

Feedback from focus groups at Oklahoma County Detention Center

On June 12, 2025 Trust member, James Johnson and CAB member, Kris Steele conducted focus group discussions with the women and men who reside at Oklahoma County Detention Center. The following is an account of the input and feedback from those conversations.

*Please note the women we interviewed had just relocated to a new pod and were still processing that transition.

Report from the women residing at Oklahoma County Detention Center:

- The women indicated the food portions are small and variety is limited especially for breakfast. They said breakfast consists of bologna, bread, and peanut butter. They expressed frustration in the manner in which breakfast is delivered and explained their breakfast sack is often tossed or thrown into their cell instead of being handed to them. They articulated a desire for fresh fruit in their diet.
- The women reported that canteen items are too expensive, “way too expensive.”
- They reported the situation with bed bugs is better and bed bugs are “no longer a problem.” However, several reported their cells and pods could and should be kept cleaner.
- The women stated interactions with OCDC staff is a “mixed bag,” meaning encounters with some staff are positive and some negative. They stated staffing levels and morale are low.
- They said they are routinely allowed out of their cell four days a week for three to four hours each day but requested more time to shower.
- The women conveyed access to health care is often slow and/or delayed. They said medication distribution can be irregular at times. They stated they are charged \$15 per sick call and the delivery of services is often delayed or insufficient.
- They shared programming inside the facility is available and stated programs such as GED training, literacy Prison Fellowship and grief support are occurring on a regular basis.
- Recommended areas of improvement include more balanced nutrition (more fruit and vegetables in their diet), incorporating in-person visitation and recovery support groups would be beneficial.
- The women identified improved mental health services, kindness and interaction with staff and quality of chaplain services as the most positive aspect inside OCDC. Some of the women said staff who work at OCDC “truly care” about the individuals who reside there.

Report from the men residing in Oklahoma County Detention Center:

- The men indicated food portions are sufficient for the most part but can be vary on occasion. They said the variety of food options is limited. They indicated breakfast routinely consists of cornbread, bologna and peanut butter.
- They stated items in the canteen are too costly but stated a variety of options exist for those who can afford to purchase the items.
- They communicated there are limited issues with bed bugs and the situation is much better.
- They said they are allowed out of their cell for two to three hours a day four days a week.
- They would like greater access to electronic tablets.
- The men said interactions with staff at the facility are good for the most part but a few staff are difficult to deal with.
- They indicated access to quality of health care is improving.
- The men stated a desire for more programming especially GED classes but revealed that programming from Diversion Hub and anger management classes are available.
- Areas for improvement include greater access to electronic tablets, increased variety in food options, more access to showers and incorporating in-person visitation.
- The men identified the quality of laundry service and air conditioning, variety of canteen options and opportunity to “communicate and problem solve with staff” as the most positive aspects inside the detention center.