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**Facility Report**



# **Monitoring Visit to Logan Correctional Center 2022-23**

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## Key Findings

1. The most cited positive aspects of life at Logan were the programs and educational opportunities. However, many people cited the need for program expansion in order to allow more incarcerated people to participate, and for participation opportunities to not be tied to reentry date. In particular “long termers” expressed the need for productive activity for wellbeing.
2. Another source of positive development for people in custody was the support of other incarcerated people, which they believed could be formalized into recognized support structures, such as approved mentoring programs.
3. Despite notable individual examples of positive staff and incarcerated people interactions, JHA again received multiple reports of verbal or physical abuse and discrimination at Logan, by both staff and within the population, suggesting inadequate supervision and education. Bullying was a common issue.
4. There was widespread expression of concern regarding uneven application of rules at Logan, as well as discipline. Many people reported that incarcerated people who acted out were rewarded while positive behavior was not incentivized. Likewise, similar concerns related to staff who neglected duties not being sanctioned while those that compensated not being acknowledged.
5. There continued to be a lack of trust between administrators, staff, and individuals in custody, as well as feelings of inadequate communication on issues of importance to them. These issues included rule changes or measures taken to ensure adequate water quality.

## Key Findings, cont.

6. Low staff morale and a lack of control were identified by both staff and incarcerated people, in addition to multiple reports of a lack of discipline for both staff and incarcerated people. An absence of solid support structures for staff, which is a key component of an effective staff and population disciplinary and incentives system, was a recurring concern.
7. The poor quality of healthcare provision and the lack of professionalism of certain healthcare staff were widely condemned by both staff and incarcerated people. Many blamed failures on the private contractor, Wexford.
8. There were serious deficiencies with the physical structure and maintenance of Logan, which impact feelings of safety.
9. Concerns were raised about a failure to ensure adequate consideration of security classifications, age, aggression level, length of incarceration, etc. when housing people together. At the time of the December 2022 visit, housing space was down due to unit closures for physical plant issues, resulting in limited placement options and inappropriate housing.

## Recommendations

1. Programs should be expanded to allow more participation, and constructive activity for people who are not close to their release dates should be increased. Educational programming should not be perceived as merely a preparation for reentry. Rather, it should be viewed as a way of allowing for personal and community development.
2. IDOC should utilize the finding that meaningful social relationships and support matter. One way this could be achieved would be by formalizing peer-to-peer support mechanisms. Training and recognition of the positive impact of peer support will encourage prosocial interaction and meaningful engagement with peers. The contribution of supportive peers and other positive forms of behavior should be recognized and incentivized to begin to address the common observation that there are no means to recognize good behavior at Logan.
3. To reduce bullying and increase safety, supervision and appropriate discipline must be in place. Additionally, a confidential mechanism – such as a functional grievance system or a dedicated office of ombuds – should be established so that issues can be identified and quickly resolved.
4. IDOC should ensure staff understand rules and expectations, provide meaningful performance evaluations, and enhance ways to recognize positive contributions from staff. Simultaneously, the Department should ensure sufficient consequences for staff who engage in misconduct. Multiple examples of inappropriate, unprofessional, and even abusive staff conduct were received, and staff were widely not seen as a legitimate authority with an enforced disciplinary system. More transparency is needed for staff discipline.

## Recommendations, cont.

5. To address the widespread communication issues, updated rules, directives, and memos should be made easily accessible. Where rules are not made clear and readily available or are not evenly enforced, perceptions of procedural fairness are undermined. News that impacts or is of concern to the population, such as the results of water testing, should also be posted. Withholding information exacerbates misunderstanding and mistrust, which were identified as issues.
6. Low staffing levels, professionalism, and morale need to remain areas of focus in order to improve relationships and interactions within the prison. IDOC should allow staff to voluntarily and anonymously communicate their opinions of working conditions to better understand issues.
7. While healthcare in IDOC remains subject to ongoing litigation and contractual issues, obvious access to care problems must be acknowledged and addressed. This includes improving communication and recognizing the accelerating need for more disability accommodation and inpatient hospital placement for people with high mental health and physical needs that are not well served in under-resourced prisons.
8. The serious infrastructure issues at Logan create unsafe and extremely difficult living conditions that must be addressed. These conditions continue to result in crowding and inappropriate housing placements.
9. Logan houses every type of classification within IDOC, from boot camp to long-term disciplinary, and it is too large and ill-equipped to effectively manage this diversity. IDOC must better utilize lower security and community custody options.

# Introduction

This report summarizes findings and presents recommendations from John Howard Association's (JHA's) monitoring visit to Logan Correctional Center (Logan) on December 6 and 7, 2022.



In conjuncture with this visit, JHA conducted a modified and shortened Measuring the Quality of Prison Life survey (MQPL) and collected responses and reflections. The survey is a validated instrument developed at the [University of Cambridge](#), and is applied by the prison service in England and Wales as a method of measuring the performance of different facilities.

The [survey](#) has been undertaken by JHA throughout the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) beginning with a few prisons in June 2022 and expanding to all prisons in 2023. As of June 2023, JHA had received responses from all prisons, representing approximately 31% of IDOC's non-reception population, and surveys continued to be received from later surveyed locations. Similar versions of the shortened MQPL have been administered by JHA's sister independent monitoring organizations, the [Pennsylvania Prison Society](#) and the [Correctional](#)



[Association of New York](#), at a few prisons. Together the three organizations are collecting information related to both substance and process regarding the applicability and use of the tool in the U.S.

JHA's reports often include survey information in order to better identify and explain issues as well as provide direct quotes that further illuminate the realities of prison and lived experiences of people in them. This report interprets the statistical data from the MQPL surveys together with survey comments to identify key findings. It incorporates survey response information and analysis framed by MQPL survey "dimensions," which are interrelated topical areas that taken together as a way to measure some of the intangibles of prisons, such as sense and impact of interpersonal relationships or feelings of safety and wellbeing, all of which greatly impact the lived experience and the culture of a prison.

JHA recognizes the efforts of many individuals within IDOC attempting to improve conditions and outcomes during trying times of the pandemic and resource crises. However, as described by one Logan survey respondent, we must ensure prisons do not make people "*Bitter not Better.*" JHA remains troubled that in a decade of [monitoring Logan](#) since its transition to becoming a women's prison, many prior concerns persist. Troublingly, only eight percent of the people responding to JHA's 2022 survey at Logan felt that the prison was better than the prior year.

By examining the prison through a new MQPL survey lens, we hoped to help surface priority issues beyond the obvious issues previously reported upon relating to poor physical plant conditions, healthcare, and inherent problems with large, complex, under-resourced, crowded prisons.

This report is informed by the information gathered within survey responses, privileged mail received by JHA from people incarcerated at Logan, and information obtained over the course of the two-day December 2022 monitoring visit, wherein JHA representatives spoke with administrators, staff, and people incarcerated throughout the prison. On this visit, JHA also conducted two separate focus groups with approximately 15 individuals in custody, who were housed in units across the facility.

In addition to debriefing onsite, in December 2022 and January 2023 JHA provided monitoring visit feedback to Logan and IDOC administrators summarizing the main findings from the visit and providing some initial survey input and recommendations. JHA also requested additional information, which was not provided. JHA sent IDOC a draft of this report June 28, 2023, and draft review of this report was conducted with IDOC on August 9, 2023, with draft written response provided, and a finalized written responses provided subsequently for inclusion in publication as Appendix C.

It is hoped that the interpretation of survey data, combined with comments and information provided by incarcerated people and staff, as well as JHA visitor observations, will provide IDOC and other stakeholders with a greater understanding of the prison and provide a basis for change.

## MQPL Survey

While the MQPL results denote scores that are intended to provide a tool for assessment, there was not yet a comparator body of survey data from the United States or Illinois to provide adequate context for the findings within this report. To partially address this, the Logan scores are grounded by making comparisons with Decatur, Illinois' other female prison, which is minimum-security. The MQPL survey was conducted by JHA at Decatur in August 2022, and a monitoring visit was conducted in October 2022. MQPL survey data shows poorer performance under most measures at Logan compared to Decatur.

Through personal correspondence, researchers at the University of Cambridge Prison Research Centre have informed JHA that application of the MQPL over many years in multiple other countries has demonstrated that women generally score their conditions worse than men. Given this input, we have not initially made a comparison with male prisons in Illinois where JHA conducted the survey in 2022.

MQPL respondents are asked to respond to 54 statements by selecting whether they strongly agreed, agreed, were neutral, disagreed or strongly disagreed. These responses were given a score from 1 (most negative) to 5 (most positive), with a neutral score of 3. To provide greater weight to the findings, most questions are also grouped by dimensions and averaged for a

dimension score. The findings are simple to interpret: scores above the neutral threshold of 3.00 are positive and reflect good areas of practice, whereas scores below 3.00 indicate areas in need of improvement or poorer practice.

Responses to individual questions from people at Logan that stood out in comparison with those from Decatur, and those that were reflected in comments or visit observations, are highlighted herein. All comments included in this document are from Logan survey responses.

Survey questions mostly relate to four key MQPL dimensions including Harmony, Professionalism, Security, and Wellbeing. A description of the dimensions is attached to this report as Appendix A and the full survey scoring for questions by dimension comparing Logan and Decatur is Appendix B.

A total of 409 MQPL survey responses from Logan were collected during the monitoring visit or subsequently received by JHA via privileged prepaid mail in the three months following the visit. This represented more than 41% of Logan's static population.

Logan mean scores for all four key MQPL dimensions were below neutral (3.00), or in other words, were negative. Further, most individual questions scored below 3.00, and several were below 2.00, strongly indicating areas in need of improvement echoing historical and 2022 visit observations.

MQPL surveys for incarcerated people additionally contain four open-ended questions asking about the most positive and negative aspects of the prison, recommended improvements, and for any other feedback on the survey or comments. Focus groups during the visit solicited similar input. JHA has separately made available [survey response data](#) (that is not MQPL scored) and comments by prison.

While the accompanying Staff Quality of Life survey (SQL) was made available online to staff at Logan, the limited number of responses (19) as of March 1, 2023 prevented meaningful quantitative data analysis. Therefore, the use of the staff survey has been limited to the extraction of quotations for Logan participants and mean scores have not been calculated.

In this report, as the question scores are more meaningful or understandable with greater context, some comparison is made to Decatur survey results, even though the facilities have many differences.

While the comparison between IDOC's female prisons provides a benchmark, it should not be assessed as a precise comparison due to the many differences between Decatur and Logan (including security classification), which likely have a noticeable impact on how people in each prison assessed the questions and responded to them. Other differences include that: Logan has the Reception and Classification Center for all female intake in IDOC; Logan is substantially larger with more than double Decatur's population; and while Logan is a multi-security level prison housing people with varying offenses and lengths of incarceration, Logan is the female prison for people in IDOC who are classified as higher security or having higher mental health needs. Additionally, the prisons have vastly different physical plants. For example, some people at Logan commented that movement and fresh air was a positive of Logan, and some contrasted this to Decatur where most of the facility and services are contained within one building. Decatur is also air-conditioned, which was mentioned as a positive, unlike most housing areas at Logan.

Ongoing COVID restrictions also may play some role in scores. JHA continued to receive reports into 2023 that people at Logan were seriously restricted due to quarantine practices, as throughout IDOC and at Decatur. For example, JHA received a report from Logan in early 2023 that it had been a month since a particular housing area had yard or gym due to COVID lockdown, which requested that people be able to go to patio areas for fresh air. There will always be a need for MQPL scores to be seen and better understood in context of the time and environment they seek to measure – which given the multifaceted nature of prisons, remains complex.

In applying the MQPL at Logan and throughout IDOC, JHA is interested in exploring if this is a useful tool for understanding the “climate” or overall environment in different prisons, as well as the factors that impact this. Further, we seek to discover whether the MQPL can be a useful managerial tool for IDOC. In England & Wales, MQPL and SQL surveys are regularly administered at all prisons every 1-3 years, enabling comparisons across facilities and over time. In the future, JHA and partners—including the [Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy, and Practice at Loyola University, Chicago](#)—will further investigate how the MQPL may

be used to compare prisons across IDOC to highlight areas of difference and change, and use our experience and expertise to theorize reasons accounting for data variation. JHA, along with our sister oversight organizations in New York and Pennsylvania, will also explore if the MQPL can be used to understand differences among prisons in other states, and if so, how that information can be used as a monitoring tool and to improve the climate inside institutions.

## Population and Demographics

Female housing in IDOC consisted of Logan, Decatur, the [Fox Valley Adult Transition Center](#) (or work release, which housed about 80 women in December 2022 and had a reported rated capacity of 128), and some beds at the [Joliet Inpatient Treatment Center](#) (total population less than 20 including men as of December 2022, with a reported rated capacity of 202 people, if staffed.) The population of Logan was around 2.5 times that of Decatur at the times at which data was collected. As noted above, Logan also houses people with higher mental health needs.

| Population                   |                            |                          |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
|                              | Logan – December 2022      | Decatur – September 2022 |
| Total Population             | 990 (rated capacity 1,215) | 398 (rated capacity 684) |
| Mental Health Caseload       | 852 (86%)                  | 319 (80%)                |
| Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI) | 363 (37%)                  | 62 (16%)                 |

Logan housed a larger identified transgender population: 12 trans women and 39 trans men as of the time of August 2023 draft review, while Decatur reportedly housed three trans men. The percentage of the population at Logan identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual was reported to be 19.4% at the time of the 2022 [PREA audit](#).

There were significantly higher numbers of people of color in held at Logan.

| Race          |                       |                          |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
|               | Logan – December 2022 | Decatur – September 2022 |
| White         | 52.8%                 | 76.9%                    |
| Black         | 36.1%                 | 18.6%                    |
| Hispanic      | 9.0%                  | 4.0%                     |
| Asian         | 1.0%                  | 0.5%                     |
| Unknown/Other | 1.0%                  | 0.0%                     |

Another component with possible implications for survey data is the offense class of incarcerated people.

| Offense Class |                       |                        |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
|               | Logan – December 2022 | Decatur – October 2022 |
| Murder        | 19%                   | 4%                     |
| Class X       | 21%                   | 8%                     |
| Class 1       | 9%                    | 12%                    |
| Class 2       | 18%                   | 26%                    |
| Class 3       | 19%                   | 28%                    |
| Class 4       | 13%                   | 22%                    |

JHA heard from many people who had been at Logan for months on low-level offenses who believed they should be classified for Decatur or lower security settings, and they did not understand what was keeping them at Logan.

In Logan visit follow-up, **JHA again stressed that other IDOC settings had populations far below reported capacities and that transfers should be better utilized for lower security housing and inpatient mental health need where appropriate, which should optimize treatment, programing, and sentencing credit opportunity.** JHA observed that many crowding and resource problems at Logan seemed to be in part a product of inefficient population management.

During the 2022 Logan visit, JHA did not have opportunity to speak with the one person reportedly in what used to commonly be known as [boot camp](#), or the “Impact Incarceration

Program,” at Logan. However, we questioned if it is appropriate for this “program” to be at Logan given all of the challenges at the prison. If successfully completed, participation can significantly [reduce sentences](#). Subsequent IDOC public reporting showed no female participants, and program status remained unclear. In August 2023 draft review administrators reported there were three participants at Logan who were housed in the X-house, and that discussions were ongoing about the program status. **IDOC must give people the opportunity that Impact Incarceration should afford, and it should be established somewhere where it can be better utilized.**

## Staffing

As throughout IDOC, staff shortages were chronic according to administrative staff. Information provided by IDOC for December 2022 shows a slightly higher rate of filled security staff positions at Logan than what was reported to JHA for Decatur in September 2022, but also demonstrate a lower rate of non-security staff positions filled.

| Staffing                              |                       |                          |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
|                                       | Logan – December 2022 | Decatur – September 2022 |
| Security staff positions filled       | 78%                   | 73%                      |
| Non-Security staff positions filled   | 67%                   | 82%                      |
| Security staff positions              | 426                   | 122                      |
| Non-Security staff positions          | 86                    | 84                       |
| Non-IDOC staff positions <sup>1</sup> | 124                   | 27                       |

As reported in ongoing class action litigation regarding unconstitutional healthcare provision in IDOC, [healthcare vacancies](#) throughout the system remain closer to 50%. **Information provided by IDOC from January 2023 showed nurse staffing vacancies of about 78% at Logan, compared to IDOC’s average of 70%.** JHA continues to receive many healthcare related concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> Includes contractual positions, such as healthcare.

While Logan had a slightly higher number of security positions filled than Decatur, incarcerated people lamented the problems caused by shortages. Such issues have been commonly reported throughout IDOC.<sup>2</sup>

*"Please help us. Officer shortages make life Hell. We are denied classes, gym, etc. because short staffed." – Survey quote from an individual in custody*

*"Everywhere is always "short staffed," there are too many people cramped in this prison, mass incarceration is real, too many people not enough staff."*

Other impacts of a lack of staff were documented across a number of dimension areas throughout this report.

## 1. Harmony

The MQPL survey questions forming the Harmony dimension scores explore perceptions of the interpersonal or relational aspects between staff and incarcerated people, and how this informs the prison experience. Another way of describing what Harmony measures is whether there are positive or productive relationships between staff and incarcerated people.

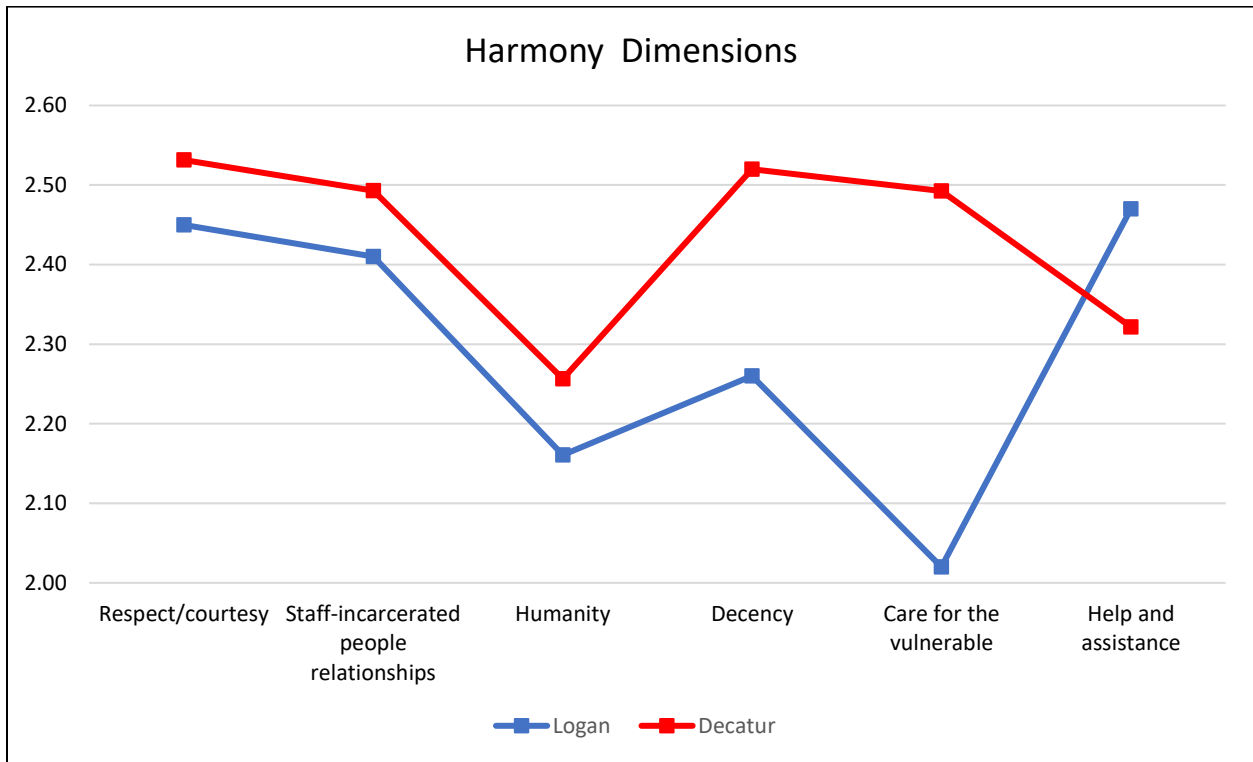
Here Logan scored better than Decatur only in the measurement of "Help and Assistance," although the mean score at Logan was still below neutral. Logan scored worse than Decatur on questions on all other themes, including "Respect/Courtesy," "Staff-Incarcerated People Relationships," "Humanity," "Decency," and "Care for the Vulnerable." Again, the dimension thematic area descriptions and full survey results are included herein as Appendices.

| Statement                                      | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| I feel that I am treated with respect by staff | 2.33  | 2.40    |

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this report, survey quotes from individuals in custody are included in red boxes, red text, or as images, while survey quotes from staff are presented in green boxes or green text.



Prior JHA surveys conducted pre-pandemic show similarly concerning scores for like questions. For example, [in a survey conducted by JHA at Logan in 2018](#) just 15% of Logan respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “most staff treat inmates with respect,” [compared to 24% at Decatur in 2017](#) and [32% at Decatur in February 2020](#).



### a. Constructive staff/individual in custody relations

A positive finding identified at Logan were anecdotal examples of positive relationships with certain staff. Both IDOC women’s prisons averaged lower than neutral for all but one of the Harmony questions.

| Statement                                      | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| I get along well with the officers on my unit. | 3.12  | 3.15    |

The above neutral response was for *“I get along well with the officers on my unit,”* indicating that proximity or closer relationship may be a benefit. Similarly, the prior JHA survey responses at Logan and Decatur for *“There is at least one staff member that I could ask for help,”* were majority positive, 57% and 68%.

In the past, IDOC administrators have expressed the desire to implement a unit management approach in which staff posted on units are responsible for being responsive to people housed on that unit. Because of the more discrete population and duty scope, the idea is that staff would come to know people more as individuals, enabling them to individualize responses. The survey input may suggest some encouragement for that approach, as non-responsiveness to issues continued to be an overarching concern.

| Statement  | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| I have been helped significantly by a staff member with a particular problem | 2.47  | 2.32    |

The theme of “Help and Assistance” within the Harmony dimension is considered a key component of improving relationships between staff and incarcerated people. This score difference is where Logan, in a rare instance, was scored slightly higher than Decatur. This may be explained in part by the fact that incarcerated people may have higher expectations of (and therefore higher levels of disappointment in) Decatur staff, as it is a minimum-security prison and there is an expectation of help with reentry preparation. Nonetheless, JHA was pleased that some survey comments from Logan identified examples of some particularly helpful staff:

*“We have good wardens [...] The mental health is great. The staff does try to help us when we need it.”*

*“If you have a problem and you approach the person in charge with respect you can get the problem solved.”*

*“Some of the C.O.s are very helpful, treat people like actual people, and care.”*

That some staff see their role as supportive was also shown in Logan staff survey responses:

*"The individuals that we supervise are incarcerated for a reason, but we still have to see them as people. Yes, we are here to do a job, but our job is to protect both the incarcerated individuals but also the staff that work within the facility. Having the opportunity to learn different ways that we as a department are able to help the individuals that are incarcerated is satisfying." – Survey quote from a staff member*

*"I enjoy making a difference. Most of these people will go back out into the world. My job is to help them not come back. I like helping them figure out problem and congratulating them on successes. I enjoy watching them better themselves and try to work on their issues."*

*"[A positive thing is] Feeling like I can make a difference in incarcerated individuals' lives, even if it's as simple as being a confidential source for them to vent to."*

However, more generalized Logan survey findings demonstrated concerns regarding staff/incarcerated people interpersonal relationships relating to staff lack of respect, discrimination, unfairness, non-responsiveness, and permitting disorder or even causing harm. Additionally, both staff and incarcerated people identified low staff morale. Together these findings suggest that the identified examples of positive relationships are more likely representative of initiatives taken by individual staff, rather than being institutionalized.

## **b. Generalized findings of a lack of respect and humanity**

*TREAT US LIKE HUMANS AND YOU'LL GET HUMANS.*

An important measure within the survey in which Logan scored consistently worse than Decatur was in questions that addressed themes of “Respect,” “Staff-Incarcerated People Relationships,” “Humanity,” and “Decency.” The most negative score for Logan under the Harmony dimension related to staff being argumentative.

| Statement  | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| Staff are argumentative towards incarcerated people. | 1.97  | 2.11    |
| I trust the officers.                                | 2.07  | 2.29    |
| Some of the treatment I receive is degrading.        | 2.09  | 2.26    |
| I am not being treated as a human being in here.     | 2.38  | 2.56    |
| This is a humane prison.                             | 2.16  | 2.63    |

Some women at Logan specifically discussed triggering and retraumatizing behaviors by male staff who curse or yell at them and get close physically or even threaten physical violence.

*“These male COs [Correctional Officers] go out of their way to threaten, intimidate, and be aggressive simply because they can!”*

Some people told JHA that they knew some staff had arrests, restraining orders, or histories of domestic violence, and they were uncomfortable that these people could still be supervising them. While JHA was not able to confirm such claims, this issue relates also to the perceived lack of appropriate consequences for staff conduct discussed below.

Individuals in custody also commented on there being fewer female staff, which seemed like it may be the case to JHA staff during the visit as well. Requested information regarding the number of security staff by sex at Logan was not provided prior to August 2023 draft review. At that time, Logan administrators reported 25% of the security staff and 64% of non-security staff was female. Decatur reported at the time of the 2022 JHA visit that 43% of total IDOC staff there was female. Female staff are necessary for certain posts and searches.

Many comments regarding the most negative things at Logan related to lack of respect and humanity.

"The negatives about this prison are the officers take everything personal. Also the officers not being professional, treating us as if we are less-than because we are incarcerated."

"The disrespect from staff, they don't know how to speak to you no matter what the issue may be."

"The most negative things are that the C.O.'s don't treat you like humans for real. There are only a few who do not."

Several individual in custody comments discussed how staff treatment related to their feeling of humanity.

"The treatment of individuals in custody by staff. The obvious racism prejudice and lack of empathy for us as humans. Also the lack of healthcare. There is absolutely no real treatment for our medical issues. We're all treated as liars. Total disregard for our physical and mental health."

"Staff treat us like we are nothing. They treat us as if we are not human."

"We get treated inhumane. The majority of the officers use their power to take advantage of inmates."

This was also noted in some staff surveys. For example, one person noted that a satisfying thing about their job was:

"The thanks I receive from individual students for treating them like humans in a place where many feel dehumanized."

As cited in JHA's monitoring visit follow-up sent to the Department, these trends were reinforced by multiple examples of serious concerns of staff abuse and misconduct. JHA was especially concerned by instances reported where staff unnecessarily escalated incidents or appeared to have unregulated emotional responses. Additionally, inappropriate behaviors often reportedly involved supervisory staff.

In particular, during the December visit and in survey responses, JHA heard from multiple sources detailed information and concerns regarding an incident where a particular woman was reportedly physically assaulted by a named staff person in a position of authority. People stated the staff member *"beat her head against the wall because she asked for help with her breast milk."* Some reported she did not want to put her milk on the floor because it was unsanitary, and she told the staff member to stop yelling at her before he *"smashed her face into the wall."* Reportedly, individuals in custody asked another staff member to intervene, and in response they were told if they did not like it to file a grievance. A supervisor was also reportedly involved. Several people told JHA representatives that the woman who was assaulted was *"sent to seg,"* i.e., disciplinary housing. While we raised this issue to IDOC administrators, we remain unsure of the staff outcome, although the woman was transferred to Decatur.

Some people reported more generally that staff *"put hands"* on them, or reported less detailed instances, e.g., that someone was *"jumped by COs in chow hall."* Someone who is transgender reported being threatened with mace in dietary by a supervisor for not immediately following an order. There was also a concern that staff facilitated individual in custody assaults of others. Some people also reported staff and supervisors told them to fight.

Verbal abuse from staff also continued to be commonly reported, e.g., cursing, name calling, etc. For example, a supervisor reportedly told someone he did not care about her *"f-ing"* issue. Another supervisor reportedly lost his beanie and cursed out individuals in custody in the area, calling them thieves and *"bitches"* before he found it. Staff calling women *"bitches"* was reported in multiple locations. Some staff were reported to say hateful things to individuals like *"you have no friends"* or *"no one remembers you."* Individuals stated that staff look up people's cases and talk about them, which is a common concern throughout IDOC prisons. As another example of staff's unnecessarily escalating behavior, someone reported she overheard

a staff member saying to a supervisor that he was messing with a mental health patient by turning the light on and off in her cell.

JHA received many reports in a particular housing area that a supervisor caused conflict. Many people stated to JHA that they believed this person would retaliate against them for talking to us or completing surveys, for example with shakedowns.

Several people commented they felt they were ignored, lied to, or retaliated against by staff for raising issues, and were therefore distrusting.

Notably, JHA also received several reports of staff problematic behavior extending to treatment of other staff and lack of accountability:

*"Also a large number of staff are allowed to belittle, harass, and discipline staff for personal reasons, which should not be tolerated in a professional setting."*

*"Staff bully + harass everyone including each other today [Date Redacted] on House 1 I witness a C/O push the other + the one being bullied was cursing out inmates"*

**This reported staff culture and lack of accountability is troubling.** The ongoing presence of staff, including staff in positions of authority, who have reportedly been responsible for incidents of unprofessional or even abusive behavior may be indicative of a lack of adequate response to staff misconduct, as discussed below.

### c. Care for the vulnerable

Q13 What are the most negative things about life in this prison?

*I'm transgender, and treated like a animal*

In the Harmony dimension, “Care for the Vulnerable” attempts to measure how staff support people who may be particularly at risk. In the shortened MQPL, JHA asked just one question under this theme.

| Statement  | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| Bullying behavior by incarcerated people is not tolerated. | 2.02  | 2.49    |

As noted above, bullying was a significant concern at Logan, emerging under multiple dimensions. People in custody at Logan reported themselves or others being vulnerable or discriminated against based on many different characteristics including sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, age, or disability.

Specifically, in survey comments, some incarcerated people highlighted a discriminatory environment at Logan for LGBTQIA+ individuals.

*“I do not want to give the impression that all inmates are or behave like Angels. However, we are not animals. The blatant disrespect Especially from the male staff toward women, transgender, African Americans and those who identify as Gay/Lesbian is beyond oppressive.”*

*“[Recommendation] For staff to actually take the classes to use gender inclusive language, like they were supposed to according to Monroe v Jeffreys [transgender treatment] case. And for them to just respect people as people. Prison needs repercussions for staff that doesn’t respect IIC’s or when they call IIC out of their name/gender.”*

*“They mis-label Trans-men as “Ladies” Every chance they get”*

Some transgender people shared that they felt they were inappropriately limited to certain housing areas. Administrators responded that this was not the case, but also stated that certain areas permitted greater shower privacy. Further, though not explicitly stated, it seemed to JHA



that some people with higher security levels were limited to certain housing areas. We were not sure why this could not be explained to people, but it may relate to the fact that due to limited placements, people with lower security classifications may be housed in the same area, highlighting the potentially inappropriate and even dangerous mixing of populations.

JHA also received some concerns that staff did not provide needed gender affirming care and items. Some transgender people reported that their right to adequate healthcare was not met, and expressed concerns regarding availability of commissary items. Binders were reportedly not approved for trans men, which JHA recommended. Commissary concerns also continued to be a general concern at Logan, as discussed further below, and JHA received reports that commissary ran out of things like food, hygiene items and clothes, including undergarments, and specifically that boxers for trans men were frequently unavailable.

There is [ongoing class action litigation](#) regarding treatment of transgender people in IDOC, in addition to litigation [regarding healthcare](#) generally and [mental health](#). During JHA's December 2022 Logan visit, some trans people reported they were approved for gender-affirming surgery, in one case for over a year, but reported they were unable to get any updates. As of August 2023, IDOC reported at least four individuals at Logan have had gender-affirming surgery and that they are working closely with outside providers and providing individuals with information and supports.

Some staff also reported that other staff make transphobic and derogatory comments, including in mental health areas, and that they are not removed from their posts.

Again, some individuals in custody mentioned examples of staff who were professional in contrast to other negative examples, which JHA finds encouraging. For example, a particular staff member was noted to be calm, polite, and always used correct pronouns.

JHA also received several comments from individuals in custody expressing that they felt transgender people were privileged at Logan or expressing concern about being housed with trans individuals, which is further discussed under general security concerns below. We note that this too relates to concerns regarding staff's ability to properly care for vulnerable people, and general feelings relating to unfairness and lack of control at the prison. These findings highlight the need for staff and population training to have a focus on non-discrimination and

equality. JHA was told that additional trainings are planned by [the Moss Group](#). In August 2023 draft review, Logan administrators reported that 98.6% of their staff had been trained and that they had attempted a voluntary training for the population, but this had had poor attendance, and they were considering other methods of sharing information.

Under the Harmony dimension, a question related care and vulnerability is asked under “Decency,” pertaining to self-harm, where again Logan’s score was concerningly low given the high level of mental health need in the population:

| Statement   | Logan | Decatur |
|---|-------|---------|
| Anyone who harms themselves is considered by staff to be more of an attention seeker than someone who needs help. | 2.08  | 2.65    |

Mental health treatment is further discussed under the Healthcare section below. Several comments addressed how bullying and lack of staff assistance in this area resulted in increased harm.

*“Death has been the only option for people seeking help, because staff did not care enough to pick up the phone for mental health or placement to move the person to another cell. more care should be given when putting people in the room together.”*

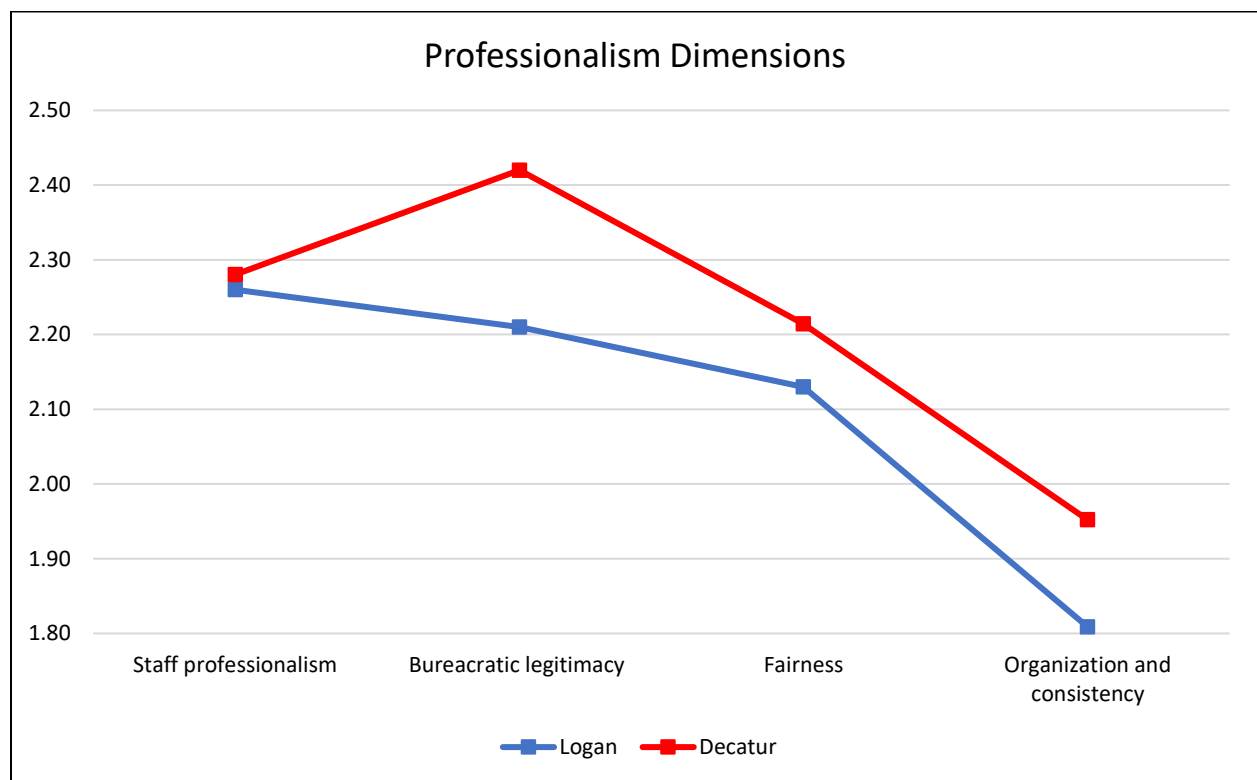
Related to this, there were several comments discussing that people have to act out to get any staff attention and that those who act out are the only ones to get attention or may even be rewarded.

Perceptions of staff discrimination against certain individuals or groups, or the opposite of care for the vulnerable, were also expressed in interviews. This is an area requiring more work.

## 2. Professionalism

The MQPL “Professionalism” dimension looks at how the prison operates or functions. “The ‘professionalism’ dimensions represent key aspects of the ‘craft’ of prison work, shaping the way it is carried out, involving communication and other skills, general expertise, knowledge, reliability and experience, and internalized as well as organizational values.”<sup>3</sup> “Professionalism” demonstrates how staff orientation towards incarcerated people impacts their approach to their daily tasks.

The main findings on questions focusing on this dimension showed perceptions of a lack of clarity on rules and a lack of discipline, including for staff misconduct, and lack of incentives for good behavior. There were also particular concerns expressed around the lack of professionalism regarding provision of healthcare.



<sup>3</sup> “Conceptualising and Measuring the Quality of Prison Life” Sage Handbook of Criminological Research Methods, Liebling et al, London 2011

## a. Lack of clarity of rules

Logan scored lowest under Professionalism in survey questions targeting “Organization and Consistency,” where again, the scores at Logan were worse than Decatur. Effective organization is fundamental to achieving institutional function. Incarcerated people and staff noted differences across shifts and supervisors and a lack of communication among them.

| Statement                 | Logan | Decatur |
|---------------------------|-------|---------|
| You never know the rules. | 2.25  | 2.35    |

The issue of rule inconsistency or ambiguity was explicitly raised in multiple comments.

*“I have a slogan “there are no rules in Logan!” I say this because they don't care about anything.”*

*“The rules change every day, nothing is ever the same from day to day.”*

*“Staff and IICs need to have solid rules/structure to follow. Not so much confusion and chaos. The mental anguish on both IIC and staff is devastating.”*

Someone specifically cited how there was less clarity of rules at Logan than at Decatur:

*“We need to be modeled after Decatur Women's Prison, inmates do not run things, the rules are always the same and general treatment of them is much better than here.”*

Some staff survey responses also identified a failure to clarify rules.

*“Rules are constantly changing. Rules are enforced on some shifts but not others.”*

The incomprehensibility of rules, and the lack of accommodation for people who did not understand specific rules correctly, was also evidenced in interviews. Some people reported they were ticketed for rules that had not been told to them. For example, someone was concerned that she would be moved off of her housing unit for a ticket she received after she reportedly had coffee to take her medications, but was told she needed clear liquids and she was unaware this rule existed. Another woman reported she was given a ticket for refusing housing when she physically could not get onto a top bunk.

Another common example of rule confusion continued to relate to COVID protocols. Some people knew that unvaccinated staff were still working and were upset with this given that they believed their loved ones were precluded from visiting if unvaccinated. There was a lack of awareness that visitors were able to apply for an exemption. The vaccination mandate for staff and people visiting IDOC prisons was suspended in January 2023 after the visit. In May, JHA continued to hear during some IDOC prison visits that incarcerated people were unaware of the change and current COVID rules.

**As recommended in JHA visit follow-up, IDOC should take initiative to actively communicate and ensure that people know the rules and updates, with ongoing access.**

JHA has repeatedly recommended that IDOC make policies, memos, manuals, and other materials – as well as updates – accessible in hard copy on housing units and in prison libraries, as well as electronically on tablets, on institutional tv channels (which Logan lacks), and on the IDOC webpage, so that people’s outside supports can also access them.

## **b. Communication on issues of concern**

In addition to the problems identified on the failure to communicate and enforce rules consistently, there were other areas in which uncertainty arose due to a lack of communication.

| <b>Statement</b>   | <b>Logan</b> | <b>Decatur</b> |
|--|--------------|----------------|
| This prison is poor at giving incarcerated people reasons for decisions. | 2.02         | 2.01           |

Notably, staff survey responses also suggested some staff do not feel well informed or involved in *"bigger picture"* initiatives, and many feel reasons for decisions are also not communicated to staff.

The issue of lack of communication regarding water quality was raised by many individuals in custody who continued to believe that legionella was present in the water supply at Logan. While administrators explained that measures had been taken to address the issue and that there was no threat, concern was expressed by many. Concerns regarding water have been an issue [throughout IDOC](#).

*"Water quality, rules are not easily communicated—They're spread by word of mouth from inmate to inmate."*

*"Logan prison very inconsistent in every area. Water is making a lot of us inmates sick, kidney pain, bladder, stomach problems."*

Recommendations regarding communication were prioritized by several of incarcerated people in interviews. Some people suggested briefing sessions or re-orientation when there are major issues to give people the opportunity to ask questions. **JHA supports the suggestion of organized briefings on key issues in addition to the above recommendation to ensure important updates on rules are accessible on housing units, in addition to the library and in other public areas.**

The lack of communication around rules and reasoning was also prioritized as an important issue to address by some staff.

*"Staff should be more informed of decisions that are being made and why they are being made... Staff have a voice, and they need to be heard but also when there are changes being made to certain things, they should be informed"*

The measures cited above for clear communication of rules and key updates need to be replicated for staff so that the entire community has shared understanding.

**JHA has consistently advocated for prioritization of improved communication, especially during times of uncertainty and change, as during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a low cost, high impact area for the Department to focus on improving.**

### **c. Perceptions of unfairness**

Strongly linked to the above findings on lack of clarity of rules and communication, there were negative scores around perceptions of bureaucratic legitimacy and fairness, which were once again mostly found to be worse at Logan than at Decatur. The perceptions of unfairness were reinforced by comments indicating the access to basic services is not assured evenly.

| <b>Statement</b>                                       | <b>Logan</b> | <b>Decatur</b> |
|--|--------------|----------------|
| Staff treat people here fairly when applying the rules | 2.08         | 2.20           |
| The disciplinary system is fair                        | 1.94         | 2.18           |

Perceptions of a lack of fairness were conveyed in comments that critiqued multiple aspects of the system.

*"No proper grievance process or disciplinary hearings. We're automatically guilty."*

*"There is no structure, consistency, or humane treatment. staff gossip like highschoolers + base their decisions/treatment off of their gossip + personal opinions rather than acting as professionals."*

*"You're forced to act a fool to get anything done Because your punished for Going about things correctly. everyone is considered a "thief" and a "liar." no one is allowed to be Different we are "Grouped""*

Both the probable underlying reasons for the low perceptions of fairness and the required course of action are similar to those applying to the finding relating to rules. **It is essential that the prison system ensure that both the rules and the corresponding consequences are well publicized and evenly enforced.** These recommendations are consistent with those expressed by several incarcerated people.

*"We all need to be treated the same and fairly."*

*"Apply all rules to everyone, no favoritism, have the C/O's be more aware"*

#### **d. Poor staff responsiveness**

*"Request slips go un-answered, but anytime we need anything they tell us to fill out a request slip, which solves nothing since nobody ever answers them."*

Individuals in custody at Logan reported lack of staff appropriate responsiveness, in some cases while also recognizing the under-resourcing of staffing, training, supervision, or other staff challenges. At Logan there was a similar lack of responsiveness identified as at Decatur, reflecting one of the most negatively scored areas of the MQPL surveys. Additional issues relating to Professionalism are discussed in the Healthcare section of this report.

| <b>Statement</b>   | <b>Logan</b> | <b>Decatur</b> |
|--|--------------|----------------|
| The best way to get things done is to go through official channels.                  | 2.62         | 2.57           |
| Staff have enough experience and expertise to deal with the issues that matter to me | 2.13         | 2.18           |
| To get things done, you have to ask and ask and ask                                  | 1.60         | 1.62           |

Asking and asking reflects a lack of effective recourse and can exasperating for staff. This also may relate to the aforementioned issue regarding lack of clarity for rules and inconsistency. Several individuals in custody stated that staff would not talk to them regarding their questions



about policy. It is unclear whether staff may not respond due to lack of professionalism or perhaps due to feeling that they lack appropriate recourse.

At the time of the December visit, Logan was operating with a clinical services staff deficit. A number of issues reported may relate to this staffing area, although JHA notes that counseling training, caseloads, and neglect of duties have been longstanding problematic areas within IDOC. As at other IDOC prisons, JHA received data showing a concerning backlog of grievances, the official mechanism that is supposed to be used to resolve issues absent informal resolution. It did not appear that, given the low response rate, the volume could be appropriately managed. The Logan data provided from November 2022 showed slightly more than a quarter of the 3,000+ grievances in the year to date were marked completed. People believed that nothing happens with grievances they file, particularly related to staff misconduct. Some reported they ceased filing grievances because of this. In August 2023 draft review, Logan administrators reported they had hired six new clinical staff, doubling the positions filled, as of the beginning of August.

In addition to lack of response through official methods, people commonly reported concern regarding retaliation, and some stated they were *"threatened with tickets"* if they expressed concerns. Several reported that if you complain, you will not be liked or will be retaliated against by staff.

Some people commented regarding lack of staff control and ineffective use of discipline, even noting that staff too are bullied, which is further discussed under Security below.

*"Staff need to stand up to some incarcerated people that cause trouble + not back down."*

*"The staff that this prison does have is verbally abused by inmates, Disrespected, Degraded as inmates treat other inmates as well if your not part of their "clique" - the officers do nothing when they are talked to like that by inmates."*

*"Enforcement of Inmate conduct has to change. Inmates Run most of Logan, especially the High Side. Officers do NOT care what happens to us, they ignore flagrantly wrong behavior. Please help."*

Low staff morale deriving largely from a lack of control was also demonstrated in staff survey comments. JHA notes that these issues also relate to other issues reported, including inconsistent application of rules and lack of appropriate incentives.

*"Dealing with the disrespect because the Individuals in Custody know that we don't really have the power to stop them. They can threaten us, disobey us, or be insolent and call us names, and there is no punishment. If they do get punishment, usually its 7 days in restrictive housing and then they are back doing the same things."*

*"Allow security staff to do their job. Security staff cannot do their job because they do not have control. Officers do not have any authority anymore. This does not allow them to do their job properly. Individuals in custody walk all over Officers. Individuals in custody are allowed to treat Officers horribly with no discipline given. Officers write disciplinary tickets and nothing is done."*

*"Lack of Supervisor staff having your back when you are RIGHT!"*

## **e. Lack of consequences for staff conduct**

Mirroring concerns regarding lack of effective discipline for misconduct in the population, there were numerous concerns regarding lack of consequences for poor staff conduct, including neglect of duties and lack of professionalism, as well as serious misconduct.

As mentioned above in relation to Humanity, many people at Logan chose to use the space in surveys for comments regarding the most negative things at Logan to identify poor staff conduct, dehumanizing behavior, and a lack of consequences for infractions committed by staff.

*"The guards have no problem calling you stupid, bitch, retarded, and many other names. When you report the problems with staff to internal affairs, nothing ever happens because they say everything is unfounded. Then the guard will come back and say "you all think your voice matters when it doesn't."*

*"Not all of the staff are bad but some will literally lie on you to get you in trouble or seg. They can lay hands on you and when you report it, no one comes to help you. Staff can do and say anything to you with no consequences."*

*"Staff always right, never held accountable. inappropriate relations between staff and individuals in custody causing favoritism."*

Several recommendations for improvement at Logan also addressed these concerns.

*"Training and enforcement for the staff to learn how to address and handle women. Consequences for the officers who do not comply with the moral + ethical code that should exist in this facility"*

*"Listen to us when we report inappropriate behavior from male C.O.'s."*

The need for staff accountability was also cited in staff survey comments, conveying how some staff would welcome a transparent approach. When asked to identify problems, staff members wrote:

*"Favoritism, Selective punishment of staff, and poor leadership (lack of empathy for front line staff)."*

*"Have majors hold everyone accountable and not just pick and choose."*

*"Staff that get away with doing everything wrong."*

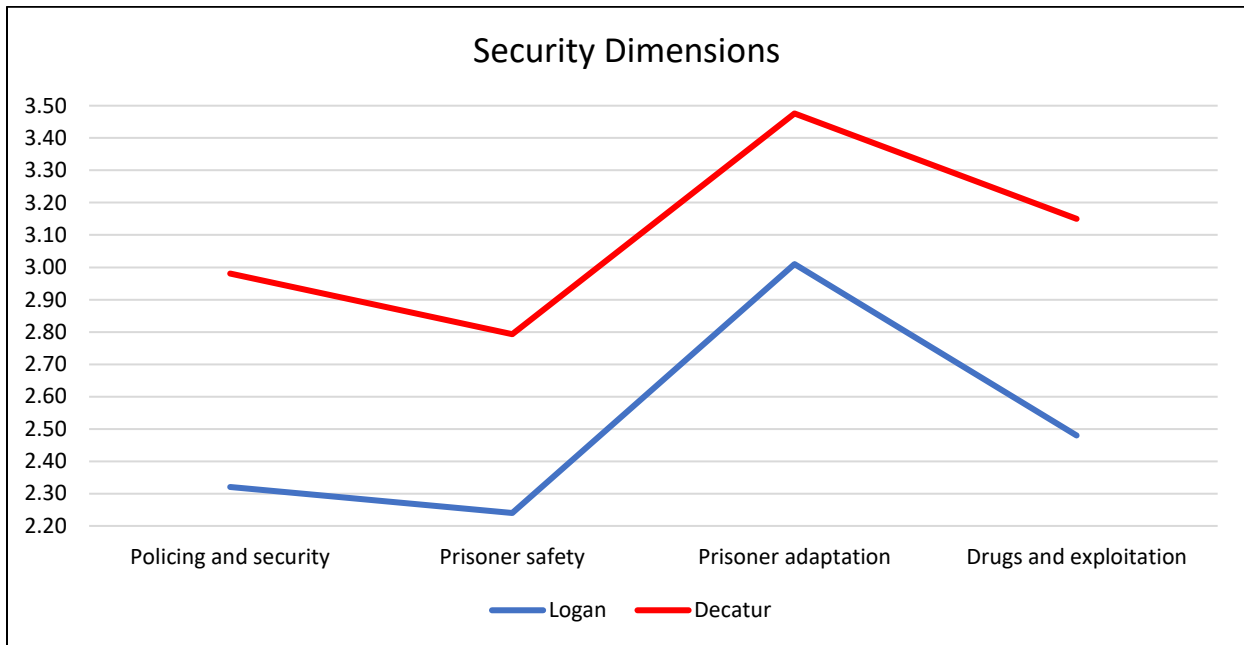
*"Majors, Lieutenants, and Sergeants are not held accountable. Staff need to be given more respect and an appropriate workload. Currently if you complete your workload you are just given someone else's which causes burn out."*

In addition to proper training and supports, a further component of ensuring quality and standardized professional staff conduct should be in the consistent application of disciplinary measures to staff. Again, it is essential that both staff and incarcerated people are made aware of the correct forms of staff conduct and the consequences for breaking rules. **JHA recommends IDOC make more of this information public.**

### 3. Security

The MQPL "Security" dimension questions reflect those aspects of a prison's environment concerned with the rule of law and the proper use of authority, the regulation of behavior, and

the provision of safety. This was an area with some of the larger variations in Logan data from Decatur results.



| JHA Question                                 | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| This prison is safe for incarcerated people. | 2.04  | 2.92    |

In 2022 surveys, only 12% of Logan respondents agreed that the prison was safe, while 68% disagreed. Some staff also expressed that the prison was not safe for incarcerated people or acknowledged the issue of bullying in the population. Several staff also felt supervision of the population was poor.

### a. Unsafe physical conditions

*"We aren't providing basic things that we should be. No heat In the kitchen in December?! How am I to teach these people to value themselves and others when the department wont even provide basic human rights to them?"*

While the survey did not specifically ask about the physical conditions, this issue was raised independently by many incarcerated people and staff. Prior [JHA Logan reports](#) have noted that many needs cannot be met until a suitable physical environment is provided.

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Shortly after JHA submitted a draft of this report to IDOC, an [infrastructure assessment](#) of IDOC facilities by hired consultants CGL was made public. This report showed a \$2.5 billion estimate of needed repairs throughout IDOC, with \$116 million of deferred maintenance at Logan. The report also outlines staffing deficits and projected population needs, and makes recommendations, including finding more suitable housing for women than at Logan. CGL states, *“Our review found the existing Logan Correctional Center to be inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population. The aging coal-fired power system, molding housing units, and facility layout all work in opposition to the mission and goals of the facility.”*

As discussed above in relation to failure to communicate issues of concern and impact to incarcerated people, such as water safety, physical conditions were a major source of stress and an observed serious ongoing issue. People expressed concerns about physical plant conditions effects on health and believed the living environment was making them sick. They also wanted greater access to cleaning supplies and better sanitation. There were reports that cells were not deep cleaned and that toilets in a particular area backed up.

There were reports that water was brown or discolored, made people break out, or tasted metallic. People were aware of the positive legionella tests and felt it was unsafe. Some people reported individuals in custody were not told anything about this, but that staff were told not to drink the water and that some *“good”* staff told people what was going on. People reported in December that bottled water just started being provided and that it was sold on commissary. While some felt they had to buy it, there were limits on purchases.

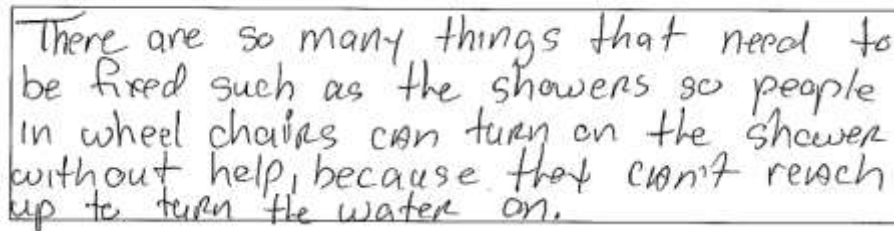
Some people reported that garbage was burnt near housing units at times or that they are affected by smoke from the coal burning boilers, both issues that caused people to want better ventilation systems. People also reported that there had been fires in a laundry room.

JHA was particularly concerned regarding reports of loss of power at the prison. Some commented on this and noted that it became very hot in the summer during outages. While some healthcare housing has air conditioning, several Logan survey comments mentioned lack of air conditioning in the summer, in contrast to Decatur.

We again observed water leaks and damage, mold, and other issues throughout the prison. People in different places reported lack of control of water temperature and that the hot water was scalding. In the X-House, one woman told us that her privates had been scalded and that she had received medication. JHA looked at a particular shower in the X-House on request, and we found the condition unacceptable. Only one shower head was working, and it was angled such that a person would have to press against the metal divider to be under the stream. We were told multiple people use the shower at once, which should not occur. Additionally, we were informed that a power washer or other cleaning supplies were not yet made available in contrast to representations regarding improvements.

In addition to numerous conditions concerns including mold, several people noted that there were not places to put clothing while in the showers. People wanted pegs or a shelf to store things in their rooms and in bathrooms. They said clothes get wet while they shower and there is nowhere to hang them to dry, and they can get in trouble for obstructing views by hanging things on bunks. **Fixing this one issue allowing people somewhere to keep clothing dry would be a small measure of humanity.**

Q15 Please write any other comments or feedback on this survey below.



There are so many things that need to be fixed such as the showers so people in wheel chairs can turn on the shower without help, because they can't reach up to turn the water on.

**JHA continued to be disturbed by lack of ADA accommodations for people, as noted in the above comment, and emphasizes the need for proactive assessment and work on these issues in recognition of the increasing aging and infirmed population.**

Further, **it was unacceptable that in a mental health housing area people reported that they had not had yard for four months due to a fencing issue**, while people there also

reported gym was not offered because of lack of staff. Several people commented elsewhere also regarding lack of staff to run yards and some reported gym was only offered once a week for an hour.

We also continue to have basic safety concerns at Logan, including the obvious danger of water and electrical possibly mixing in some locations, such as in an X-house shower where a light fixture reportedly leaked, or a staff workspace in a converted cell in the X-house where water was observed leaking down from the ceiling, pooling on the floor. Slip and fall risks also seemed high. Staff and incarcerated worker conditions were troubling. Additionally, some incarcerated workers stated they were overworked due to staff shortages.

Lack of heat in dietary as well as in other areas was frequently raised. Further, people working in dietary were concerned that they would be ticketed and lose spots in desirable housing if they refused to work, but they were very uncomfortable working in dietary without heat. We were told this issue had been ongoing for quite a while at the time of the December visit, and it was quite concerning that the repair was still anticipated to be weeks out in December. It was reported in the dish room there was water *"everywhere"* and a worker was soaked, while the area was without heat. Mold was reported in food prep areas. Roaches, birds, and droppings were again reported as an issue in the area. In addition to the many dietary area issues reported, someone reported that she works in the dark in another area where lights did not function, causing her safety concerns.

People reported housing units were cold in the winter and that people slept in boots when they had them. Some staff also expressed distress regarding lack of heat or adequate clothing for people in custody. Over the Christmas holiday season JHA again received a report of lack of heat and that people were not provided with additional blankets.

*"Shut it down. These buildings are condemned, riddled with asbestos and black mold. The plumbing is less than adequate and maintenance doesn't maintain."*



*"I sat on a toilet it broke and split in half I bumps my head and hurt my back and they gave me no medical attention no x ray, no cat scan. They only gave me ibuprofen"*

The impact of the poor quality of the physical conditions was also identified by multiple staff. Like individuals in custody, staff noted leaks, temperature, and water quality issues, as well as the poor conditions of parking lots with significant potholes, which JHA has also observed for years. Some staff also expressed concerns about environmental hazards and lack of maintenance in survey comments.

*"The basic maintenance of the facility. Winter is here and it's cold. We lose heat all the time. It isn't fair for us or the individuals we serve."*

*"Housing, these buildings are infested with mold, falling apart, toilets, showers, water issues DAILY"*

*"New windows instead of fixing plumbing no heat waiting on a part no yard because fencing..."*

Infrastructure issues compromise the safety and wellbeing of everyone who lives and works inside many of Illinois' prisons. The Fiscal Year 2024 IDOC Capital Budget indicated \$2.5 billion needed in deferred maintenance and other repairs to prisons throughout IDOC. JHA continued to push for the infrastructure assessment completed by an outside consultant to be made publicly available, as it had not been released as of June 2023 when a draft of this report was shared with IDOC, despite being publicly funded. It was made public after, as referenced on page 38. **IDOC must address the most urgent safety concerns, and absent the ability to safely house people at Logan, focus on release and relocation efforts.**

## b. Inadequate supervision

*"The security needs to change, too much free movement, especially on dayshift, and very little supervision in areas due to not having enough movement staff."*

*"Safety and Security. There are a lot of areas that we lack in within the facility and us staff as a whole need to be more aware of what is going on. It is hard to work in a correctional setting and feel safe every day because there is always a risk that something could happen to either staff or the incarcerated individuals."*

| Statement                                  | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| Supervision of incarcerated people is poor | 2.24  | 2.77    |

Staff and individuals in custody expressed concern regarding supervision. As previously reported regarding Logan, this is an extremely large, complex prison, and general population housing unit layouts are very difficult to supervise well, adding to safety concerns.

Some incarcerated people commented that positives to them at Logan are things relating to lack of staff attention and inadequate supervision, like being able to have intimate relationships or improve tattooing skills.

Several people had the impression that cameras were not functional. **JHA recommends ongoing use and maintenance of cameras, particularly in light of inadequate staffing.**

While low staffing is undoubtedly a factor making supervision issues worse, several people reported that staff do not pay sufficient attention or even sleep, and are not responsive to issues, as discussed in relation to Professionalism concerns. People reported they felt they had to be hyper-vigilant because security staff is not helpful or aware.

Some suggested increased and improved staff training. One individual in custody reported staff told them they just slept through training. Staff survey information noted specifically some interest in more training and support to deal with the effects of suicide and self-harm, and noted that some training was not done in a way to have meaningful impact. Some staff also noted they found the work highly emotionally demanding, the stress level of the work was a cause of concern, or that the environment at Logan was tense and distrustful. Increasing staff supports is critical. **JHA recommends that, to better prepare staff and assess understanding, training should include testing or should be interactive.**

People also wanted more administrator accessibility. JHA was told administrative tours are done weekly by housing unit. However, given the large number of housing areas at Logan, with this rotation it was a concern that it may take several months to return to the same unit.

JHA was concerned that in the 2022 [Logan PREA audit](#), the auditor notes that all 76 hotline calls in the prior year were reportedly found to not be PREA-related. This suggests either people are perhaps attempting to get assistance on other issues, or that there are things missed in review of these calls for sexual safety concerns. JHA received several unspecific sexual safety concerns involving both staff and incarcerated people in survey comments.

*"Cameras don't work officers are being extra friendly to certain inmates. certain inmates can do things others can't Counselors half do their jobs they handpick those they want to help."*

### c. Bullying and concern regarding appropriate housing

*“I have been here 20 years straight. Please if you Don't do anything else - Please separate the known violent, aggressive bullies from the low medium and minimum offenders. We are currently in a state of anxiety and survival mode trying to avoid these individuals that do not care if they get in trouble, hurt others, or go to seg. They need help too but not at the expense of the low medium & minimum offenders.”*

Interviews and survey responses evidenced bullying being an issue at Logan, as noted in the Harmony dimension, where “Care for the Vulnerable” is assessed through asking whether bullying is tolerated.

| Statement   | Logan | Decatur |
|---|-------|---------|
| This prison is controlled by incarcerated people rather than staff.                 | 2.53  | 3.69    |
| There is a hierarchy among incarcerated people                                      | 2.22  | 2.73    |
| I feel safe from being injured, bullied, or threatened by other incarcerated people | 2.24  | 2.79    |

There was a stark difference seen between the two IDOC women’s prisons in response to the statement “This prison is controlled by incarcerated people rather than staff.” This difference, and many of the smaller divergences in scores, may be a result of an underlying lack of control and safety, which has historically been a concern at Logan.

The lack of control that staff have over the facility, and the corresponding negative impact on safety, was emphasized in comments. As noted herein, some people report not feeling safe due to lack of staff responsiveness to problems, lack of consistent response to undesirable behavior, or fear of retaliation. Some people reported that *“tickets don’t stick”* when they report threats, coercion, or violence from other individuals in custody. Others reported that staff ignored their reports of theft or other issues.

JHA notes that management of prisons should be achieved through proper supervision and use of incentives, in addition to discipline only where appropriate to assure safety. While many staff feel ill-equipped to respond to discipline with lesser use of restrictive housing, we note that other systems have effectively reduced or even eliminated use of isolation while maintaining behavioral management systems. Notably, these systems must be properly resourced and motivated.

At Logan, a multi-security level facility, there were numerous comments that detailed concerns regarding perceptions of being housed with other people inappropriately, as well as inability to have housing changed due to conflicts. These were identified as key reasons for bullying taking place.

*"I have a person who has been threatening/harassing me for a year! I even went to IA and made a statement. Nothing is being done."*

*"Long timers should be grouped together. People w/ shorter time should be grouped together. Security levels should be taken more into consideration. People should just be better matched to help avoid conflict and living stress for inmates, and not just "randomly" housed."*

*"How can you put Killers w/ everyone else? I didn't Hurt or Kill anyone, DUI. But I have 2 cell mates that are killers and make threats or want to fight. They aren't getting out soon so they don't care. I just want to serve and go home."*

Additionally, JHA was concerned that in one wing of the X-house at the time of the visit, segregation kick-outs and maximum-security people were housed with people who reported they were minimum-security or new from intake. The anxiety in this area was particularly high.

**The prevalence of comments that were made regarding mixed populations indicates that placement, and its relationship to bullying, is a serious concern and that the some of the factors identified—such as security level, length of sentence, and age—should be further considered. JHA also encourages Logan to revisit having more specialized and**

**incentivized housing.** For example, the prison used to have housing dedicated to long-termers, and would likely benefit from honors or reentry dedicated housing units.

As noted above, at the time of the Logan visit, several housing areas were closed due to infrastructure issues, making separating people appropriately likely impossible. However, some people also believed that staff making placement decisions were not overseen or rotated appropriately and had favorites. In addition to placement issues, the existence of bullying demonstrates a failure to enact safeguards to prevent violence.

Several people at Logan shared concerns about staff lack of control and physical safety. Some mentioned specific fights, assaults, or even deaths in relation to the environment and bullying, or lack of adequate supervision and assistance. In one housing unit JHA was told that staff will just watch people fight until additional back-up arrives, which may be official policy, but was perceived as unresponsive. Other people also reported that COs will ignore altercations while they are happening and then crack down on security temporarily when someone gets seriously hurt.

People detailed dates of incidents and believed they were captured on cameras but said the people involved were not moved and that Internal Affairs (IA) or administrators were aware. Some people reported that a woman with Alzheimer's was attacked the week prior to the visit, and they were concerned about her being housed in the environment. Some people shared the impression that staff *"wait until someone is severely injured until they move someone."* Such conflicts were also reported on program units where people's participation in positive opportunities was being negatively affected.

Some individuals expressed that security staff are more concerned about their personal security than that of the incarcerated people. Initial staff survey responses suggest that staff also have concerns regarding their safety and security and assaults on staff. Violence indicators in IDOC are [publicly reported](#).

JHA was concerned by the impression that Logan staff were not taking conflicts seriously and that things may be viewed as "manipulative" or as "female drama," instead of real safety risks. Further, with limited bedspace availability, it appeared appropriate separations could not always be used. People reported that individuals who assaulted each other were put back on housing

units together. Additionally, some people felt that they were punished when they were assaulted, by being put in investigative status or ticketed for fighting, further increasing distrust of official responses.

Some people said that COs care more about things like use of curtains, unauthorized phone use, or hanging calendars on the wall than someone getting beat up in the shower. It may be that these are things staff have greater visibility over or where they feel equipped to respond.

Reports of staff favoritism and inconsistent or ineffective rule application was also common in comments relating to bullying. Some staff survey responses also acknowledged a hierarchy among incarcerated people.

In survey scores, Logan scored worse than Decatur on questions that focused on perceptions of discrimination and inequality among incarcerated people. Under the Security dimension this issue is considered in relation to improper control, whereas in the Professionalism dimension, favoritism relates to fair treatment, and the Harmony dimension discusses fairness in relation to staff-incarcerated people relations.

As noted above, people expressed concern regarding discrimination based on various factors, including race. At Logan some people felt that White people were allowed to do what they wanted, jobs were assigned unequally, people were able to use the phone more, or that they were assigned to protective custody on request when others were not. Perceptions of discrimination were not isolated to staff behavior but were also represented in access to opportunities. Such findings demonstrate the importance of ensuring equal distribution and a clear rationale and process for things like assigning jobs to prevent perceptions of discrimination. Such guidance should also be clearly communicated to the population. These findings suggest that the Department's efforts to [address and reduce disparate treatment and impact](#) have not yet been successfully implemented or communicated at Logan.

There were again common concerns that discipline was not enforced fairly or effectively.

*"Most officers have their hands tied, if they write tickets they all throwed out, the men never get punished, you must pray each day your not hurt by another inmate, even if you are they only get 3 day punishment, no one cares."*

*"make the co's be strict on all the inmates and sergeants plus lieutenants as well too many favoritisms going on in prison and letting a lot of things get over look with violence and all sexual relations in here going in each other rooms and fighting in rooms and bathrooms where no cameras are at."*

It is inevitable that an environment in which staff recognize their lack of control or fear for their own safety will result in low staff morale, which will negatively impact the quality of life for all living and working at Logan. **It is therefore essential that support structures are strengthened.**

A notable subset of the concerns relating to housing were perceptions of risk posed by transgender incarcerated people.

*"Transgenders have no place in a women's prison, when they fight with us, we are fighting a man, not a woman. ... Use the system of aggression levels versus security levels to house individuals. Seniors need to be housed together and children (younger population) need to be housed together. Transgenders need to be housed together."*

*"They should Not be able to house us FEMALES with MALE inmates nor should they be able to house minimum security with maximum security inmates!"*

*"Separate buildings for trans men and women"*



**It is critical that the rights of transgender incarcerated people are respected, including by ensuring that there is no discrimination in placement.** Since people housed at Logan generally feel unsafe and that there is lack of control, it is not surprising that some feel unsafe due to the presence of trans people, just as some feel unsafe being housed with someone of a higher-security level. IDOC must take steps to ensure that all incarcerated people are safe, while also ensuring they are not being discriminatory.

**JHA again recommends increased supervision and responsiveness, such as allocating staff to live camera review and increasing unannounced administrator rounds. Security, like physical conditions, is fundamental to the prison’s functioning.**

## d. Scarcity

| Statement   | Logan | Decatur |
|---|-------|---------|
| I have to buy and sell things in order to get by. | 2.57  | 3.10    |

A climate of scarcity with inadequate staffing, limited programming, commissary problems, and movement restrictions creates more competition for limited resources, like phones, which further feeds bullying issues. The Security dimension recognizes that trading and trafficking in prisons increases safety issues. A majority of people in Logan surveys reported that this was occurring, which given scarcity, is highly predictable. The lack of basic items and this area’s impact on wellbeing is further discussed in the section below regarding State Issued and Commissary Items.

## e. Drug related issues

A pronounced difference between Logan and Decatur survey results was the difference in scores relating to the presence and impact of drugs.

| Statement  | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| Drugs cause a lot of problems between incarcerated people. | 2.61  | 3.44    |

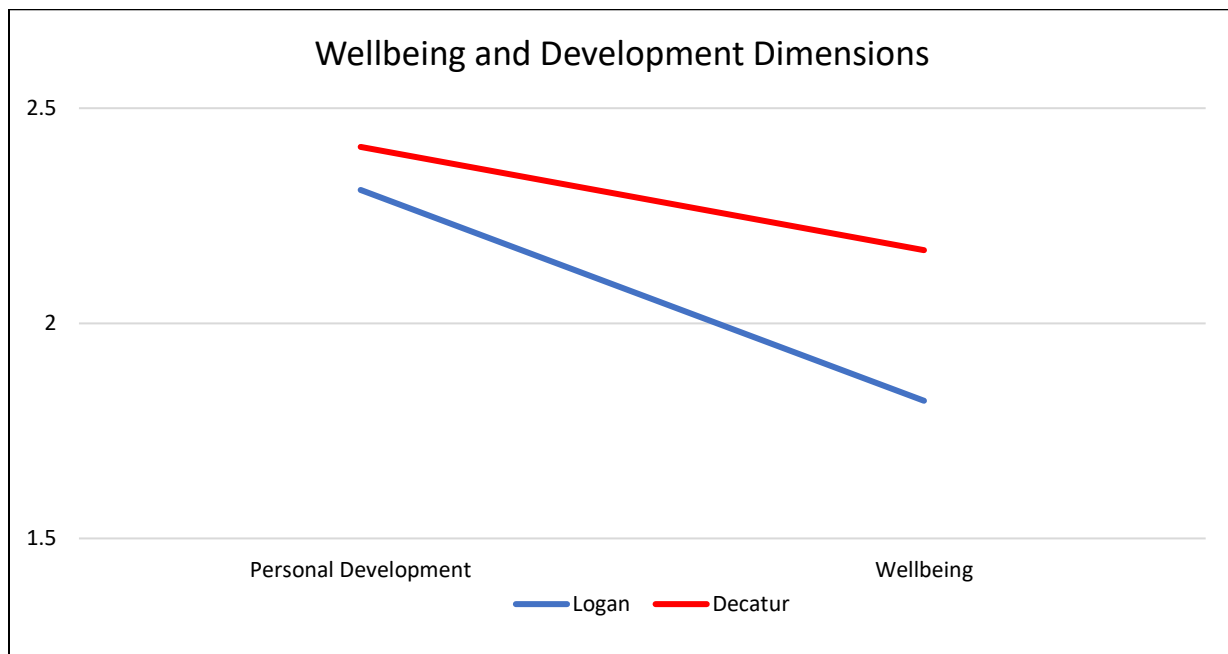
*"I had a drug problem and I believe that if I get the tools I need, I can practice utilizing them now, because drugs is still a problem in prison."*

*"People still getting high on psych drugs. Bullying.  
No yard time. Staff threatening prisoners."*

The significant difference in the level of concerns relating to drugs between Logan and Decatur is a further indicator of a lack of control, organization, and needed safeguards that have been referenced throughout. As noted in the Healthcare section, medications were being crushed due to concerns about trading and trafficking. The absence of better staffing and supervision makes controlling such issues a near impossibility.

## 4. Wellbeing & Development

The Wellbeing & Development dimension questions reflect incarcerated people’s perceptions of their own wellbeing, capacity to act autonomously, levels of support for their personal development, and help with progression. They refer to an incarcerated person’s present and future prospects.



### a. Positive experiences with programs and requests for expansion

*"I'm in the paws program and they are not only helping me be a better me they are teaching me how to train dogs to help people."*

*"[The most positive thing is] The ability to further education/NPEP [Northwestern Prison Education Program], however not every[one] has the opportunity because of outdates [...]"*

*"School wait list is crazy, so is WestCare. I can't even get in for 9 months so far."*

Asked to identify positive things in open-ended comments, a commonly cited positive aspect of life at Logan were special programs and educational opportunity, particularly the PAWS [dog training program](#). In staff survey responses the importance of programs was also emphasized. There were also some individual in custody comments where people expressed concern regarding the perceived favoritism in programming assignments or lack of assignment rotation, specifically for the PAWS program participants. Some people commented positively about the WestCare substance use disorder treatment program and sobriety, as well as other volunteer and facility-run programs, or other productive activity, such as having a job.

At the time of the December 2022 JHA visit, people wanted more programming to be offered on housing units given ongoing quarantines, and JHA was pleased to hear administrators were considering this. In August 2023 draft review, Logan administrators reported this had begun.

## **b. Need for programming for “long-timers”**

Many comments identified the need for programming to include people who have a long time until their projected release dates. IDOC prioritizes program placement mostly by outdate, which effectively precludes most people from limited placements.

*"The recidivism rate is astronomical and no one seems to be concerned about the ones who have sat in prison for 10 plus years straight. I understand we long timers are sentenced according to our crime. However, we long timers have had a change of heart and mind, although continuing to deteriorate physically and sometimes spiritually because we are considered lost causes. Whereas the drug users and abusers who continue to repeat their offenses, to once again be offered credited days, is absurd to me. The state continues to spend money on those who apparently haven't made up their minds to change. What could be done for long timers to make us feel valued. Our rehabilitation comes from self motivation because we qualify for nothing."*

**JHA emphasizes that all incarcerated people should be allowed access to programming and productive activity, regardless of their length of sentence, and that programming must be expanded to allow for this.**

### **c. Failure to recognize positive behavior**

A key point made by many, which directly linked to behavioral management and personal development, is the perception that there are no ways in which positive behavior is rewarded. Instead, people feel the system, at best, only notes when people do not commit infractions within official systems. Worse, several people commented that individuals are unofficially rewarded for bad behavior, encouraging them to make trouble until their interests are served.

*"Bad behavior is rewarded here. There isn't any positive gain for individuals who behave accordingly or better themselves or rehabilitate. This no consistency and no structure. The bad is always reinforced then the ones that are doing right."*

*"Logan staff treat the troublemakers better than they do the people that don't get tickets or cause disruptions. Seems like they give in so that they do not have to deal with these problematic individuals."*

*"I haven't had a ticket in 2 years of incarceration and still don't Qualify for good time credit on my sentence? It supposed to be for Good conduct??"*

As stated above, IDOC should find ways to incentivize and reward positive behavior, and make sure that misconduct is addressed in ways that promote improvement. Disregarding positive behavior while rewarding bad behavior leads to a culture that is undesirable and dysfunctional. The lack of programming and other productive activities, dysfunctional application of discretionary sentencing credit, and lack of a meaningful system of parole in Illinois also complicates issues related to incentives and behavior.

#### **d. Potential for increased formalized peer-to-peer support**

It was notable that in response to the part of the survey that asks people to identify positives, many people cited informal support structures that exist among incarcerated people:

*"The positive things about this prison is the support system you create amongst your fellow inmates."*

*"The old timers feel like useless people (dead women walking) yet we are the support for the women with outdates the help the staff keep them positive but we have no one but god to pull us day by day."*

*"That the girls help each other all the time more than staff or any program they have here."*

**JHA recommends that this finding of friendship and support as critical quality of life factors be optimized by IDOC.** This can be done by utilizing the informal support structures to develop peer-to-peer mentorship. Allowing people in prison an opportunity to actively address this impactful quality of life factor has the potential to provide myriad benefits, such as increasing successful communication, reducing conflict, and nurturing relationships that provide support. Such structures would supplement, rather than replace, existing staff-run programs. This is an objective that was also raised by incarcerated people:

*"Start a Zumba class [run by incarcerated people] and other positive groups."*

*"Truly acknowledge that our connection with our fellow inmates are vital to our survival emotionally"*

*"Let inmates help other inmates if staff is not going to help."*

The development of an official peer-to-peer support program should include a training, pay, and sentencing credit availability and other recognition, as well as transparent selection and rotation criteria.

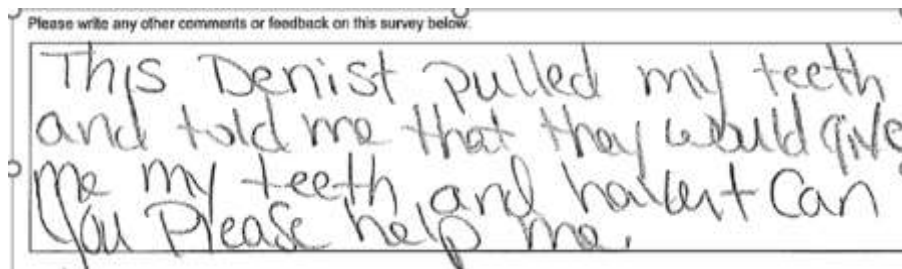
## **e. Stress**

Most individuals in custody reported that their experience of imprisonment at Logan was stressful, and this was one of the lowest scored areas in the MQPL. Staff stress and wellbeing was also a concern. Given the many issues discussed herein, this finding is unsurprising. **JHA again encourages IDOC to harness this input to tackle large issues while recognizing**

that small improvements can be realized through easier and no-cost measures, like improving communication, listening, and not yelling.

| Statement   | Logan | Decatur |
|---|-------|---------|
| My experience of imprisonment in this particular prison has been stressful. | 1.60  | 1.91    |

## 5. Healthcare



As acknowledged by administrators during the visit, and raised in staff and incarcerated people interviews, there were serious issues with the quality of healthcare provided, as well as healthcare staffing.

### a. Mental Health

While the MQPL does not ask about general healthcare, there was one additional JHA question on mental health care provision in the survey in which Logan again scored worse than Decatur. However, encouragingly, this is a question where both prisons scored above neutral. Again, people with higher mental health needs are housed at Logan; 86% of Logan’s population was on the mental health caseload.

| JHA Question                          | Logan | Decatur |
|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Mental health treatment is available. | 3.30  | 3.41    |



While there were comments expressing appreciation for mental health treatment and staff, there were also comments regarding mental health care at Logan expressing similar professionalism concerns to other staff, such as non-responsiveness, and similar concerns about difficult housing situations.

*"3 out of 15 staff members listen, help and treat us like humans but we can't always find them. I cried to a mental health person and she told me to drop a slip to talk. She then sat with the officers at the desk and talked + laughed for 30 minutes before leaving."*

*"The mental health units were rebuilt without viewable outside windows + they make you depressed + claustrophobic. Living on MHU with violent, crazy inmates who enjoy causing trouble. MHU lockdowns for one person's abuses or suicide attempt"*

*"The need to stop placing people with mental issues with people that will bully them. And make their stay hard. There is no structure to how they place people. Other than that the help here is down and cant keep people here to keep the prison up and going."*

Some people reported that individual mental health care just relates to medication, that they are not offered individual therapy, and that not everyone feels comfortable in group. Others felt mental health care was not confidential because people could overhear.

Some people felt that mental health staff were overruled by security and that security staff did not take mental health concerns seriously. Some reported that COs would not call for a response for a mental health crisis unless they were told what it was about, and people felt they should not have to disclose that information to staff. JHA continues to also hear this concern at other prisons.

JHA was told that people avoid asking for crisis care because they are put in rooms *"naked,"* likely meaning that they are not allowed clothing with only a suicide smock, and the overflow

crisis rooms are cold. One woman suggested Logan may need more *"real"* crisis rooms. If staff is not better able to deescalate people and more mental health higher level placements remain unavailable, this may be necessary. Staff expressed concern regarding cross-gendering viewing of people on crisis watch, which JHA raised to the IDOC PREA Coordinator

As mentioned under the Harmony discussion above, Logan survey responses suggest a widely-held impression in the population that self-harm is perceived by staff as attention-seeking. Some reported that when individuals in custody cut themselves, COs do nothing, saying they are trying to get attention and even make jokes about it.

During the visit, it again appeared that some individuals in Residential Treatment Unit (RTU) mental health level care or in crisis at Logan should be receiving inpatient higher level of care. However, IDOC inpatient treatment at the [Joliet Inpatient Treatment Center](#) remains extremely limited due to staffing there a year after its opening, and at most ten women could be housed there.

**JHA remains extremely concerned that many people are too ill both mentally and physically to be housed in IDOC prisons.**

## **b. Other Medical Care**

Many Logan comments expressed dissatisfaction with general dental and medical care.

*"Healthcare/Dental care is a nightmare. Can we remove Wexford and get a new Provider?"*

*"Healthcare doesn't really care about our health. We have to sign up for sick call multiple times before getting seen. Then when we finally do get seen, they just give us medicine before actually checking seeing what the issue is."*

Several comments noted healthcare staffing issues.

*"We can't keep Doctors, nurse-practitioners, nurses to save our lives. This should be a #1 priority for us."*

*"Hire fulltime Healthcare staff! I have been Neglected on Dental due to A Dentist Coming twice a week. I've been trying to get a Cavity filled for over a year. I am told, "I'm on a list." These "Lists" don't work"*

Additionally, lack of professionalism from some healthcare staff was noted.

*"The healthcare system is trash. We barely get seen when we sign up for sick call; we don't get results back from ultrasounds, X Rays etc. We don't even have a physician. Nurses have been known to tell other inmates about inmates' medical issues."*

*"One nurse told someone that they should be happy about what meds thy get because their in prison. The messed up thing is that they tried to give them someone else's medication and expected them to take it!"*

The poor quality of healthcare provision was also referenced by some healthcare staff:

*"The healthcare/nursing is horrid. I've had so many incarcerated individuals state that they're afraid of dying here due to lack of adequate health care, and I don't blame them."*

*Feeling unsupported by management Wexford and IDOC  
and when issues are brought up, there is no resolve"*

Staffing issues were affecting healthcare treatment and issues reported. People reported sick call was not consistent for getting seen. Someone reported that a CO eventually called healthcare after she had signed up multiple times for sick call and was having serious issues. Another person reported difficulty getting an inhaler for breathing trouble until she had a medical emergency and stated that she felt disbelieved by staff. Being perceived as lying or manipulative by healthcare providers, as well as by other staff, was a theme.

People reported that inconsistency of staffing and inconsistency of care by healthcare staff was problematic. For example, that when there is a new doctor, they get taken off their medications or dosages get changed. Someone reported that her dosages keep being altered such that sometimes she gets one dosage in the morning, a different dosage in the afternoon, and then it is changed back by the evening.

Some staff also commented regarding some healthcare concerns for individuals in custody. Nursing staff shortages were noted as a problem by staff, as well as inability to communicate with other healthcare staff within the large spread-out facility. Better technology for staff would undoubtedly help with some issues.

In several instances reported, there seemed to be poor communication with outside providers resulting in inefficient and even pointless care provision, e.g., an ultrasound of the wrong body part. As is common in IDOC, some people reported that when they return from outside medical care, medications are changed at the prison. In one case, someone was reportedly prescribed narcotics but believed staff at the facility was stealing them and that was why they were not received. It may be that they were not allowed and this was not explained.

Several people reported inability to receive the COVID booster vaccination as requested or reported long COVID issues.

Medication issues and errors were frequently raised. Nurses reportedly forgot medications or packed the wrong ones and said they cannot access the computer to confirm orders. Additionally, crushing of medications (e.g., Gabapentin, Topamax) was a concern raised by several people. They did not understand why everyone was being punished for the actions of a few people who were reportedly misusing these medications. People said the medication was not crushed in front of them, so they did not know what they were getting. They requested to be provided with a memo on this if it is a new policy. Concerningly, one woman reported that staff told them that if they grieved the issue, they would be taken off their medications, again relating to the issue of improper unprofessional staff response. People also reported concerns about crushing time release medications. Alterations for medication and effects on efficacy should be reviewed and explained in writing.

Concerningly, during the visit, JHA was told that Boswell, a pharmaceutical supplier subcontractor to Wexford, was not providing medications. People reported not getting various medications, including no neuropathy medication for five days, no blood pressure medication for a month, and no psychiatric medication for a month. Some people reported they were told the pharmacy says the medications were not ordered. JHA raised this serious concern to IDOC executive staff. Lack of accountability for quality contractual services has been an ongoing problem.

JHA received several healthcare concerns that may relate to an aging population, such as reports of people having difficulty clipping toenails due to mobility or vision issues and not receiving assistance, medical notes permitting extra mattress pads being constantly challenged by security staff, that Logan does not have tactile watches for deaf and hard of hearing people, that Logan needed phones that were easier to hear on, and inaccessibility of cataract surgery.

We were also troubled to hear that someone with breast cancer reported she was denied a mammogram because of her age and lack of family history of breast cancer, although there was a history of other cancers. **JHA recommends cancer screening policies be made public and be reviewed.**

Medical care inside of IDOC continues to be an intractable issue, fueling pain and suffering for people who are incarcerated. Ongoing litigation has further brought to light lack of care, inadequate quality of care, lack of standards, and lack of oversight of the outside vendor

providing medical care in Illinois' prisons. **The need for improved and accountable care is urgent.** Having a functional, timely and transparent system for people to grieve medical issues would also shed light on delays and problems with care so that they could be addressed.

## 6. Additional Issues

This section of the report further discusses some additional areas of concern raised by people incarcerated at Logan, which if better addressed would likely increase feelings of wellbeing. Some people mentioned in surveys small things that would greatly impact their quality of life; that IDOC lacks mechanisms to regularly consider and adopt these suggestions is a missed opportunity. Again, JHA hopes that by improving other areas such as communications, grievances, and peer support, Logan can continue to capture this input and implement solutions.

### a. Outside and Family Support

| Statement  | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| Staff help incarcerated people maintain contact with outside supports. | 2.06  | 2.04    |
| I am able to maintain meaningful contact with my outside supports.     | 2.79  | 3.23    |

The Harmony dimension of the MQPL asks if staff enables outside connection in measuring “Humanity,” while another part of the survey asks about whether connections can be meaningfully maintained generally. This is an area where it seems people at Logan did not feel staff supported them, and it should be an area of increased focus and effort due to the critical nature of family support, interpreted widely, in increasing humane treatment.

*“Recently my grandma passed away. My mom called here to get in touch with me to notify me. She was told that because it was the weekend, she had to wait until Monday to talk to a counselor. That should NEVER be the answer—there needs to be someone available on weekends for situations like this. Also, I was not able to participate in a zoom funeral because she was not considered my immediate family. I don't believe IDOC should be able to determine who my immediate family is—my grandma was more of a parent and influencer to me than my father, and I believe the same would be true for many incarcerated people. A suggestion would be to have incarcerated people indicate who they consider immediate family upon intake.”*

During the 2022 visit and in survey review, JHA was struck by comments regarding issues with means of maintaining outside supports at Logan. There were many comments regarding visitor restrictions, concerns regarding the Department of Children and Family Services related issues, and ongoing problems with mail, phones, and tablets.

Notably at the time of the 2022 visit, the pregnancy wing at Logan, as reported on [in 2021](#), was closed due to physical plant issues. The status of that programming was unclear, resulting in pregnant people being housed in general population. In August 2023 draft review IDOC administrators stated they are working to ensure pregnant women who are eligible go to Decatur, and looking at this issue at Logan.

*“They need to bring back parenting classes for mothers to complete for services they are given through court.”*

Additionally, people noted poor cable service, which restricts connection to the outside world. Administrators explained that the cable system at Logan is connected to the neighboring prison Lincoln, resulting in more issues, and they were seeking authorization for funds to better address this. As of August 2023 draft review, Logan administrators expected the prison would soon have its own new cable contract.

JHA also received reports of tablets not working in many areas or not working without doors or chuckholes being opened. **IDOC must improve wiring throughout prisons to ensure access and has requested budget allocation for this purpose.**

*"It's a "me first" characteristic for many even when it comes to getting on the phone. People are fighting over a place in line to use the phone to call home."*

Regarding phones, some people reported it took a month or more for phone list approvals. As throughout IDOC, people reported fights for phones. Someone reported a lack of emergency phone calls when there was a family emergency; such calls are supposed to be facilitated by counselors.

On this visit, JHA heard a lot about lack of communication with family members due to criminal history. For example, someone reported she could not phone her son who lived with his father who was on parole, which JHA requested be reviewed. JHA received several concerns regarding visitation with family with criminal history. Again, individualized reviews must occur with contact with children prioritized.

*"I feel like our significant others should be allowed to visit even if they have a history of incarceration. I don't have anyone else for support. We been together 8 years. He's all I have."*

*"[One of the most negative things about life in this prison is] not receiving a reason of denial of not seeing my son in 4 yrs. He was in prison for a firearm and finished parole 4 yrs ago & the warden year after year denies him."*

**We recommend IDOC review and revise policy and try to provide more predictability and uniformity for family contact.** Denying everyone initially—or even not letting people apply to visit based on criminal history—is an outdated practice. Approving people with felonies as



contacts needs to be improved. We appreciated that Logan administrators were seeking additional guidance on this from IDOC officials at the time of the visit. In August 2023 draft review, IDOC administrators stated that they were working on this. Given the security in place for visits, JHA believes restrictions are unduly harsh. Some other states readily approve such contacts, viewing it as good intel and better than dealing with people trying to circumvent the rules constantly to retain contact with loved ones.

Many people also reported that continued COVID-related visit limitations were too restrictive. Some reported that visits were limited to two-hour visits three times a month. Someone reported that she could not get her visits extended even when there were not other visitors present or scheduled. Another person wrote about difficulty getting disability accommodations for her mother to be able to visit.

As with visitation restrictions, JHA noted some mail restrictions that seemed excessive. Logan's handbook stated that people at Logan may not correspond with people at the other IDOC women's prisons. This should have an exception for when it is approved by the Wardens, like correspondence with people in other prisons. **In general, JHA would again encourage IDOC to reconsider this rule since such mail should be monitored, and many people have incarcerated relatives and may benefit from the encouragement of others.**

As is common in IDOC prisons, there were comments regarding slow mail, e.g., they received mail postmarked in July in early December. Some people reported they did not get mail for a few days at a time, and some reported there was no or inadequate staff in the records or mail areas. Some people believed their mail was being tampered with. Similar issues were raised at Decatur, and **JHA again stresses that outside contacts must be a priority area for wellbeing as well as for legal reasons.**

## **b. Dietary**

*"Allow us to grow a huge garden and use the food for our meals and snacks. We need 20 minutes to eat our meals. We get 8 to 12 minutes to eat and have no napkins."*

Dietary satisfaction was one of the most negative areas of survey response. Improvements to this area should be relatively straightforward and have major quality of life impact.

| JHA Question                           | Logan | Decatur |
|--|-------|---------|
| I am satisfied with food from dietary. | 1.72  | 1.85    |

Several people commented regarding receiving insufficient food, as well as quality and sanitation issues, and the lack of heat in dietary as noted above in relation to infrastructure concerns.

At the time of the visit, people reported two of the refrigerators were broken and this impeded having a wider variety of diet and there were repeating meals. People reported getting cold food and, during the visit, some reported that those who did not leave the unit for chow had been given trays from the day before.

Some people raised inability to get allergies accommodated, and JHA again encouraged greater education on how to get dietary accommodations and communication of what is available. A few people commented they would like a salad bar like staff have.

JHA was particularly concerned to hear from a pregnant woman that she was *"starving"* with the supplemental food provided and requested administrators review this with her to ensure she is getting what is supposed to be provided and ensure that she was healthy. As noted above, the pregnancy wing was closed due to physical plant issues and the supplemental donated food was no longer available.

### c. State Provided Items and Commissary

*"At least let us have a pillow in seg/disciplinary"*

*"It's hard to even get state-issued clothing. The clothing workers expect you to pay them for anything."*

*"We're in a women's prison but can't buy hairbrushes, hairties, get half a pack of pads and 8 Tampons once a month I use ALL of those in 2 to 3 days and the 2 rolls of Toilet paper don't last a week."*

Some people reported they were ticketed for not having proper clothing when it was unavailable, or that you cannot go to chow if you do not have a polo or smock, but you could not buy them on commissary because they were out. Some people in mental health housing reported not being provided with enough toilet paper or detergent and having to buy these items. Other people commented that the prison runs out of cleaning supplies, toilet paper, and pads, and that detergent is not available on commissary or that what is distributed has been insufficient. In addition to clothing and hygiene issues, there were several comments in surveys regarding poor quality of mattresses and concerns regarding used bedding and linens being distributed or sold.

There were several reports of not having suitable shoes or ability to obtain them, e.g., mesh shoes being inappropriate for the snow. Someone requested shoes that do not have to be tied. Aging and disabled people may need such accommodations. Shoes again came up as a commissary issue as well as a medical one, where people reportedly could no longer order orthopedic shoes through the healthcare unit.

*"Can we change the Commissary Provider? We cannot get basic items on a Regular basis."*

Many people at Logan reported shopping once a month or unpredictably, with items being out when they could shop including food, clothing, and hygiene, as well as higher prices.

People wanted pay increases to help with commissary inflation. JHA supports this suggestion. We note that a pay increase was [approved in Pennsylvania](#). Additionally, people continued to report unfair pay restrictions, such as being restricted while on the mandatory Adult Basic Education waitlists for classes that were unavailable to them, a policy which JHA continues to oppose. While we understand this is supposed to incentivize participation in education, this is unnecessary and demand far outpaces supply. Further, it has a likely impact of disadvantaging people with disabilities.

*“Think that people being pay restricted because they don't score high enough on their TABE Test is not ok and should be stopped.”*

Further, it seemed like crackdowns on property limits in IDOC during times of supply uncertainty had added to difficulties, including reports that items that were no longer sold on commissary were being confiscated as contraband unfairly. People reported that they felt they had to stock up on supplies when they could afford them and items were available, but then they get in trouble for exceeding limits. For example, having too much tuna when it was the only meat product available.

There were some comments about poor commissary quality of product, which JHA heard frequently at [Decatur in October 2022](#). Logan administrators reported they had responded to a number of issues raised by individuals in custody regarding commissary. **JHA recommended that having more predictability around shopping and being able to shop multiple times a month would be helpful; some people said they wanted this even at lower spending limits.**

*“Lack of staff and supplies for staff to do their job- it erodes morale”*

Some staff shared concerns regarding the population's lack of commissary items and noted that lack of basic items was a problem for them as well, including no toilet paper, paper towels, paper, access to a copier and shredder, etc. Others commented on not having a dedicated workspace. Such issues affect wellbeing.

Some people were upset that donations were not being accepted to supplement areas with shortages. Others commented regarding commissary proceeds in the Inmate Benefit Fund (IBF) not being used for things that would help the population. **JHA again recommends increased transparency regarding IBF.**

## d. Overly Restrictive Practices

JHA continues to have concerns regarding reported overly restrictive practices that do not appear necessary to assure safety and security and that are highly likely to be harmful to restricted individuals. Further, such restrictions do not appear to be appropriately reviewable.

We spoke to several people who reported long lengths of restrictive housing being used for discipline. JHA was not provided with requested data regarding length of disciplinary sanctions or stays on crisis watch. Some of the other disciplinary sanctions—such as lengthy [grade restrictions](#) or less formal restrictions from productive activity—that we heard seemed excessive and should also be reviewed. As IDOC moves away from use of restrictive housing, these alternative sanctions should be carefully tracked to make sure another form of isolation or excessive punishment is not substituted. For example, someone told us they had a five-year dayroom restriction. Others reported years of grade restrictions.

People classified as [high escape risks](#) noted that they were extremely restricted for minor misconduct such as failure to report to a community program. There were noticeably more people at Logan designated as high escape risk, Level E, since a reported change to an agency policy. JHA expressed concern that many such people were likely being over-classified. Someone not returning to a community program or running from the police during arrest is unlikely to correspond to the level of supervision they need in prison, particularly where substance use disorder and mental health issues are involved, as they likely are in most cases. Such restrictive labels and statuses limit people's opportunities and chances for successful reentry. **JHA was told that nine out of eleven people who were Level E at Logan would not be incarcerated long enough to benefit from a possible annual review and reconsideration.** JHA asked that this be reviewed as well as some similar situations in male

prisons we have noted. To our knowledge, no substantive review has occurred. In draft review administrators stated annual reviews are provided.

*"I am confined to a single man cell 23 hours a day but they say I am in General population. Because of my escape level I am segregated to eat alone in my cell, I'm not aloud to have a job, attend school or go to recreational activities unless it is between hours of 8AM-2PM"*

Someone also commented regarding use of particular restraints for writs as another overly punitive practice. **Again, JHA strongly recommends review of such practices, particularly those that equate sentence length and dangerousness.**

*"Also, just because someone has 30 years or more is not reason for them to get "black boxed" [restraints used in transport] when they have already been locked up for more than 10 years and have never tried to escape and don't get tickets that often at all. Why do they have to be black boxed - especially when they are obese?"*

**Again, we hope that better staffing resourcing and proper attention to grievances could improve IDOC's ability to respond to and better individualize such issues, which are constantly surfaced.** However, without an independent mechanism for review, it is likely that people will continue to fear retaliation and that issues will continue to be dealt with only through crisis and lengthy, costly litigation that cannot immediately respond to people's needs.



This report was written by JHA staff. Media inquiries should be directed to JHA's Executive Director Jennifer Vollen-Katz at (331) 264-4081 or [jvollen@thejha.org](mailto:jvollen@thejha.org)

Incarcerated individuals can send privileged mail to report issues to the John Howard Association, P.O. Box 10042, Chicago, IL 60610-0042. JHA staff read every letter and track this information to monitor what is occurring behind prison walls and to advocate for humane policies and practices. Family and friends can contact JHA via our website [www.thejha.org](http://www.thejha.org) or by leaving us a voicemail at (312) 291-9183.

Since 1901, JHA has provided public oversight of Illinois' juvenile and adult correctional facilities. Every year, JHA staff and trained volunteers inspect prisons, jails, and detention centers throughout the state. Based on these inspections, JHA regularly issues reports that are instrumental in improving prison conditions. JHA humbly thanks everyone who graciously shared their experiences and insights with us.



# Appendix A: Description of the MQPL Dimensions

- **Harmony: Questions relating to interpersonal aspects of the prison experience**
  - Respect/courtesy – Positive, respectful, and courteous attitudes towards incarcerated people by staff.
  - Staff-incarcerated people relationships – Trusting, fair and supportive interactions between staff and incarcerated people.
  - Humanity – An environment characterized by kind regard and concern for the person, which recognizes the value and humanity of the individual.
  - Decency – The extent to which staff and the regime are considered reasonable and appropriate.
  - Care for the vulnerable – The care and support provided to incarcerated people at risk of self-harm, suicide, or bullying.
  - Help and assistance – Support and encouragement given to incarcerated people for problems including drugs, healthcare, and progression.
- **Professionalism: Questions relating to how the prison operates**
  - Staff professionalism – Staff confidence and competence in the use of authority.
  - Bureaucratic legitimacy – The transparency and responsiveness of the prison/prison system and its moral recognition of the individual.
  - Fairness – The perceived impartiality, proportionality, and legality of punishments and procedures.
  - Organization and consistency – The clarity, predictability, and reliability of the prison.
- **Security: Questions relating to use of authority and safety**
  - Policing and security – Staff supervision and control of the prison environment.
  - Incarcerated person safety – The feeling of security or protection from harm, threat, or danger.
  - Incarcerated person adaptation – The need or pressure to get involved in trade and allegiances.
  - Drugs and exploitation – The level of drugs, bullying, and victimization in the prison environment.



- **Wellbeing & Development: Questions relating to welfare and prospects**
  - Personal development – An environment that helps incarcerated people with offending behavior, preparation for release, and the development of their potential.
  - Wellbeing – Feelings of pain, punishment, and tension experienced by incarcerated people.
  
- **Additional MQPL Questions**
  - Decision-making – The extent to which administrators prioritize security concerns over other factors.
  - Family contact – An environment that facilitates incarcerated people maintaining relationships with loved ones.

# Appendix B: MQPL Dimensions & Question Mean Scores

Survey questions are scored 1 to 5 on a scale of 'Strongly Agree,' 'Agree,' 'Neutral,' 'Disagree,' and 'Strongly Disagree.' Questions that indicate positive aspects are scored with 'Strongly Agree' as 5 down to 'Strongly Disagree' as 1. Questions that indicate poor aspects are reverse scored, meaning scored with 'Strongly Disagree' as 1 down to 'Strongly Disagree' as 5. Consequently, the higher score for each question indicates a more positive result.

The results below reflect responses from **409** surveys from Logan (received through February 9, 2023) and **204** surveys from Decatur (received through the end of 2022), reflecting 41.5% and 49.6% of the static populations respectively.

| <b>Harmony</b>  |              |                |
|---|--------------|----------------|
|   | <b>Logan</b> | <b>Decatur</b> |
| <i>Mean</i>   | 2.30         | 2.43           |
| <b>Respect/Courtesy</b>   |              |                |
| Relationships between staff and incarcerated people are good.                                     | 2.36         | 2.47           |
| I get along well with the officers on my unit.  | 3.12         | 3.15           |
| Staff are argumentative towards incarcerated people.  | 1.97         | 2.11           |
| I feel that I am treated with respect by staff.   | 2.33         | 2.40           |
| <b>Staff-Incarcerated People Relationships</b>  |              |                |
| I receive support from staff when I need it.  | 2.39         | 2.37           |
| I trust the officers.   | 2.07         | 2.29           |
| Overall, I am treated fairly by staff.  | 2.58         | 2.79           |
| When I need to get something done, I can normally get it done by talking to someone face to face. | 2.60         | 2.52           |
| <b>Humanity</b>   |              |                |
| I am treated as a person of value.  | 2.12         | 2.17           |
| Some of the treatment I receive is degrading.   | 2.09         | 2.26           |
| I am not being treated as a human being in here.  | 2.38         | 2.56           |
| Staff help incarcerated people maintain contact with outside supports.                            | 2.06         | 2.04           |

| <b>Decency</b>  | 2.26 | 2.52 |
|---|------|------|
| Anyone who harms themselves is considered by staff to be more of an attention seeker than someone who needs help. | 2.08 | 2.65 |
| This is a humane prison.  | 2.16 | 2.63 |
| Incarcerated people in this prison spend too long locked up in cells.   | 2.55 | 2.26 |
|   |      |      |
| <b>Care for the Vulnerable</b>  | 2.02 | 2.49 |
| Bullying behavior by incarcerated people is not tolerated.  | 2.02 | 2.49 |
|   |      |      |
| <b>Help and Assistance</b>  | 2.47 | 2.32 |
| I have been helped significantly by a staff member with a particular problem.                                     | 2.47 | 2.32 |

| <b>Professionalism</b>  |              |                |
|---|--------------|----------------|
|   | <b>Logan</b> | <b>Decatur</b> |
| <i>Mean</i>   | 2.10         | 2.22           |
|   |              |                |
| <b>Staff Professionalism</b>  | 2.26         | 2.28           |
| Staff here treat incarcerated people fairly when applying the rules.                          | 2.08         | 2.20           |
| The best way to get things done is to go through official channels.                           | 2.62         | 2.57           |
| Staff have enough experience and expertise to deal with issues that matter to me.             | 2.13         | 2.18           |
| If you do something wrong, staff only use punishments if they have tried other options first. | 2.21         | 2.18           |
|   |              |                |
| <b>Bureaucratic Legitimacy</b>  | 2.21         | 2.42           |
| To improve my situation, I have to meet impossible expectations.                              | 2.58         | 2.95           |
| I can't improve my situation through good behavior.   | 2.59         | 2.78           |
| I have to be careful about everything I do, or it can be used against me.                     | 1.72         | 1.93           |
| When important decisions are made about me, I am treated as an individual, not a number.      | 2.22         | 2.14           |
| All they care about is my offense and security level, not the person I really am.             | 1.93         | 2.28           |
|   |              |                |
| <b>Fairness</b>   | 2.13         | 2.21           |
| Positive things only happen for a certain type of people.                                     | 2.43         | 2.45           |
| The disciplinary system is fair.  | 1.94         | 2.18           |

|  |             |             |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| This prison is poor at giving incarcerated people reasons for decisions. | 2.02        | 2.01        |
|  |             |             |
| <b>Organization and Consistency</b>                                      | <b>1.81</b> | <b>1.95</b> |
| To get things done, you have to ask and ask and ask.                     | 1.60        | 1.62        |
| This prison is well organized.   | 1.58        | 1.89        |
| You never know the rules.  | 2.25        | 2.35        |

| <b>Security</b>  |              |                |
|--|--------------|----------------|
|  | <b>Logan</b> | <b>Decatur</b> |
| <i>Mean</i>  | 2.51         | 3.10           |
|  |              |                |
| <b>Policing and Security</b>   | <b>2.32</b>  | <b>2.98</b>    |
| Supervision of incarcerated people is poor.  | 2.24         | 2.77           |
| This prison is controlled by incarcerated people rather than staff.                  | 2.53         | 3.69           |
| Staff respond promptly to incidents and alarms.                                      | 2.27         | 2.73           |
| There is a hierarchy among incarcerated people.                                      | 2.22         | 2.73           |
|  |              |                |
| <b>Prisoner Safety</b>   | <b>2.24</b>  | <b>2.79</b>    |
| I feel safe from being injured, bullied, or threatened by other incarcerated people. | 2.24         | 2.79           |
|  |              |                |
| <b>Prisoner Adaptation</b>   | <b>3.01</b>  | <b>3.48</b>    |
| I have to buy and sell things in order to get by.                                    | 2.57         | 3.10           |
| You have to be in a group or gang in order to get by.                                | 3.44         | 3.85           |
|  |              |                |
| <b>Drugs and Exploitation</b>  | <b>2.48</b>  | <b>3.15</b>    |
| There are a few incarcerated people who run things on this unit.                     | 2.34         | 2.85           |
| Drugs cause a lot of problems between incarcerated people.                           | 2.61         | 3.44           |

| <b>Well-being and Development</b>  |              |                |
|--|--------------|----------------|
|  | <b>Logan</b> | <b>Decatur</b> |
| <i>Mean</i>  | 2.31         | 2.41           |
|  |              |                |
| <b>Personal Development</b>  | 2.56         | 2.53           |
| The environment encourages me to think about and plan for my release.                                | 2.98         | 2.83           |
| On the whole, I am just doing time rather than using my time.  | 2.50         | 2.32           |
| My time here seems like a chance to make positive changes.   | 2.94         | 2.92           |
| Every effort is made by this prison to help people stop committing offenses on release from custody. | 1.85         | 2.00           |
|  |              |                |
| <b>Well-being</b>  | 1.82         | 2.17           |
| My experience of imprisonment in this particular prison has been stressful.                          | 1.60         | 1.91           |
| My experience in this prison is painful.   | 2.05         | 2.45           |

| <b>MQPL Standalone Questions</b>                                   |              |                |
|--|--------------|----------------|
|  | <b>Logan</b> | <b>Decatur</b> |
| <b>Decision-Making</b>   | 2.77         | 3.10           |
| Decisions are dominated by concerns about security.                | 2.77         | 3.10           |
|  |              |                |
| <b>Family Contact</b>  | 2.79         | 3.23           |
| I am able to maintain meaningful contact with my outside supports. | 2.79         | 3.23           |

| <b>JHA Questions</b>  |              |                |
|---|--------------|----------------|
|   | <b>Logan</b> | <b>Decatur</b> |
| This prison is safe for incarcerated people.                | 2.04         | 2.92           |
| Mental health treatment is available.                       | 3.30         | 3.41           |
| This prison is better now than it was last year.            | 1.97         | 2.30           |
| I am satisfied with food from dietary.                      | 1.72         | 1.85           |
| I have the opportunity to go to yard at least twice a week. | 2.63         | 1.81           |

# Appendix C: IDOC Response

Please see IDOC's written response received September 15, 2023 starting on the following page. Note that JHA has reordered our recommendations as IDOC suggested in this document.