Orleans Correctional Facility
Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement (HALT)
Final Compliance and Quality of Care Review
JC#: 77010179882

On October 8, 2025, the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs (the Justice Center) conducted a site visit at the Orleans Correctional Facility (CF) to review the programs, treatment, and conditions of confinement for incarcerated individuals placed in segregated confinement in that facility. The Justice Center also assessed compliance with the implementation of the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement (HALT) Act.[1]

The Justice Center reviewed policies and practices concerning:

a) Placement of persons in segregated confinement and residential rehabilitation units (RRU).
b) Placement and treatment of persons meeting the "special population" definition in the HALT Act.[2]
c) Length of time spent in segregated confinement or residential rehabilitation units.
d) Hearings and procedures.
e) Assessments and rehabilitation plans, procedures, and discharge determinations.

The Justice Center toured the Special Housing Unit (SHU), Residential Rehabilitation Unit (RRU), and the General Population Restricted Unit (GPRU) and spoke with 149 incarcerated individuals. Justice Center staff chose a sample of 20 individuals across three programs.[3] Each of those individuals were offered private interviews, and 11 individuals accepted.[4] The Justice Center also distributed 149 surveys to solicit information about programming, recreation, and tablet use in segregated confinement and 35 were returned at the time of this draft report.

In addition to reviewing Office of Mental Health (OMH) clinical case records, Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) SHU folders, DOCCS guidance records, and the DOCCS Sign-In logbook and Unit Activity logbook, the Justice Center also requested any Exceptional Circumstances documentation for a time-period of six months.[5] The Justice Center's review found that there were no individuals placed on exceptional circumstances during this review period. Justice

[1] Correction Law §§137(6)(d)(e) (h), (i), (j), (k), (l), (m), (n), and (o) and §§138 (7), 401.
[2] Section 2 of the Correction Law, subdivision 33 defines Special Population as any person twenty-one years of age or younger; fifty-five years or older; with a disability; pregnant, in the first 8 weeks of postpartum recovery or caring for a child in a correctional facility.
[3] One individual was from the GPRU, four from the SHU and 15 from the RRU,
[4] The private interviews that were conducted included 2 individuals from the SHU, 8 individuals from the RRU, and 1 individual from the GPRU.
[5] April 8, 2025, to October 8, 2025.

Center's findings, recommendations and requests follow below.

Justice Center Findings

Treatment and Conditions:

1. **Individuals in the Special Housing Unit were not attending programming.**

   The single-occupancy Special Housing Unit (SHU) and the General Population Restricted Unit (GPRU) were located in Building 16 and was comprised of three blocks: A, B, and C.[6] A-Block contained 12 SHU housing cells, and the census on the day of the site visit was 2 individuals. B-Block contained 12 GPRU cells and the census was 11, but only 1 individual was serving a disciplinary sanction; the rest were individuals in both Involuntary Protective Custody (IPC) and Voluntary Protective Custody (VPC) status. B-Block had 6 Reduced Security Therapy and Recreation Tables (ReSTART chairs) available on the tier for programming. C-Block had 4 SHU cells, and the census was 2. C-Block had 4 ReSTART chairs on the tier facing the gate designated for programming. The total number of programming seats available in Building 16 is 10. There were no programming attendance records available.[7]

   The Justice Center requested the current program scheduled for individuals in the SHU and GPRU and was provided with the following schedule:

SHU Program Schedule

TIME	SHU A COMPANY	SHU C COMPANY	GP (SHU) B COMPANY
	AM	AM	AM
7:00-7:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
7:45-10:45	Program (CBT/Holistic)		Program (CBT/Holistic for Disciplinary)
8:00-9:00		Outdoor Recreation	Outdoor Recreation (IPC/PC)
8:00-11:00			
11:20-11:40	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch

[6] The GPRU was located in Tier B of the SHU and is reserved for housing special populations in SHU status, for VPC & IPC status individuals, and drug/special watches and suicide watches, per the Orleans CF SHU-GPRU Operations Manual (2.1.25), page 2. This program was added since the Justice Center's last monitoring review in 2024.

[7] DOCCS informed the Justice Center via email on February 13, 2026, that attendance records for the SHU, RRU, and GPRU were not available, but from the date of the site visit going forward they would be preserved.

11:45-2:45		Program (CBT/Holistic)	Outdoor Recreation (Disciplinary)
12:00-1:00	Outdoor Recreation		
12:00-3:00			Program (CBT/Holistic)
3:00-3:45	Movement-Count	Movement-Count	Movement-Count
4:00-4:45	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
6:00-10:00	Tablets	Tablets	Tablets
10:15	Count	Count	Count

According to the SHU Activity logbook entries, recreation was conducted daily from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. During the 2-week period, an average of one person per day participated in outdoor recreation.[8] Building 16 features 6 single recreation pens, with 2 located at the end of each of its 3 Tiers. SHU static tablets are distributed daily at 6:00 p.m. and collected at 10:00 p.m.

The Justice Center requested the May 2026 program attendance records for out-of-cell programming and congregate recreation for the SHU and GPRU. A review of these records determined that the SHU had individuals on the census for 25 days from May 1, 2026, to May 25, 2026, and no individuals attending program. The average daily recreation attendance was 3 individuals.[9]

Per the records received, no one in the GPRU accepted programming during the Month of May 2026. The average daily recreation attendance was 3 individuals on 14 days.

2. RRU programming was not offered as outlined by the HALT Act.

The RRU is a 200-bed program unit contained in Building 34, located next to Building 16. The RRU has 4 double-bunked tiers, containing 25 housing cells each; A1 and C1 were located on the ground floor. Tiers A2 and C2 were located upstairs. The Orleans RRU has 5 programming classrooms; the 2 upstairs classrooms have 10 ReSTART chairs each, and the 3 classrooms in the basement hold 8 ReSTART chairs each.

The Justice Center was told the Orleans RRU had resumed RRU programming on a limited basis, as of June 16, 2025. The modified schedule allows for one gallery to program a day for one module from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, with Friday used as a makeup day. Per the Orleans RRU Operations Manual, at least six hours of daily out-of-cell congregate programming, services, treatment, recreation, activities and/or meals will be

[8] Two weeks of Activity and Sign In/Out Logbooks were requested for September 22, 2025, through October 6, 2025.
[9] There were no individuals on the census in the SHU from May 26, 2026 to May 30, 2026.

offered. Per DOCCS executive staff, records for out-of-cell programming attendance were not available but have been preserved since the Justice Center's site visit on October 8, 2025.

Individual recreation pens are attached to the back of each double cell accessed through a door at the rear of the cell, and individuals have continuous access daily from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. If double-celled, they share with their cell mate.

The individuals in the RRU must split/share static tablet time with their bunkmates. The tablets are distributed daily from 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., collected for charging (for 2-3 hours), and redistributed at 10:30 p.m.

The Justice Center also requested the May 2026 program attendance records for out-of-cell programming and congregate recreation for the RRU. Per the documentation provided, the RRU had both a.m. and p.m. program attendance for 20 days total, Monday through Friday (excluding weekends and holidays) in May 2026 for an average of 7 incarcerated individuals per day in the a.m. session and for an average of 5 individuals in the p.m. session. There were 4 occasions when programming was cancelled due to security reasons or due to fights erupting in class, making it necessary to terminate program for that session.

Request and Recommendation:

The Justice Center encourages staff at the Orleans CF to promote out-of-cell program attendance, offer desired incentives and verbal praise for positive behavior, and preserve a daily record of attendance so it is available upon request going forward.

3. **Orleans CF does not offer congregate recreational opportunities for individuals in disciplinary housing.**

   The Justice Center was told by executive staff that the installation of the RRU congregate recreation area is an on-going capital project, and construction has been very slow due to the staffing crisis. Currently there is no physical location for out-of-cell congregate programming at Orleans. Per the DOCCS response, the congregate recreation area project is still in progress and there is no projected completion date.

4. **Six individuals in the RRU received an average of a 66-day reduction of sanction time.**

   Per the PMT Meeting Minutes and Participant Feedback Forms, six program participants out of 15 in our sample were recommended for and received time

cuts. Five individuals demonstrated a lack of engagement with the program and received no time cuts.

Recommendation:

Time cuts are a desirable incentive for incarcerated individuals to obtain to shorten the length of their sanction time and the possibility of earning back privileges including good time. The PMT should offer time cuts whenever possible.

5. **Five out of the fifteen individuals reviewed by the Justice Center in the RRU received Informational Reports.**

A total of 8 Informational Reports were received and reviewed.[10] Two Informational Reports were positive for addressing consistently incorrect special diet meal trays without being negative toward security staff, and one for filling in as the building porter, following directions and working hard while cleaning. Six negative Informational Reports were received for having fishing lines tied to a different cell or rec pen, for being seen and heard yelling obscenities out to staff and/or for making threats to staff, yelling out the classroom window to the recreation pens after being instructed not to, and refusing to accept double-celling.

Recommendation:

The Justice Center encourages the liberal use of Informational Reports as an important and valuable tool used to communicate daily positive or negative feedback to everyone and to the PMT Committee in real time.

6. **149 surveys were distributed to individuals in disciplinary units by security staff, a total of 35 were returned (23%).[11]**

According to the responses on returned surveys, when asked how often programming is offered during the average week, 27 individuals responded; 44% said never, 33% said 2-3 times per week, 15% said 4-5 times per week, 2 people said daily. To the question how many hours of programming are offered each day, 30 individuals responded: on average; 53% said for less than 2 hours per day, 43% said 2-4 hours per day, and 1 person said for more than 6 hours per day. When asked how often individuals chose to attend programming, 31 people answered; 55% said never, 23% said other, 16% said 2-3 days per week, and 2 people said daily. When asked if programs are cancelled, what are the reasons given for the cancellation, 30 individuals responded; 50% said I don't know why, 30% said DOCCS was short-staffed, 13% said it was due to security-related reasons, 2 individuals said it was because of a holiday.

[10] Some of the five individuals received more than one information report during that time period

[11] Out of the 35 incarcerated individual survey respondents, 33 were I/I's housed in the RRU, 2 were from I/I's in the SHU.

In addition, the survey asks how many hours individuals have access to a tablet per day, 32 individuals responded; 69% said it was greater than 6 hours per day, 16% said for 4-6 hours per day, 9% said for 2-4 hours per day, and 2 people said for less than 2 hours per day. 34 individuals responded about how often recreation is offered; 65% said they were offered rec daily, 32% said they are never offered rec, and one individual said they are offered rec 4-5 days per week.

7. **Private interviews were conducted by Justice Center staff with 11 incarcerated individuals on the day of the site visit.**

   In private interviews, individuals reported that a typical day on the unit looks like, "This is the first time I've been out of cell since July [2025]," "I'm in the cell all day and am offered programming twice a week," "I get program one time per week for 3 hours from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m.," "We're bored out of our minds and I haven't attended out-of-cell at all while at Orleans," "Wake up/count/go-round at 6:30 rec at 7:00 a.m. then chow, I sleep, workout and at 3:00 p.m. there's a go-round for lights/tablet/shower/razor/magazines," "There's no daily programming," "I'm in the juvenile program for 7 hours a day and not out of cell for anything at all," "The day runs off of three meals; you get a tablet all day and give it back to charge, and I don't go out in the rec pen because I don't want to get into trouble, it's too loud, and it's a depressing garbage dump."

   When asked what programming topics they would like to attend, the responses included Alcohol Substance Abuse Treatment, Aggression Replacement Training, self-help, education, exercise, current events discussions, making a life plan, and exploring career choices.

<u>Special Populations:</u>

8. **There were no incarcerated individuals on the mental health caseload, under the age of 21, over the age of 55, pregnant or with any disability listed on the SHU census at the time of the Justice Center's site visit.**

<u>Hearings and Procedures:</u>

9. **A review of Tier Hearing materials for the incarcerated individuals on the sample at Orleans CF determined that all were appropriate for criteria justifying Tier III confinement.**

   All incarcerated individuals committed violations of rules that permit a penalty of segregated confinement such as violent conduct and assaults on staff and other incarcerated individuals, being found in possession of weapons, altered items, and contraband, smuggling items throughout or into the facility, harassment, and gangs.

10. **According to documentation received by the Justice Center, there are 13 Orleans staff who are up to date on the annual HALT Tier III Hearing Officer Training.**

11. **Legal representation was received by one individual with Tier III disciplinary charges.**

    Incarcerated individual 1 received a Tier III Misbehavior Report at Elmira CF on April 24, 2025, after they were witnessed making stabbing motions towards another individual and was found to be in possession of a 6 ¼ inch by ½ inch sharpened metal ice pick melted into a toothbrush.[12] Their hearing paperwork indicates that the incarcerated individual received legal representation from a "RPL Bennett" for their Tier III disciplinary hearing held beginning on April 24, 2025, concluding on May 6, 2025.

Length of time spent in segregated confinement:

12. **All of the incarcerated individuals in the SHU were held for less than 15 consecutive days or under 20 days in a 60-day period in segregated confinement.**

    At the time of the Justice Center's site visit, the individuals spent an average of 7 days in segregated confinement. The lowest amount of time spent in the SHU was 3 days and the highest number of days was 15.

Request:

Please provide the Justice Center with the transfer and SHU release dates for the four individuals that were in the Orleans SHU at the time of our site visit.[13]

13. **There was one incarcerated individual serving a disciplinary sanction and housed in the GPRU due to their age.**

    Incarcerated individual 2, a mental health service level (MHSL) 6, was placed in the GPRU on September 24, 2025, due to being under the age of 21.[14] On the day of the site visit, the individual had been in the GPRU for approximately 14 days.

Request:

Please provide the Justice Center with the individual's transfer date out of the Orleans GPRU.

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[12] [redacted] (DIN: [redacted]) will hereafter be referred to as **incarcerated individual 1.**

[13] Incarcerated individuals housed in the SHU on the day of the site visit: [redacted] (DIN: [redacted]), [redacted] (DIN: [redacted]), [redacted] (DIN: [redacted]), and [redacted] (DIN: [redacted]).

[14] [redacted] (DIN: [redacted]) will hereinafter be referred to as **incarcerated individual 2**

14. The average length of time spent in the Orleans CF RRU was 66 days.

Per the Justice Center's review of 15 incarcerated individuals housed in the RRU, the longest length of stay was 363 days and the shortest was 6 days.[15]

15. In the Orleans RRU, the average sanction time was 205 days.

For the 15 individuals in the RRU, the average SHU/RRU sanction time was 208 days. The lowest amount of sanction time in the sample was 50 days; the highest amount was 795 days.[16]

Assessments, rehabilitation plans and discharge procedures:

16. Individualized Rehabilitation Plans (IRP's) and Participant Feedback Forms were reviewed for individuals in the sample. The goals appeared to be realistic and attainable for the individuals to complete during their time in RRU.

The Justice Center received and reviewed fifteen IRP's. None of the IRP's had goal completion dates, and no individuals had exceeded the one-year timeframe. Individuals listed "anger and stress management," "my attitude," "interpersonal skills," and "dealing with authority" as topics that would be beneficial to work on in the RRU program.

Recommendation:

When completing rehabilitation plans with incarcerated individuals, having individuals collaborate on goals that can be tracked for progress and updated as needed is essential to be effective. Their plan should be measurable while addressing specific needs of the person to aid in fostering personal growth, promoting safety and readiness for reintegration into the community. All goals should have anticipated goal completion dates and staff should provide encouragement to incarcerated individuals to complete their goals, as well as completing documentation that notes individuals were encouraged. This documentation will assist in making choices as to whether a goal should be continued or adjusted.

[15] One individual, [redacted] (DIN: [redacted]) was admitted on October 10, 2024, with a 6-months 15-days SHU/RRU sanction from Auburn CF. The individual received a two additional Tier III Misbehavior Reports and SHU/RRU sanctions totaling an additional 498 days on May 4, 2025 and September 25, 2025.

[16] Three individuals had two incidents with Tier III SHU Time sanctions during the 6-month review period ([redacted] with 795 days total, [redacted] with 498 days total, and [redacted] with 320 days total).

17. **Incarcerated individual 3 appears to have had continuous confinement sanctions since October 2024.**[17]

    According to the individual's disciplinary history, the individual received six months of disciplinary sanctions ("service dates 10/01/24 - 04/16/25") following an incident on September 27, 2024. Even though their SHU/RRU sanction time was scheduled to end on April 16, 2025, it does not appear they were discharged or transferred upon expiration of their sanctions and was in the RRU continuously until their next Tier III on May 4, 2025, where they received a 137-day ("service dates 05/15/25 - 09/29/25") disciplinary sanction.

    Furthermore, the individual received another sanction on September 25, 2025, for an incident in which they were given another 361 day ("service dates 10/03/25 - 09/29/26") disciplinary sanction.

Request:

Please provide verification of the individual's housing location during this time. In addition, given the facts provided that the individual has been housed in the RRU longer than 365 days, which is the maximum duration an individual can stay in a RRU before an automatic, independent review by the commissioner. The Justice Center requests the independent review, all individual rehabilitation plans that have been completed with the individual since September 2024, and any disciplinary tickets received, or time cuts, since October 8, 2025.

18. **All individuals received their DOCCS Suicide Prevention Screening Guidelines #3152 upon their most recent admission to disciplinary confinement.**

A six-month review of DOCCS and OMH records often includes records of treatment that an incarcerated individual received at another correctional facility before being transferred to the correctional facility reviewed. The findings below do not pertain to the Orleans Correctional Facility:

19. **Documents indicate that an individual spent 77 days in the SHU at the Elmira CF during the Justice Center monitoring review.**

    Incarcerated individual 1, a MHSL 6, was admitted to the SHU at the Elmira CF on April 24, 2025, after being observed approaching another individual from behind, stab them in the upper torso and neck, then drop an object to the floor. The recovered weapon measured "4 7/8 inches long x 1-inch-wide piece of sharpened metal with plastic and purple and white cloth wrapped as a handle with a black shoelace as a lanyard with a cardboard sheath." Upon pat frisk at

[17] [redacted] (DIN: [redacted]) will hereinafter be referred to as **incarcerated individual 3**

the scene, a metal ice pick-type weapon measuring 6.25 inches by ½ inch and was a sharpened metal pick melted into a toothbrush as a handle was also recovered from the individual's front left pants pocket. According to the misbehavior report, the individual was confined as a result of the incident, and their housing cell was changed from "I-3-20" to "E-5-7". Documents reflect that the individual remained in the SHU at the Elmira CF until July 10, 2025, when they were transferred to the Orleans RRU.

Request:

Please clarify and identify where the individual was remanded at the Elmira CF after the Tier III incident on April 24, 2025, and provide an explanation as to why this individual was held in segregated confinement for 77 days before being transferred to an RRU.

Review conducted by: Roberta D. Almstead, RN
Roberta Almstead, RN, Facility Review Specialist

NEW YORK STATE | Office of Mental Health

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

ANN MARIE T. SULLIVAN, M.D.
Commissioner

July 9, 2026

Jody Signoracci
Deputy Director of Outreach, Prevention and Support
Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs
161 Delaware Avenue
Delmar, New York 12054

Dear Ms. Signoracci:

We received your letter dated 7/2/26, in response to the Justice Center's 10/8/25 site visit of the Orleans Correctional Facility (CF) Special Housing Unit (SHU), Residential Rehabilitation Unit (RRU), and General Constricted Unit (GC-R) to review the quality of mental health care provided to incarcerated individuals and determine compliance with the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement (HALT) legislation, the Office of Mental Health's (OMH) policies, and the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision's (DOCCS) directives.

An OMH response was only required for the recommendation associated with Finding #20. Below is OMH's response.

Request and Recommendation for Finding #20:
"Please forward any mental health interviews completed at the Elmira CF from April 24, 2025, until June 10, 2025, for the Justice Center's review, if available. If it was determined that the assessments were not completed, please retrain mental health staff evaluations are completed per CBO Policy #1.0 and in accordance with the HALT Act."

OMH Response:
Though incarcerated individual 1's sanctions began on 4/24/25, he was initially confined in General Population (GP) due to lack of disciplinary housing space and limited movement to the RRUs post-DOCCS job action. He was formally admitted to the SHU on 6/9/25 and his intake assessment was completed per policy on 6/10/25.

Sincerely,

Li-Wen Lee, M.D.
Associate Commissioner
Division of Forensic Services

cc: Danielle Dill, Psy.D., Executive Director, CNYPC
William Vertoske, Deputy Director, Corrections Based Operations, CNYPC
File

NEW YORK STATE | Department of Corrections and Community Supervision

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor
DANIEL F. MARTUSCELLO III
Commissioner

August 10, 2026

Jody Signoracci
Deputy Director, Office of Outreach, Prevention & Support
NYS Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs
161 Delaware Avenue
Delmar, NY 12054

Orleans Correctional Facility
Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement (HALT)
Draft Compliance and Quality of Care Review
JC#: 77010179882

Dear Deputy Director Signoracci:

This is in response to the New York State Justice Center's visit at the Orleans Correctional Facility on October 8, 2025, to review the quality of corrections-based mental health programs, treatment, and conditions of confinement for incarcerated individuals placed in Special Housing Unit (SHU), Residential Rehabilitation Unit (RRU), and the General Confinement Restricted (GC-R) Unit in that facility in accordance with the HALT Legislation, OMH policies, and DOCCS directives.

1. Individuals in the Special Housing Unit were not attending programming.

2. Request and Recommendation:

Please forward the SHU, RRU, and GPRU attendance records for out-of-cell programming for the month of May 2026. The Justice Center encourages staff at the Orleans Correctional Facility to promote out-of-cell program attendance, offer desired incentives and verbal praise for positive behavior, and preserve a daily record of attendance so it is available upon request going forward.

To ensure that individuals in the RRU are being offered at least six hours of daily out-of-cell congregate programming, services, treatment, recreation, activities and/or meals as per the HALT Act, please provide the Justice Center with the current programming and recreation schedule offered in the RRU and if staffing levels have improved to ensure rehabilitative programming has commenced at full schedule.

Response:

We have attached for your review the SHU, RRU, and GC-R units attendance records for out-of-cell programming for the month of May 2026. Galleries A and C in Building 16 are designated as SHU housing; B gallery is in the same building and is designated as the GC-R housing unit.

Our administration at Orleans Correctional Facility continues to emphasize to all staff the therapeutic benefits of out-of-cell programming for incarcerated individuals with confinement sanctions.

Both security and civilian staff continue to encourage all incarcerated individuals in SHU, RRU and GR-R units to participate in program during daily Go-Rounds. A standardized incentive system is utilized to encourage and reward positive behavior.

Program staff have been instructed to start utilizing a new system to document program attendance with the names, identification numbers and cell location of each individual for better record keeping (see attached Excel spreadsheet for SHU attendance).

We have attached for your review the current RRU programming and recreation schedule. As far as staffing in RRU is concerned, the administration at Orleans Correctional Facility continues to actively engage in efforts to recruit program staff for the RRU. We still have four (4) items assigned to RRU that remain vacant. However, these vacant items will continue to be covered by general population staff, until they are filled.

3. Request:

Please provide an update on the projected completion date of the congregate recreation areas at the facility.

Response:

The congregate recreation area project is still in progress. The facility is working on processing the needed changes such as extra concrete pads, raising the asphalt and addressing the gate locks. We do not have a projected completion date at this time.

4. Recommendation:

Time cuts are a desirable incentive for incarcerated individuals to obtain to shorten the length of their sanction time and the possibility of earning back privileges including good time. The PMT should offer time cuts whenever possible.

Response:

At Orleans Correctional Facility, the administration and staff continue to see the benefits of encouraging and rewarding the positive behaviors of incarcerated individuals who are programming in RRU. Positive behaviors are reinforced using incentives and time cuts. As indicated in the Justice Center's report, five (5) individuals reviewed by the PMT demonstrated a lack of engagement with the program and did not receive time cuts. Regarding earning good time, as outlined in Directive #4932, "Standards Behavior & Allowances", the opportunity to earn good behavior allowances offers incarcerated individuals a tangible reward for positive efforts made during incarceration. Incarcerated individuals who do not display positive engagement or behaviors cannot be rewarded with time cuts without earning them.

5. Recommendation:

The Justice Center encourages the liberal use of informational reports as an important and valuable tool used to communicate daily positive or negative feedback to everyone and to the PMT Committee in real time.

Response:

The administration and PMT at Orleans Correctional Facility recognizes the benefits of utilizing informational reports to document and communicate behaviors that are considered outside of the baseline presentation of an incarcerated individual. While informational reports are very useful tools to communicate with the rest of the PMT, they are not meant to be utilized as routine daily progress notes for each incarcerated individual in RRU and are not required under HALT Legislation.

6. 149 surveys were distributed to individuals in disciplinary units by security staff, a total of 35 were returned (23%).

7. Private interviews were conducted by Justice Center staff with 11 incarcerated individuals on the day of the site visit.

8. There were no incarcerated individuals on the mental health caseload, under the age of 21, over the age of 55, pregnant or with any disability listed on the SHU census at the time of the Justice Center's site visit.

9. A review of Tier Hearing materials for the incarcerated individuals on the sample at Orleans Correctional Facility determined that all were appropriate for criteria justifying Tier III confinement.

10. According to documentation received by the Justice Center, there are 13 Orleans Correctional Facility staff who are up to date on the annual HALT Tier III Hearing Officer Training.

11. Legal representation was received by one (1) individual with Tier III disciplinary charges.

12. Request:

Please provide the Justice Center with the transfer and SHU release dates for the four (4) individuals that were in the Orleans Correctional Facility SHU at the time of our site visit.

Response:

[redacted] ([redacted]) was transferred to Cayuga Correctional Facility RRU for programming purposes on October 16, 2025. Their confinement sanction expired on April 24, 2026, and they were discharged to the community on their maximum expiration date on June 26, 2026.

[redacted] ([redacted]) was transferred to general population at Orleans Correctional Facility as their confinement sanction expired on October 8, 2025. They were discharged to the community on their Maximum Expiration date on February 18, 2026.

[redacted] ([redacted]) was transferred to Greene Correctional Facility RRU for programming purposes on October 21, 2025. Their confinement sanction expired on November 10, 2025, and they were discharged to the community on April 20, 2026.

[redacted] ([redacted]) was transferred to Greene Correctional Facility RRU for programming purposes on October 21, 2025. Their confinement sanction expired on May 11, 2026, and they remain in general population at Greene Correctional Facility.

13. Request:

Please provide the Justice Center with the individual's transfer date out of the Orleans Correctional Facility GPRU.

Response:

[redacted] ([redacted]) was transferred out of the Orleans Correctional Facility GPRU on October 14, 2025.

14. The average length of time spent in the Orleans Correctional Facility RRU was 66 days.

15. In the Orleans Correctional Facility RRU, the average sanction time was 205 days.

16. Recommendation:

When completing rehabilitation plans with incarcerated individuals, having individuals collaborate on goals that can be tracked for progress and updated as needed is essential to be effective. Their plan should be measurable while addressing specific needs of the person to aid in fostering personal growth, promoting safety and readiness for reintegration into the community. All goals should have anticipated goal completion dates and staff should provide encouragement to incarcerated individuals to complete their goals, as well as completing documentation that notes individuals were encouraged. This documentation will assist in making choices as to whether a goal should be continued or adjusted.

Response:

Individual Rehabilitation Plans (IRPs) are developed with the input of the incarcerated individuals to help them develop some insight into their problematic behaviors and set goals they want to achieve. As described in the RRU program manual, incarcerated individuals during the development of their IRPs will identify what they can do to help them make improvements and achieve the goals they want to work on. IRPs are individualized and each behavior identified comes with a target date and a completion date. While some goals are achievable in a short timeframe while in RRU, others may require ongoing efforts and work beyond an individual's discharge from RRU. The IRPs surveyed did not list a completion date. While the goals may appear achievable to a reviewer, they depend on each individual's ongoing participation, effort, and progress during RRU programming.

17. Request:

Please provide verification of the individual's housing location during this time. In addition, given the facts provided that the individual has been housed in the RRU longer than 365 days, which is the maximum duration an individual can stay in a RRU before an automatic, independent review by the Commissioner. The Justice Center requests the independent review, all individual rehabilitation plans that have been completed with the individual since September 2024, and any disciplinary tickets received, or time cuts, since October 8, 2025.

Response:

Incarcerated individual 3 ([redacted]), was transferred to Orleans Correctional Facility RRU on October 10, 2024, after receiving a Tier III misbehavior report on September 27, 2024, for charges including Weapon and Smuggling while at Auburn Correctional Facility.

This misbehavior report resulted in them receiving 6 (six) months and 15 days of confinement sanctions which included 4 (four) days of SHU pre-hearing time. Their initial confinement sanction time was supposed to expire on April 16, 2025.

While in the Orleans Correctional Facility RRU, incarcerated individual 3 received three (3) Tier II and two (2) Tier III misbehavior reports resulting in additional confinement sanctions. They received 137 days of confinement sanctions including 11 days of SHU pre-hearing time for an incident dated May 4, 2025, for charges including Weapon and Gangs. They received an additional 291 days of confinement sanctions for a Tier III misbehavior report dated September 25, 2025, for charges including Assault on Inmate, Fighting, Weapon, Violent Conduct, Interference and Direct Order.

They remained at Orleans Correctional Facility RRU for programming purposes until their transfer to Lakeview Correctional Facility SDP on October 16, 2025.

Since the Justice Center's visit on October 8, 2025, incarcerated individual 3 was issued the following time cuts: 2 (two) days on October 30, 2024, 4 (four) days on November 27, 2024, 15 days on December 4, 2024, 4 (four) days on June 11, 2025, and 10 days on August 27, 2025.

We have attached for your review all individual rehabilitation plans that have been completed with incarcerated individual 3 since September 2024.

18. All individuals received their DOCCS Suicide Prevention Screening Guidelines #3152 upon their most recent admission to disciplinary confinement.

19. Request:

Please clarify and identify where the individual was remanded at the Elmira Correctional Facility after the Tier III incident on April 24, 2025, and provide an explanation as to why this individual was held in segregated confinement for 77 days before being transferred to an RRU.

Response:

Incarcerated individual 1 ([redacted]) received a Tier III misbehavior report on April 24, 2025, for charges including Violent Conduct, Assault on Inmate, Weapon and Smuggling. Due to the illegal job action which ended on March 10, 2025, programming, hearings and transfers were temporarily delayed or halted due to staffing issues. An extension was obtained, and their hearing was completed on May 6, 2025, resulting in them receiving 240 days of confinement sanctions. They were transferred to Orleans Correctional Facility RRU for programming on July 8, 2025.

20. Request and recommendation:

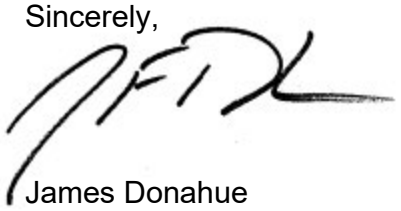
Please forward any mental health interviews completed at the Elmira Correctional Facility from April 24, 2025, until June 10, 2025, for the Justice Center's review, if available. If it was determined that the assessments were not completed, please retrain mental health staff evaluations are completed per CBO Policy #1.0 and in accordance with the HALT Act.

Response:

DOCCS will defer to OMH on this request.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your report. I look forward to continuing to work productively with the Justice Center to improve the services for our population.

Sincerely,



James Donahue
Associate Commissioner

cc: Kishon Walker, Superintendent - Orleans Correctional Facility
Roberta Almstead, RN, Facility Review Specialist, NYS Justice Center