the Facility Survey and seven correctional officers completed the Correctional Officer Survey (Table 1).

Table 1. Status of the survey by type of survey and state

State	Facility Survey Status	Correctional Officer Survey Status
Mississippi	Completed	Completed
Maryland	Not Completed	Not Completed
Nebraska	Completed	Completed
Maine	Completed	Completed survey, but did not complete debriefing
Wyoming	Completed	Completed survey, but did not complete debriefing
Illinois	Completed	Completed
Ohio	Completed	Completed
Oregon	Completed	Completed
Pennsylvania	Completed	Completed

On average, participants completing the Facility Survey finished the survey in 35 minutes, with a range of 15 to 86 minutes. On average, participants completing the Correctional Officer Survey finished the survey in 25 minutes, with a range of 15 to 37 minutes. The administration times for the surveys are displayed in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2. Administration time for the Facility Survey

State	Facility Survey Administration Time
Mississippi	27 minutes
Maryland	Not Completed
Nebraska	Not Recorded
Maine	Not Recorded
Wyoming	30 minutes
Illinois	15 minutes
Ohio	Not Recorded
Oregon	15 minutes
Pennsylvania	86 minutes (needed to ask Deputy for responses)

Table 3. Administration time for the Correctional Officer Survey

State	Correctional Officer Survey Administration Time
Mississippi	37 minutes
Maryland	Not Completed
Nebraska	20 minutes
Maine	Not Recorded
Wyoming	15 minutes
Illinois	30 minutes
Ohio	20 minutes
Oregon	27 minutes
Pennsylvania	24 minutes

When the completed survey was returned to the Field Manager, the Field Manager contacted the participant to schedule a debriefing telephone call. The goal of the debriefing was to discuss:

- o Questions or instructions that were unclear or confusing,
- o Terminology that needed to be better defined,
- o Response options that were unclear, confusing, overlapping, or missing, and
- o Requested information that was not available or could not be reasonably provided.

Feedback from the Facility Survey participants (included as Appendix 1 to this summary) indicated that instructions on the survey were easy to follow. There were some survey items for which facility respondents indicated it would be difficult to obtain the requested information. We addressed some of these concerns where rewording would be expected to facilitate responses; in other cases, we acknowledge the potential for missing data. Questions were modified according to feedback from the Facility Survey participants. The updated Facility survey is in Appendix 2. Facility respondents were also asked if lists of officers could easily be provided; responses ranged from the affirmative to deferral to another staff person or committee with a sense that obtaining the list would not likely be a problem.

Overall feedback from the Correctional Officer debriefings (included as Appendix 3 to this summary) indicated that the survey is easy to navigate and questions are straightforward. The updated Correctional Officer survey is in Appendix 4. Correctional officers were also asked if they were able to complete the survey in a private location; they uniformly indicated that they were able to complete the survey in a private area. This was a concern of NORC's Institutional Review Board.

## Appendix 1: Feedback from the Facility Survey

### Q1.

Clarity?	I answered these questions for my unit. I have 30 guys in my unit. In the dept there are 4500 - 5000 guys. The questions were clear. Yes, most of the questions were clear and easy to answer. The questions were clear. The questions were pretty clear.
Ability to provide?	I can get the information for the department. I will send you another questionnaire with the information for the department.

### Q2.

Clarity?	The questions were clear.
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### Q3. Was the question clear to you? Was the answer easily available? Were the response options comprehensive?

Clarity?	The answers were easy to get to and the answer choices were clear.
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### Q9.

Ability to provide ?	We have 2 groups of officers who wear body armor - Cell extraction team, swat team. I answered regarding these two groups. This is data is available, but I didn't have time to find the document.
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### Q10.

Ability to provide ?	This is data is available, but I didn't have time to find the document
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### Q14.

Clarity?	The ie, officer's discretion can be removed - leave Not mandatory by itself. The questions and choices were clear. The current policy does not require the wear of stab-resistant body armor so I put a check in the box. I answered items a - h based on the previous policy that required the use of stab-resistant body armor.
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### Q15

Clarity?	At the beginning of the question add - of those marked above. I answered this question the same as the Q. 14
Response options ?	Add Cell Extraction Teams, Medical Trip Officers, Hospital Watch Officers, Mobile Perimeter Patrol, and Perimeter Patrol to the list.

**Q16.**

Clarity?	Add Range training to the list.
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**Q19.**

Clarity?	Can't answer this the way it is written. It depends on the incident specifics.
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**Q20.**

Ability to provide ?	I answered this based on the time period when the policy was enforced.
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**Q21.**

Clarity?	Would like to distinguish type of body armor - Stab resistant vest, ballistic resistant, temp users.
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**Q30.**

Clarity?	Add this question - How does your facility store body armor. Significant because if it is stored properly it will last longer.
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**Q38.**

Clarity?	Would like to add - temporary replacement - in the text of the question.
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**Q41.**

Clarity?	The question is clear Question is clear.
Ability to provide ?	We do not keep track of assaults the way you have it broken down in the questionnaire. They are all lumped together. I could not get this information. We have 43 facilities and each facility keeps it's own records. Qs 41 - 48 is difficult to get this information at this time. Assaults are not broken down by the type of weapon used. In the future, we will have a database that will contain these details including the type of force used during an assault. Such as if it was hand or chemical type of assault.

**Q42-48.**

Ability to provide	Qs 41 - 48 is difficult to get this information at this time. Assaults are not broken down by the type of weapon used. In the future, we will have a database that will contain these details including the type of force used during an assault. Such as if it was hand or
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?	chemical type of assault.
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**Q49.**

Clarity?	The question is clear as all of them are.
Ability to provide ?	<p>It was a little difficult to obtain this information. The Union is protective of officers' information.</p> <p>It would be too labor intensive to get this information. I probed for how long it would take and he said about 8 hours. He said it would be best to direct questions like this to HR. I asked him if he could get this information. He said he could get from division heads then it would take about a week to pull it together.</p> <p>We do not break down injuries the way it's asked for in this question. If you ask for occupational injuries we could get that information from HR. We do not break it out this way.</p> <p>Unable to provide this level of detail.</p> <p>Will have to get this from HR. Due to HIPA, there are concerns about giving out this data. I didn't have access to this data. The Deputy answered this question and Q.50.</p> <p>The answers given were due to injuries incurred during training. Non were duty-related injuries.</p>

**Q50.**

Ability to provide?	The Deputy answered this question. I did not have access to this data.
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**Overall were the skip patterns in the survey easy to follow?**

<p>They were easy to follow and straight forward. Most of these questions didn't apply to us.</p> <p>Skips were easy to follow.</p> <p>Very easy to follow.</p> <p>Skip patterns were easy to follow.</p> <p>Yes, add a question about our funding source. Federal funding and State funding etc.</p> <p>The skips were easy to follow.</p> <p>Yes, they were easy to follow.</p>
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**There are two components to the Officer Safety in Correctional Facilities survey, a Facility Survey, which you completed, and a Correctional Officer Survey. When our team at NORC begins data collection across the country we will also ask facility staff to send in a list of all correctional officers working in the facility. Correctional Officers would then be randomly selected from these lists. Based on your own professional experience [OR your experiences at your own facility], do you think that this information would be readily available to send to NORC? Even after explaining that this list would be used for research purposes only, do you think there may be some concerns with sending the team such a list?**

<p>There would be no problem getting this list sent to NORC.</p> <p>You would have to send the request to the Director of Special Operations. It shouldn't be a problem to get a list of officers.</p> <p>You would have to submit a request via our Research Protocol - the Commissioner has to approve it.</p> <p>We have a 15 member team who wears body armor. Getting a list of these officers to you would not be difficult.</p> <p>You would have to ask this question of XX. (The person we communicated with initially about the institution participating in the survey.) I don't think this would be a problem, but if you are going to request that information it would have to be through him.</p> <p>You would have to contact our Deputy. I don't know if officers will be willing to do this since it</p>
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is no longer a requirement that we wear body armor.  
Contact me and I will give you the list. We have 30 officers who wear vests.



## Appendix 2: Revised Facility Survey

## Appendix 3: Feedback from the Correctional Officer Survey

### Q1.

Clarity?	The questions were clear. No suggestions for improvement given. The questions were clear and pretty straightforward. All of the questions were pretty straight forward.
Response options?	The response options were clear, no problem
Ability to provide?	I didn't have trouble answering the questions.

### Q20.

Response options?	Expand response options to include 15, 20-25 years
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### Q25.

Ability to provide?	We don't use body armor every day. We wear it when we are involved in tactical responsibilities.
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### Q33. Did you visit the NIJ website?

Clarity?	No
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### Q38.

Clarity?	These questions are very easy to follow.
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### Q47. Was the body armor referenced in the question clear to you?

Clarity?	It was clear.
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### Q56.

Response options?	I wear body armor when I'm deployed with the swat team, or sniper duty.
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### Q72.

Response options?	Replacement would be out of pocket.
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### Q87.

Response options?	Expand response options to include up to 30 years. Also ask how many times assaults occurred.
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**Q90.**

Response options?	Add to response options nail, ice-pick. Add 2 questions: 1. Did it happen with physical hand to hand combat? (for example - blunt force trauma like a punch to the face or throat). 2. In your professional opinion will a vest keep you safe or hinder your ability to do your job.
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**Overall were the skip patterns in the survey easy to follow?**

They were pretty straight forward and easy to understand. I skipped out of most of the questions. Yes Yes, skip patterns were easy to follow. They were very clear, easy to follow.
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**Were you able to complete the survey in a private area so that no one else could see your answers?**

Yes. Yes Yes, completed the survey in privacy. Yes, completed the survey in privacy. No one stood over my shoulder, but I was in a room with other workers.
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## Appendix 4: Revised Correctional Officer Survey