

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

The Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA, P.L. 108-79) was enacted by Congress to address the problem of sexual abuse of persons in the custody of correctional agencies throughout the country. The Act applies to all public and private institutions that house adult or juvenile offenders and is also relevant to community-based agencies. It addresses both inmate-on-inmate sexual abuse and staff sexual misconduct. The major provisions of PREA include:

- Adherence to a zero-tolerance standard for the incidence of inmate sexual assault and rape;
- Development of standards for detection, prevention, reduction, and punishment of prison rape;
- Collection and dissemination of information on the incidence of prison rape; and
- Award of grant funds to help state and local governments implement the purposes of the Act.

Although the Act was legislated in 2003, the National Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Respond to Prison Rape were not published in the Federal Register until June 20, 2012. These standards are applicable to adult prisons and jails, lockups, community confinement facilities, and juvenile facilities. A Juvenile Facility is defined as a facility primarily used for the confinement of juveniles pursuant to the juvenile justice system or criminal justice system. Diversified Treatment Alternative Centers is a rather small (70 beds across three residential sites), privately owned psychiatric residential treatment facility provider located in Central Pennsylvania. We have been in operation for 30 years now, serving male children and adolescents in need of behavioral health services in a residential treatment setting from 33 counties across the state as well as a limited number of children from the State of Delaware. All of our residents have mental health diagnoses and receive specialized counseling and psychiatric treatment services in an open, nurturing, staff secure environment, however, many are also adjudicated delinquent and placed in our program under court order through the Juvenile Justice System in their respective counties and we are thus required to maintain compliance with PREA standards to further ensure their protection from sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment in our facilities.

A large part of the act is devoted to creating a culture of zero tolerance towards sexual abuse and sexual harassment. Diversified Treatment Alternative Centers (DTAC) strives to ensure the safety and well-being of the children and adolescents in our care. As such, DTAC has zero tolerance of sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment against any client in its care. Anyone who suspects a resident at a BJJS facility is being sexually abused or sexually harassed is urged to contact **ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313**. There, you

will be able to make a confidential report to authorities who will ensure an investigation occurs.
Additionally, reports can be made to:

Pennsylvania State Police: 911

Transitions - Phone: 1-800-850-7948

Bureau of Civil Rights Compliance - Department of Human Services - Phone: (717) 787 -1127

Annual Reports and PREA Audit Reports are available to the public upon request, please contact Alvin Weaver, Regional Administrator for Residential Services at (570) 523-3457.