



To: Commissioner Blanche Carney  
From: Claire Shubik-Richards, Pennsylvania Prison Society Executive Director  
Regarding: March 18, 2022 RCF and PICC walkthroughs  
Date: April 11, 2022  
Copied: Philadelphia County Government Officials<sup>i</sup>  
Pennsylvania State Department of Corrections  
Prison Society Board of Directors

On March 18, 2022, Pennsylvania Prison Society staff and volunteers walked through general population and restrictive housing units at two Philadelphia Department of Prisons facilities, the Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center (PICC) and the Riverside Correctional Facility (RCF).<sup>ii</sup> As part of the walkthrough we interviewed 49 men in custody.

Based on our observations and interviews, it is clear that significant problems persist.

- Almost everyone we spoke with reported spending 21-23 hours a day locked in a cell.
- Not a single person had been given activities to keep busy with while confined. This is in contrast to many other county jails and all PA DOC facilities where people are provided access to tablets, TVs, or books during extended periods of in-cell confinement.
- Almost everyone reported an absence of correctional officers on weekends, i.e. particularly unsafe conditions on weekends.
- Access to phones continues to be limited.
- Significant problems were reported with commissary. Several incarcerated people perceive that the jail is stealing from them.
- The physical plant at PICC was visibly filthy, with bird droppings on the floor and trash spilling out of the bottom of cells. Several people reported a mouse problem at the facility.

That said, there were marked improvements since our September 2021 walkthrough of RCF.<sup>iii</sup>

- The majority of manual slide bolt locks, which were arguably in violation of building code, have been replaced with new locks.
- The emergency buzzers inside cells in RCF are now working.
- Most of the showers we observed had been cleaned of rust, slime, mildew and grime.
- Almost everyone in general population reported daily access to showers.
- Almost all people in custody reported receiving sufficient toilet paper.
- Almost all people we spoke to in disciplinary segregation reported having an administrative hearing.

### **Locked in Cells for Extended Periods with Nothing to Do**

***Nothing, no crosswords, no books to read, just in your cell most all of the day driving yourself crazy.***

– resident of the Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center Unit J

In the two general population housing units we toured, RCF G and PICC F2, we observed and/or the residents reported correctional officers letting half a unit out of their cells at a time. This is in contrast to earlier walkthroughs when people in only a few cells were permitted out at a time.

Most everyone in these units reported being allowed out of their cells one or two times a day. In RCF G, the 16 men we spoke with reported various lengths of time out of cell, with some saying they are permitted out for a half an hour at a time, and others saying two hours or more. In PICC F2, the block representatives stated they are allowed out of their cells for most of the day. The other men we spoke with recounted getting out for an hour or less once a day.

In the segregated housing units, where even prior to the pandemic movement was very restricted, the situation is different. Several men in RCF C stated they are allowed out of their cell once a day for one hour. The men in PICC J stated they are allowed out every few days. Often, they had trouble estimating how often or for how long. Men in this unit have their legs shackled when they are let out, two to four at a time, to use phones located in cages, or to stand in cages located outside. We observed men in the cages with phones. We did not observe anyone in the outside cages. Prison staff informed us that men, one at a time, can use the larger outside “yard” area off of the unit that includes a basketball net. The one resident of the unit who we asked about this stated that no one was allowed to use that area.



Of the 49 people we interviewed across both facilities, not a single person had received any materials from the prison to help them pass time while confined to cells. Some men had family send them books. One man showed us a library he had amassed of approximately 20 books. The majority had none. A few men had radios they purchased from commissary. One man with a radio reported that he had been unable to use it for weeks because of difficulty getting a new battery from commissary.

### **Unsafe Weekend & Night Staffing**

***This Super Bowl we was locked down. If there was an event in the City they just don't come to work we just get locked down.***

– resident of Riverside Correctional Facility Unit G

***They only come around [on the weekends] when they come around for trays.***

– resident of Riverside Correctional Facility Unit C

We asked 39 people across both facilities if correctional officers were regularly available on the weekend. Thirty-seven said no.

We also asked the same number of people if correctional officers were available at night. Most everyone said no, with one notable exception. Eight out of 16 men in RCF general housing unit G stated that guards are regularly available at night.

### **Limited Access to Phones and Other Issues Communicating to Family**

***All but one of the phones is working. We don't get enough time [for everyone to use the phone] if we only get an hour out. There's always fights over the phones.***

– resident of the Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center Unit F2

People confined in general housing units report that there are too few phones to allow most people phone access during the limited time they are permitted out of their cells. In RCF G, ten phones serve approximately 128 people who are let out of their cells in groups of 64. At PICC F2 there are six phones for a unit with approximately 100 people. Every single one of the people we interviewed in general housing reported that phone access is a problem.



Though we did not ask a question about this, several men volunteered that because correctional staff do not manage who uses the phones, fights regularly break out over phone access.

In the segregated housing units, several men reported getting sporadic access to phones (twice a month, once a week) and other men stated that their segregation status meant that they were not allowed access to phones.

As in prior walkthroughs, people in multiple housing units reported that phones were broken for extended periods, limiting phone access even more. In RCF G, multiple men reported that one phone was broken. At PICC F2 multiple men identified the same two phones as broken. Several men in PICC J identified one phone as broken. The Prison Society identified the specific phones alleged to be broken on these units to our Department escorts. They stated they would have the phone service provider check if the specific phones are working.

The few men we interviewed who had used tablets for video calls reported problems with access and quality. Said one man in general housing “you got 80 some people with only two working tablets” for video calls. Another man reported having a video call with his attorney but that the call cut out four times.

### **Multiple Problems with Commissary; No Refunds When Items Are Missing**

***They are robbing us. They just take our money.***

– resident of the Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center Unit F2

***The commissary menu is not updated so we don’t know what we can actually order, and the codes must be wrong.***

– resident of the Riverside Correctional Facility Unit G

We asked 22 people across all four units about commissary. Twenty reported problems, the most frequent one being that ordered items do not arrive and that refunds are slow or never happen.

In PICC F2 and J several men showed us print outs of their commissary orders and balance. We shared these printouts with our Department escorts. The printouts were hard to understand. In one case, our Department escorts were able to determine that a refund was credited several months after a purchase.



Prison Society staff had difficulty understanding the commissary balance sheets that the men in custody had been given. It is understandable, therefore, that the men in custody are unclear on when or if refunds have been given. The lack of clear communication, particularly as it pertains to money, breeds suspicion. In PICC F2 a group of men explained their belief that the Prison intentionally delays refunds because it earns interest off the men's commissary accounts which the Department keeps.

### **Physical Plant Problems**

RCF was generally clean and maintenance workers were undertaking improvements in several housing units. The one exception was the segregated housing unit, RCF C, where one shower was broken, three working showers had mold, and one had a broken light. In addition, several men in RCF G reported that their cells were missing desks and chairs. The Prison Society looked into the relevant cells and confirmed this was the case.

The physical condition and cleanliness of PICC was markedly worse. Spills and trash were observed in several corridors and the floor of the elevator. Prison Society staff and volunteers smelled a strange odor outside of housing unit F2. Our escorts declined to hypothesize on what the smell was from.

Inside F2 there was trash on the floors and tables of the common area. Several men complained that the hot water faucet had been removed several weeks ago. Our escorts looked at the water faucet and confirmed this was the case. The Department escorts stated they would look into getting it repaired. One man in F2 reported he could smell urine from the toilet in the adjacent cell. Several men reported, and our staff escorts confirmed, that mice come out of the maintenance closets located in the unit. We observed towels wedged under the doors of these closets and adjacent cells and were told by a man in the unit and a corrections officer that these towels are to keep mice out.

In PICC J bird droppings covered a good section of the floor near the cells and there were water puddles on the floor. Both the bird droppings and the water appeared to be coming from the skylights. Several men reported that the ceiling was leaking. Trash spilled out from beneath the door of several cells on this unit. Several men had put up paper or fabric to cover the window from the unit into their cells.



In addition to these observations, the Prison Society holds a weekly class for parenting fathers at PICC. Our parenting class facilitators have observed the ceiling in the PICC gymnasium leaking.

### **Access to Medical Care**

***I've put in medical slips for months. I have two bullets in my leg. I've got pain and they just don't respond.***

– resident of the Riverside Correctional Facility Unit G

***My celly has been requesting a COVID vaccination for a week but no one is picking up medical request slips.***

– resident of the Riverside Correctional Facility Unit G

***I've put in six sick slips over the course of a year. Not one has been responded to.***

– resident of the Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center Unit F2

***You have to pull an arm and a leg to get medical care.***

– resident of the Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center Unit F2

Twenty eight out of 46 people said that they had experienced problems accessing medical care. Several people, across the different units, reported that sick slips are not regularly collected. In RCF G the unit ran out of formal sick slips and so the men have taken to using grievance forms and putting them in the box for sick slips.

### **Access to Social Workers and Chaplains**

We asked 30 men if they had tried to speak with a chaplain or social worker. Fifteen people said that they had requested to speak with someone but that no one had come. In the segregated housing unit, PICC J, one man expressed the belief that social workers would not meet with people on that unit.

### **Access to Laundry and Clean Clothes**

Most men in RCF reported access to clean laundry and fresh jumpsuits.

In PICC however, 14 out of 21 men stated they had difficulty getting clean sheets and/or clothing. In the PICC general housing unit, F2, one man reported going three months without a change of jumpsuit. Another explained that the person who



assists with doing the laundry has been “assigned to light duty” and as a result, laundry was only done once in the last month.

In the segregated housing unit, PICC J, one man explained that he had to wash clothing and sheets in the toilet in his cell. A different man demonstrated to us how he uses his socks and commissary soap to clean his cell.

### **Other Issues: Grievance Process, Law Library, Inmate Handbooks**

This section details issues that several men brought up on their own.

#### Grievances

We did not ask about the grievance process. Nevertheless, at least one man in each housing unit we visited reported filing a grievance and not receiving a response. In PICC F2 one man stated that grievance forms are no longer available.

In its October 26th letter to the Prison Society, the Department stated it would “review the grievance process.” The Department has not informed the Prison Society if this review has taken place.

#### Law Library

A handful of men reported being denied access to the law library.

#### Inmate Handbooks

Seven men, five in RCF and two in PICC, stated that they had never been given the inmate handbook.

### **Recommendations**

Eighteen people died in the Philadelphia prisons in 2021, three of them murdered. At least three people have died in 2022. The conditions that we detail in this memo and in the ones that preceded it, are unsafe for people in custody and unsafe for staff.

The Pennsylvania Prison Society is encouraged to learn that the City of Philadelphia has hired former Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Secretary John Wetzel to help address the crisis in the Philadelphia prisons.

The ongoing crisis at the City’s correctional facilities is the confluence of too few correctional staff, administrative inefficiencies resulting in people staying in jail longer than is needed, and serious physical plant and management problems. We are hopeful that, with Secretary Wetzel’s leadership, the City will consider:





- Utilizing national guard and/or contracted temporary staff to address critical staffing shortages and specifically medical staffing shortages.
- Temporarily leasing space in other, nearby facilities with excess capacity.
- Working with the criminal legal stakeholders to address the administrative inefficiencies that keep the jail population excessively high, such as the time to Gagnon One hearings, the time to Early Bail Review, the time for transportation to state facilities, court continuances, and the delays associated with the court process for individuals who are arrested while under community supervision.

The Prison Society does not call on the city to undertake any one of these solutions, but rather to thoughtfully consider them all. Each one may have important drawbacks, but at the same time, each one may lead to safer facilities, and a safer Philadelphia.

While these are the type of big initiatives needed to end the crisis, there are a number of other measures that will help ameliorate the degrading and dangerous conditions that persist.

It is notable that three of the problems identified in our walkthrough – broken phones, access to tablets and programing on tablets, and commissary – are all services the Department contracts out for. Presumably, the City is able hold these contracted, for-profit providers accountable for a basic level of service provision.

### **Locked in Cells for Extended Periods with Nothing to Do**

- Individuals in general housing should be permitted out their cells at least twice a day and for longer periods of time.
- The City of Philadelphia should provide daily activities that can be conducted while in a cell, such as books, puzzles, or ebooks. Approaches to consider include:
  - Providing ebooks, games, and other programing on the GTL prison tablets, similar to what Allegheny County, Berks County, and the PA DOC have done. To do this equitably, Philadelphia would need to purchase enough tablets to enable every resident to have a few hours with a tablet each day. These tablets will have use well beyond the pandemic. If possible, Philadelphia may wish to consider an alternative tablet provider that has more extensive educational programming at less cost to the incarcerated patron.





- Weekly distribution of hard-copy activity books or magazines, similar to the puzzle books the Prison Society donated to the Department of Prisons at the Prison Society's expense in 2021.
- Resumption of library and law library access.

### **Unsafe Weekend & Night Staffing**

- Staff should be assigned and present inside each housing unit, 24 hours a day.
- Staff distribution should be prioritized so that calls for help or rings from an in-cell buzzer are always responded to.

### **Limited Access to Phones and Other Issues Communicating to Family**

- Prison administration should have the phone service provider conduct weekly tests of all housing unit phones and confirm, to the prison, which phones are working.
- Implement and supervise a system for equitable tablet and phone access in each unit. This can be a simple sign-up sheet with time limits.
- Increase access to video visits by purchasing more tablets (see above).
- Change the video call provider to a more reliable service like Zoom as the PA DOC has recently done.

### **Multiple Problems with Commissary**

- Audit all aspects of the commissary process including making sure that commissary menus are up to date, that refunds are prompt, and that communications with incarcerated people around their commissary accounts are easy to understand and that incarcerated people have easy ability to ask questions and receive answers about their accounts.

### **Physical Plant Problems**

- Address leaks and cleanliness issues identified at PICC and RCF C.

### **Access to Medical Care**

- Identify and address hurdles to getting requests for medical care processed and responded to in a reasonable time.

### **Access to Counseling**

- Identify and address hurdles to getting requests for counselors and chaplains processed and responded to in a reasonable time.



- Closely review and monitor the completion of daily housing unit visits by assigned Social Service Case Managers.
- Expedite hiring for any Social Service Case Manager vacancies.

### **Access to Laundry and Clean Clothes**

- In PICC, ensure that linens and other laundry are being washed on a weekly basis as required by the inmate handbook, Section II, page 13.

### **Other Issues**

- Audit the grievance process as the Department committed to in October 2021 and share findings publicly.
- Ensure access to the law library.
- Distribute inmate handbooks throughout every housing unit in the prison system.

Thank you once again for facilitating these walkthroughs. The Prison Society is a partner in ensuring the health, safety, and dignity of Philadelphians in prison custody. We are encouraged by some of the progress we saw on this most recent walkthrough and by the hiring of Secretary Wetzel. We look forward to documenting additional progress on our upcoming May walkthrough.

We would appreciate a written response to this memorandum within two weeks of receipt. Thank you for this opportunity to be of service.

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<sup>i</sup> Greg Vrato, Philadelphia Department of Prisons, Chief of Staff  
 John Wetzel  
 Jim Engler, Mayor's Chief of Staff  
 Tumar Alexander, Managing Director  
 Vanessa Garrett Harley, First Deputy Managing Director  
 Members of City Council  
 Rebecca Rhynhart, Controller  
 Diana Cortes, City Solicitor  
 Larry Krasner, District Attorney  
 Keisha Hudson, Chief Defender  
 Alexander DeSantis, Inspector General  
 Idee Fox, President Judge, Court of Common Pleas  
 Lisette Shirdan-Harris, Administrative Judge, Court of Common Pleas  
 Joffie Pittman, Supervising Judge, Municipal Court  
 Lucretia Clemons, Supervising Judge of Criminal Trials  
 Patrick Dugan President Judge, Municipal Court  
 Philadelphia Prison Advisory Board  
 Office of Governor Wolf  
 Philadelphia members of the Pennsylvania Legislature  
 Josh Shapiro, Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General



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Ilana Eisenstein DLA Piper

**Thomas Greishaw, PA DOC**

<sup>ii</sup> Executive Director Claire Shubik-Richards and Prison Monitoring Director Noah Barth. Volunteers John Knapich and Yvonne Newkirk.

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.prisonersociety.org/reports-fact-sheets>





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**Blanche Carney, MSS, CCM**  
**Commissioner**

April 27, 2022

Claire Shubik-Richards  
Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Prison Society  
230 S. Broad St., Suite 605  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Ms. Shubik-Richards,

I am writing in response to your April 11 letter concerning the Philadelphia Department of Prisons (PDP). Your letter is based on your tour of the Riverside Correctional Facility (RCF) and Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center (PICC) facility on March 18, 2022. I now respond to your letter accordingly.

In your letter, you raise the following issues based on reports made by incarcerated people you and/or your staff spoke with during your tours:

- Almost everyone we spoke with reported spending 21-23 hours a day locked in a cell.
- Not a single person had been given activities to keep busy with while confined. This is in contrast to many other county jails and all PA DOC facilities where people are provided access to tablets, TVs, or books during extended periods of in-cell confinement.
- Almost everyone reported an absence of correctional officers on weekends, i.e. particularly unsafe conditions on weekends.
- Access to phones continues to be limited.
- Significant problems were reported with commissary. Several incarcerated people perceive that the jail is stealing from them.
- The physical plant at PICC was visibly filthy, with bird droppings on the floor and trash spilling out of the bottom of cells. Several people reported a mouse problem at the facility.

We continue to work on every aspect of providing a clean, healthy and safe environment for our incarcerated population while ensuring that they receive proper time out of their cells with access to services and activities. If we had the name/PP#/facility/housing unit of the incarcerated individual (s), we could fully investigate your concerns, ensure no retaliation or harm and provide a response accordingly. As your letter only provides broad contentions, I can only respond in kind. I will address each of your bulleted allegations in turn.

“Almost everyone we spoke with reported spending 21-23 hours a day locked in their cell.” This broad statement is unsupported by our documentation. Contrary to the complaints made to you and your team, our time out of cell reports show that we are consistently above three (3) hours of out of cell time per day in all of our facilities. We are constantly striving to increase that time, and, when possible, housing units in all of our facilities are far exceeding three (3) hours of out of cell time.

“Not a single person had been given activities to keep busy with while confined. This is in contrast to many other county jails and all PA DOC facilities where people are provided access to tablets, TVs, or books during extended periods of in-cell confinement.” This assertion of categorical deprivation of activity is simply not true. Our incarcerated population has access to tablets upon request. Televisions run on the housing units until late evening. And, all incarcerated persons have the right to have books and crossword puzzles in their cells, it is their choice whether to exercise that right.

“Almost everyone reported an absence of correctional officers on weekends, i.e. particularly unsafe conditions on weekends.” We acknowledge that we have been challenged with less staff reporting on weekends throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, but not to the degree reflected in your correspondence. We ensure that all housing units are staffed, and, through strategic assignment of staff and continued hiring, we have also seen improvement in staff reporting to work, including on weekends.

“Access to phones continues to be limited.” This statement is incorrect. There are sufficient phones on every housing unit to allow for phone time. Indeed, when our population was higher, with more incarcerated persons out at one time for recreation and phone calls, we did not hear complaints regarding lack of phone access. According to logic, it does not make sense for there to be less access to phones now. If a phone is not working, the incarcerated individual need only to inform the housing unit officer so that it can be addressed. Regarding access to tablets, we are in the midst of expanding the tablets on our housing facilities, and well over 500,000 video visit calls have been made since we introduced tablets in November of 2020. Technical glitches are forwarded to our provider and promptly fixed.

“Several problems were reported with commissary. Several incarcerated people perceive that the jail is stealing from them.” In fact, a print-out you provided on the tour from an incarcerated individual who claimed that he had not been compensated for commissary clearly showed that he had indeed been compensated. That being said, we will continue to review and monitor our grievance process to ensure that there are prompt and clear responses to our incarcerated population regarding refunds and any other issues regarding commissary orders. I reviewed the order form and menu. The order form is clear as it is. I will work with the commissary vendor to increase the font size for the menu to make the items easier to read.

“The physical plant at PICC was visibly filthy, with bird droppings on the floor and trash spilling out of the bottom of cells. Several people reported a mouse problem at the facility.” My staff were on the same tour and did not see PICC as “visibly filthy.” Rather, they observed that floors throughout the facility were swept clean. My staff did not observe bird droppings. Any bird droppings, which would only be near the entrance to the outside courtyard on housing units, are a result of open air being allowed so that the incarcerated population can have easy access to fresh air and outside activities. Yes, that can mean a bird swooping in at times, but any bird droppings that would be near the doorway to the outside recreation area are cleaned. Further, our population is constantly urged to clean their cells and trash is collected daily from every cell. Trash from the cells is put into a large, wheeled container that is then transported to a dumpster. Those who had “trash spilling out of the bottom of their cells” did not follow the protocol to dispose of their trash as they were given consistent opportunity to do so. We provide continuous verbal instruction to the population for trash to be collected to avoid attracting any pests and to maintain sanitary conditions. As has been previously shared, we have a contracted exterminator to continuously address any problems with pests, which can occur in any dwelling or building. Lastly, we are in the midst of a roof replacement project at PICC, which will address any ceiling leaks.

You also raise concerns regarding access to medical care, chaplains, laundry and the grievance process. Regarding medical care, we are in the midst of increasing medical staff which has been impacted by the pandemic and are ensuring that there is proper access to medical care. The increase in medical staff has been beneficial and both sick call slips and medical grievances are responded to promptly. We will ensure that all housing units have an ample supply of sick call slips. Regarding access to social workers and chaplains, we continuously strive to ensure that there is access to both of these services.

Regarding laundry services, we again need specific names/PP#s so that we can investigate the allegations and respond accordingly. We have ensured weekly access to laundry services and cleaning supplies throughout the pandemic.

You report that there were incarcerated individuals who stated that they filed grievances and did not receive a response. The grievance process is continuously reviewed and monitored. Pursuant to that continuous review and monitoring, we will ensure that all housing units have an ample supply of grievance forms.

You state that “a handful of men” reported being denied access to the law library. If we knew the name/PP#s, we could properly investigate this allegation. We are providing access to the law library for all housing units.

You state that certain incarcerated individuals have not received the Inmate Handbook. The Inmate Handbook is provided to all newly admitted incarcerated individuals as part of the intake process. If the names/PP# of these individuals is provided, we can ensure that another copy of the Inmate Handbook is provided to them.

I will now respond to your recommendations. You first refer to the deaths that have occurred in the Philadelphia Department of Prisons. It must be noted that the increase in deaths in prison facilities is a nationwide problem. For the most part, our deaths have occurred due to incarcerated individuals being admitted with terminal conditions or serious medical

complications that have been developed over many years. We have an extensive medical intake process that assesses individuals for immediate medical needs while also engaging the individual to share their health condition and history. We acknowledge that we receive some of the most medically vulnerable and compromised individuals from the community, who are admitted when they have reached their worst medical state--and we remain committed to providing care and treatment.

You acknowledge the hiring of former Department of Corrections Secretary John Wetzel as a consultant. The PDP administration is also pleased with this hiring, as Mr. Wetzel will provide valuable, impartial review, insight and possible recommendations regarding our operations. However, it must be noted that the PDP administration has worked hard to face the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic from its onset—constant preparation and adaption to all of the myriad challenges presented by the pandemic. As a result of these ongoing efforts, our infection rate throughout the pandemic has been lower than both the community rate and most correctional facilities nationwide. We are looking forward to working with Mr. Wetzel to further enhance our operations.

You make a recommendation for utilizing the national guard and/or contracted temporary staff. We acknowledge that we are staff challenged and are working continuously to hire correctional officers. We have continuously onboarded classes throughout the pandemic. We currently have a class in the Academy that began on March 21 and we have another new class beginning on May 2. We do not see the need for the national guard at this time, due to continuously onboarding new hires and strategically assigning staff to our facilities. We will continue to do so to fill vacancies. There is also no need for us to lease space from another facility at this time, other facilities are also staffed challenged and have similar or more emergent needs than what we are experiencing. Additionally, we have begun to see a slight, steady decrease in our population.

Regarding your recommendation to “work with the criminal legal stakeholders,” we have continuously worked with the courts and our other criminal justice partners to increase access to court hearings for our incarcerated population. It was through our exhaustive efforts that a protocol was developed which allowed for great expansion in the number of incarcerated individuals able to be transported for court hearings each day. As a result, we have seen a decrease in our population that will hopefully continue.

In your recommendations, you state that we should add “ebooks, games and other programming on the GTL prison tablets.” We continue to increase the number of tablets available for educational programs to our population and offer activities to incentivize program participation. We believe incentivizing program participation is most productive. We also have libraries available to the population for them to access books and reading materials.

Your other recommendations and concerns have already been addressed in my response. I will ensure that all aspects of our operations and services which are the basis for your recommendations are continuously reviewed and monitored.

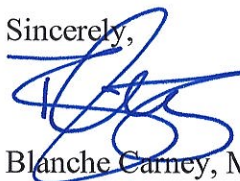
Lastly, your letter acknowledges visible improvements that you observed during your last tour on March 18, especially in RCF. You note observing that most of the manual slide bolt locks which had been temporarily in place were now replaced with new locks. Several random



tests were done of the RCF call buzzers and you saw that they were working in every instance. You state that most of the showers you observed were cleaned from any "rust, slime, mildew or grime" that you state you observed on a previous tour. You state that almost everyone in general population reported daily access to showers. You state almost all people in custody reported receiving sufficient toilet paper. And, you state that all people you spoke to in disciplinary segregation reported having an administrative hearing. Lastly, you acknowledge that throughout the general population housing units you visited in RCF and PICC, incarcerated people were out of their cells, with correctional officers "letting half a unit out of their cells at a time."

In sum, I will continue to review your recommendations. As you also acknowledge, I will continue to work through the challenges presented by Covid-19 as the PDP moves towards a full return to pre-pandemic operations while continuing to mitigate the risk of introduction and transmission of Covid-19 within our facilities.

Sincerely,



Blanche Carney, MSS, CCM  
Commissioner

cc: Tumar Alexander, Managing Director  
Vanessa Garrett-Harley, First Deputy Managing Director  
James Engler, Mayor's Chief of Staff  
Members of City Council  
Diana Cortez, City Solicitor  
Keisha Hudson, Chief Defender  
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Lisette Shirdan-Harris, Administrative Judge, Court of Common Pleas  
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Thomas Greishaw, PA DOC