Office of Professional Responsibility

Knox County Detention Facility

Inspection 2026-006-165

September 24, 2026

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

INSPECTION
of the
KNOX COUNTY DETENTION FACILITY
Knoxville, Tennessee

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FACILITY OVERVIEW

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) Office of Detention Oversight (ODO) conducted an inspection of the Knox County Detention Facility (KCDF) in Knoxville, Tennessee, from August 25 to September 25, 2026, which included a 1-day on site visit on September 24, 2026.[1] The facility opened in 1994 and is owned by Knox County and operated by Knox County Sherrif's Office. The ICE Office of Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) began housing detainees at KCDF in 2018 under the oversight of ERO's Field Office Director in New Orleans (ERO New Orleans). The facility is a United States Marshal Service (USMS) contracted detention facility where ICE is an authorized user and operates under the USMS Federal Performance Based Detention Standards (FPBDS) (May 2025).

ERO has deportation officers assigned full-time to the facility. They are on-site Monday through Friday, from (b)(7)(e). A corrections administrator handles daily facility operations and manages (b)(7)(e) support personnel. KCDF provides food services, medical care, and commissary services at the facility. The facility was accredited by the American Correctional Association in September 2026 and Tennessee Corrections Institute in May 2024. In April 2024, KCDF was audited for the Department of Justice (DOJ) Prison Rape Elimination Act and was found DOJ PREA compliant.

Capacity and Population Statistics	Quantity
ICE Bed Capacity[2]	(b)(7)(e)
Average ICE Population[3]	(b)(7)(e)
Adult Male Population (as of August 25, 2026)	(b)(7
Adult Female Population (as of August 25, 2026)	(b)(7

During its last inspection in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, ODO found 7 deficiencies: Food Service (1) and Medical Care (6).

[1] This facility holds male and female detainees with low, medium-low, medium-high security classification levels for periods under 72 hours.
[2] Data Source: ERO Custody Management Division Authorized Facility List as of September 24, 2026.
[3] *Ibid.*

INSPECTION PROCESS

ODO conducts the following annual and biennial oversight inspections of ICE detention facilities to assess and rate each facility's compliance with their contractually obligated detention standards as noted in the Facility Overview section above.

- Dedicated facility: ODO conducts annual on-site inspections of dedicated inter-governmental service agreement (IGSA) facilities, contract detention facilities (CDF), family residential centers, and service processing centers.

- Non-dedicated IGSA facility:
  - For facilities with an average daily population (ADP) of 50 or more, ODO conducts biennial on-site inspections.
  - For facilities with an ADP of 50 or less,
    - If the facility has not previously had a rated ODO inspection, then ODO conducts an initial on-site inspection, and
    - If the facility has had an ODO inspection, then the facility completes a biennial ODO-assisted self-inspection process (OASIP).

- U.S. Marshal Service (USMS): USMS CDF and intergovernmental agreement facilities complete biennial OASIPs.

In FY 2025, ODO implemented OASIPs, which replaced the annual Special Review inspections ODO conducted at most low ADP and/or short-term use facilities. This new inspection framework is more reflective of the actual operation demand of facilities with a low ADP and/or short-term use. OASIP inspections focus on facility compliance with detention standard requirements that directly affect detainee life, health, safety, and/or well-being. Facilities have 30 calendar days to complete the OASIP inspection and ODO staff will go on-site for 1 day towards the end of the 30-day inspection window to observe facility conditions, interview ICE detainees, and spot-check the facility's reported findings.[4]

ODO defines a "deficiency" as any violation of detention standards, policies, or operational procedures, as applicable. ODO highlights instances when the facility resolves deficiencies prior to the completion of the ODO inspection as corrective actions. Where applicable, these corrective actions are annotated with a "C" in the *Inspection Findings* section of the report.

Upon completion of each inspection, ODO conducts a closeout briefing with facility and local ERO officials to discuss preliminary findings. ODO shares a summary of these findings with ERO management officials. Thereafter, ODO provides ICE leadership with a final report to:(i) assist ERO in developing and initiating a uniform corrective action plan (UCAP); and (ii) provide senior executives with an independent assessment of facility operations. ODO's findings inform ICE executive management in their decision-making to better allocate resources across the agency's entire detention inventory.

[4] When ODO conducts on-site inspections for non-OASIP facilities, the facility is notified 4 weeks before the inspection and ODO is on-site for 2-3 business days conducting the inspection.

FINDINGS BY FEDERAL PERFORMANCE BASED DETENTION STANDARDS (MAY 2025) MAJOR CATEGORIES

USMS FPBDS (May 2025) Standards Inspected[5]	Deficiencies
Part 1 - Administration and Management	
Quality Control	0
Facility Admission and Orientation Program	0
Detainee Transfers and Releases	0
Staffing	0
Staff Training	0
Emergency Plans	0
Sub-Total	**0**
Part 2 - Health Care	
Health Care Administration	0
Intake Health Screening	0
Medical, Mental Health, and Dental Appraisals	0
Access to Health Care	0
Provision of Health Care	0
Incident Health Care	0
Sub-Total	**0**
Part 3 - Security and Control	
Use of Force/Non-Routine Application of Restraints	0
Sub-Total	**0**
Part 4 - Food Service	
Food Service Administration	0
Food Storage and Preparation	0
Detainee Meals and Special Diets	0
Sub-Total	**0**
Part 6 - Safety and Sanitation	
Fire Safety and Chemical Control	0
Sanitation and Environmental Control	0
Clothing and Bedding	0
Sub-Total	**0**
Part 7 - Services and Programs	
Classification and Housing	0
Grievance Program	0
Sub-Total	**0**
Total Deficiencies	**0**

[5] For greater detail on ODO's findings, see the *Inspection Findings* section of this report

DETAINEE RELATIONS

The facility's ICE detainee population count was 10 during the inspection; however, ODO did not conduct any detainee interviews due to the processing of detainees on the day of inspection.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

ODO found no deficiencies during this inspection.

CONCLUSION

During this inspection, ODO assessed the facility's compliance with 21 standards under USMS FPBDS (May 2025) and found the facility in compliance with all 21 standards. Although ODO conducted a prior inspection of KCDF, ODO cannot perform an analysis due to the change in standard from NDS 2019 to USMS FPBDS (May 2025). ODO recommends ERO New Orleans continue to work with the facility in accordance with contractual obligations.

Inspection Results Compared	FY 2024 NDS 2019	FY 2026 USMS FPBDS (May 2025)
Standards Reviewed	10	21
Deficient Standards	2	0
Overall Number of Deficiencies	7	0
Priority Component Deficiencies	2	N/A
Repeat Deficiencies	N/A	N/A
Areas Of Concern	N/A	0
Corrective Actions	N/A	0
Facility Rating	Good	Superior

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