

October 2023 Local Inquiry Team Case Blocks
Published in December 2023

Amarik K. Singh Inspector General

Neil Robertson Chief Deputy Inspector General

> Independent Prison Oversight

From October 1, 2023, through October 31, 2023, the OIG's Local Inquiry Team monitored and closed seven cases. This document presents all monitored and closed cases during this period.

OIG Case Number 23-0047834-INQ

Rating Assessmen **Poor** 

### **Case Summary**

On December 23, 2022, an officer allegedly interrupted and used profanity toward an incarcerated person. Additionally, the officer allegedly used his personal smart watch and slept during his shifts. A second officer allegedly also slept during his shifts.

### **Case Disposition**

The hiring authority sustained the allegation that the first officer used profanity and issued the officer a letter of instruction. The hiring authority found insufficient evidence to sustain the remaining allegations. During the inquiry, the hiring authority reviewed video recordings and determined that both officers violated other departmental policies. The hiring authority issued a letter of instruction to the first officer and training to both officers.

#### **Overall Inquiry Assessment**

Overall, the department performed poorly. The investigator failed to obtain all departmental policies relevant to the inquiry or ask the officer questions about the officer's compliance with the policy. The investigator also failed to provide an advisement of rights to three witnesses during interviews. The investigator further failed to interview a potential witness and timely request all relevant video-recorded evidence, despite the OIG's recommendations to promptly do so. The investigator interviewed the additional witness and requested the additional video-recorded evidence only following the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit manager's recommendation. However, by this time, the investigator's request to preserve the video evidence was not timely under the department's 90-day video retention policy, which resulted in the evidence being destroyed. The investigator also failed to complete a draft inquiry report that included all relevant facts, evidence, and supporting exhibits. The hiring authority incorrectly documented the findings for the allegations and the letter of instruction issued to the first officer was inaccurate; the hiring authority remedied those deficiencies after the OIG's recommendation, but it took 84 days to correct the errors. Finally, the inquiry was not timely processed. The Centralized Screening Team received the complaint on January 3, 2023, but the hiring authority did not render a complete and accurate final decision until September 29, 2023, 269 days thereafter, and 179 days beyond departmental goals.





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OIG Case Number 23-0047379-INQ

Rating Assessment Satisfactory

# **Case Summary**

On December 28, 2022, an officer allegedly failed to open an incarcerated person's cell door for his evening medications. When the incarcerated person complained to a second officer about being denied medication, the second officer used unprofessional language at the incarcerated person.

#### **Case Disposition**

The hiring authority conducted an inquiry and found insufficient evidence to sustain the allegations.

#### **Overall Inquiry Assessment**

Overall, the department performed satisfactorily.

OIG Case Number 23-0051531-INQ

Rating Assessment **Satisfactory** 

#### **Case Summary**

On March 2, 2023, an officer allegedly threatened to retaliate against incarcerated persons in the housing unit for not following the officer's personal preferences that incarcerated persons do not loiter in the dayroom area and not walk to showers wearing only a shirt and boxer shorts, which were contrary to prison policies and procedures. Further, the officer has allegedly acted aggressively, threatened, and been disrespectful toward incarcerated persons in the housing unit.

## **Case Disposition**

The hiring authority conducted an inquiry and found insufficient evidence to sustain the allegations.

# **Overall Inquiry Assessment**

Overall, the department handled the inquiry satisfactorily.



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OIG Case Number 23-0051828-INQ

Rating Assessmen **Poor** 

### **Case Summary**

On March 3, 2023, a sergeant allegedly ignored an incarcerated person's request to be moved to another cell after the incarcerated person complained that officers housed him in a cell contaminated with feces on the inside of the door and window edges.

### **Case Disposition**

The hiring authority determined that the inquiry conclusively proved the misconduct did not occur.

## **Overall Inquiry Assessment**

Overall, the department performed poorly. The hiring authority made an inappropriate finding for the allegation identified. The Centralized Screening Team received the complaint on March 7, 2023, but the hiring authority did not render a decision on the inquiry until June 21, 2023, 106 days thereafter, and 16 days beyond the department's 90-day goal. The investigator did not provide the confidentiality admonishment to the incarcerated person who submitted the complaint and one witness. The investigator also failed to obtain pertinent body-worn camera footage until the OIG recommended that the investigator obtain the footage and failed to include all exhibits in the draft and final inquiry report. Further, the grievance coordinator failed to adequately confer with the OIG during the draft inquiry review process.

OIG Case Number 23-0051827-INQ

Rating Assessment **Poor** 

#### **Case Summary**

Between March 5, 2023, and March 20, 2023, 11 officers and one sergeant allegedly deactivated their body-worn cameras when they interacted with and escorted incarcerated persons, and when they responded to alarms.

#### **Case Disposition**

The Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit accepted the allegations for investigation during a manager's review because the inquiry report documented evidence of potential staff misconduct that could result in disciplinary action. The OIG concurred with the referral. The OIG did not monitor the investigation after the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit accepted the case for an investigation.

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### **Overall Inquiry Assessment**

Overall, the department performed poorly. The Centralized Screening Team screened the complaint and inappropriately assigned the allegations for a local inquiry when the complaint specifically alleged misconduct listed in the Allegation Decision Index, which warranted referral to the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit for an investigation. During the local inquiry, the investigator failed to provide a confidentiality admonishment to the incarcerated person who submitted the complaint and a witness. The investigator prepared a draft inquiry report that included conclusory statements that the evidence did not support, and used language that marginalized the failure of the officers and sergeant to comply with departmental policies relating to body-worn cameras. In addition, the investigator and the hiring authority declined to refer the allegations to the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit for an investigation until the OIG made multiple recommendations to refer the case. The Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit manager also failed to initially accept the allegations for an investigation, and returned the inquiry for additional work, although the investigator had discovered evidence of staff misconduct which warranted acceptance. The investigator timely submitted the draft inquiry report to the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit manager for review on April 13, 2023, but the manager did not review the report and return it to the investigator for additional inquiry and revisions until May 22, 2023, 39 days thereafter. Subsequently, the hiring authority assigned a new investigator who submitted a revised draft inquiry report to the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit for review. The Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit manager approved the inquiry report on September 28, 2023, 168 days after the investigator first submitted the draft inquiry report. The Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit ultimately accepted the case for an investigation on October 17, 2023, 221 days after the Centralized Screening Team initially received the complaint.

OIG Case Number 23-0062715-INQ

Rating Assessment **Poor** 

## Case Summary

On August 22, 2023, an officer allegedly failed to prevent an incarcerated person from attacking a second incarcerated person and responded by deploying an excessive amount of pepper spray to end the incident.

#### Case Disposition

The hiring authority disagreed with the screening decision and requested that the Centralized Screening Team reevaluate its decision. The Centralized Screening Team modified the screening decision and returned the complaint to the prison for a routine response after it identified the issues as not constituting staff misconduct. The OIG did not concur with the modified decision and referral.

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### **Overall Inquiry Assessment**

Overall, the department performed poorly. The hiring authority disputed the Centralized Screening Team's screening decision on the basis that the complaint contained allegations of unreasonable use of force and warranting an investigation by the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit. This prompted the Centralized Screening Team to complete a clarifying interview of the incarcerated person. Although the incarcerated person alleged the officer deployed an excessive and steady stream of pepper spray rather than short bursts, the Centralized Screening Team incorrectly modified its screening decision and identified the issues as routine, not an allegation of staff misconduct. The Centralized Screening Team should have referred the complaint to the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit for investigation.

OIG Case Number 23-0063755-INQ

Rating Assessmen **Satisfactory** 

### Case Summary

On August 28, 2023, a sergeant and an officer allegedly forced an incarcerated person's arms back when applying handcuffs, resulting in an injury to the incarcerated person.

#### **Case Disposition**

The hiring authority disagreed with the screening decision and requested that the Centralized Screening Team reevaluate its decision. The Centralized Screening Team modified the screening decision and referred the complaint to the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit for investigation of unreasonable use of force. The OIG concurred with the modified decision and referral. The OIG did not monitor the investigation following the referral.

### **Overall Inquiry Assessment**

Overall, the department performed satisfactorily. The hiring authority disputed the Centralized Screening Team's screening decision on the basis that the complaint contained allegations of unreasonable use of force. The hiring authority's request for reevaluation prompted the Centralized Screening Team to appropriately refer the complaint to the Office of Internal Affairs' Allegation Investigation Unit for investigation.