

CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION INSPECTION COMMITTEE

INSPECTION REPORT

INSTITUTION: Belmont Correctional Institution

DATE OF INSPECTION: November 10, 2003

TYPE OF INSPECTION: Unannounced

CIIC MEMBERS/STAFF PRESENT: Representative Robert Otterman, Member  
Shirley Pope, Director  
Gregory Geisler, Inspector  
Daniel Cox, Inspector

INSTITUTION STAFF PRESENT:

Michele Eberlin, Acting Warden; Lanny Sacco, Deputy Warden of Special Services; Kathy Cole, Warden's Assistant; Dan Lipperman, Administrative Assistant; Edward Banks, Captain; Roger Moore, Business Administrator; Zane Dougherty, Personnel Officer; and Edward Burke, Maintenance Supervisor, were present during the initial meeting on arrival at the institution. Additional staff communication occurred throughout the inspection, including discussion with the following: Jack Elliot, Deputy Warden of Operations, Mike Mintell, Unit Manager, and Bob Patterson, Construction, Activation and Maintenance.

AREAS/ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN INSPECTION:

Entry Building	Recreation: Arts and Crafts
Mental Health Offices	Housing Unit (Five House)
Older Offender Dorm (Three House)	Food Services
Segregation Unit and RIB Building	Therapeutic Community Program:
Housing Unit (One House) and Puppy Program	Medical Services: Dental Clinic,
Therapeutic Community Program and	Records Office, Lab/Exam Room
Housing Unit (Seven House)	X-Ray Room, and Infirmary

Minimum Camp:  
Ohio Reads, Visiting Room,  
Random Shakedown, Art Room,  
Puppy Program, Dormitory

ATTENDANCE AT GENERAL MEAL PERIOD:

The CIIC group attended the lunch meal, which consisted of plums, spinach, two hot dogs with buns, coney sauce and au gratin potatoes.

#### ATTENDANCE AT EDUCATIONAL OR REHABILITATIVE PROGRAM:

The CIIC group attended the Genesis Therapeutic Community Substance Abuse Treatment Program and Housing Unit.

#### INSTITUTION OVERVIEW:

Per the institution's website, the mission of the Belmont Correctional Institution is to protect citizens by maintaining a secure, humane, and sanitary environment for staff and inmates. It is further noted that the facility is dedicated to providing offenders with programs and opportunities to become more productive and responsible citizens.

The Level One and Two (Minimum and Medium Security) facility opened in 1995. The institution is located on 158 acres. It is accredited by the American Correctional Association. As of October 3, 2003, its population totaled 2,076. On the day of the inspection, the population was reported to be 2,042. Based on the October data, 52.36% of their inmates are Black, 45.95% are White, and the remaining 1.69% are classified as Hispanic.

The FY 2004 annual operating budget is \$37,374,336, with an annual cost per inmate of \$16,498, and a daily cost per inmate of \$45.20. The institution has 484 employees, including 291 security staff.

#### PROGRAMS:

According to the Belmont Correctional Institution Program Listing, as of September 2003, the following programs are available:

**EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATIONAL, VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS:** Inmates must have at least three years left on their sentence in order to qualify for the available vocational programs which include: Barbering, Plumbing, Small Engine Repair, Culinary Arts, and Turf Management

##### Vocational and Related Programs:

Employment After Prison	Vocational Horticulture (camp only)	Barber School
Plumbing	Power Equipment Technology	Baking
	Administrative Office Technology	

##### Educational and Related Programs:

Computer Lab	Adult Basic Education
GED/Pre-GED	MATC (College)
Release Preparation Program	

### Apprenticeships:

Animal Trainer	Carpenter	Cook
Environmental Services	Maintenance Repair	Plumber

### MARITAL AND FAMILY RELATIONS PROGRAMS:

Responsible Family Life Skills	Marriage and Family Chaplain
Boundaries in Marriage	Boundaries with Kids
Couples	Active Parenting
Family Dynamics	Raising Children in Troubled Times

### ASSOCIATES AND SOCIAL INTERACTION PROGRAMS:

Religious Studies	Safe People	Boundaries in Dating	How People Grow
Men of Purpose	Dating		

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMS:

Therapeutic Community	Life Without a Crutch
Twelve Step Group Counseling	Voluntary Drug Education Program
Relapse Prevention	Stopping for Life Smoking Cessation Program

### THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY:

The Genesis Therapeutic Community (TC) Program is considered a unique program for those with substance abuse related problems. The stated purpose of the program is to facilitate the cessation of addictive behavior and to reduce the recidivism rate. Goals and objectives focus on interceding in the addiction process and instilling value systems and behaviors reflective of responsible, productive members of society.

The TC philosophy places responsibility for choices and behavior on the individual. Participants learn to realize that substance abuse has an impact not only on the participant, but also on others. The program provides a special environment, in which inmates live and work together as a family to accomplish the goal of improving themselves and their lives. It is an intense and regimented program environment that instills responsibility for each other to succeed and to build relationships, which are the foundation for community.

Per the written information provided by staff on site, the Therapeutic Community Program is staffed with a TC Director and five Counselors. On a daily basis, each employee facilitates a specific group, such as an encounter, as well as morning and evening meetings. Counselors are assigned to specific treatment phases including orientation, main treatment and relapse prevention. Each staff member is also responsible for two hours per month of individual office hours. Program hours begin at 8 AM and resume from 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM.

PERSONAL AND EMOTIONAL FUNCTIONING PROGRAMS:

Stress Management	Domestic Violence	Anger Management
Anger and Conflict Management	Anxiety Management	Boundaries
Anger and Aggression Management	Grief/Therapy	Current Events
How to Handle Life's Problems	Anxiety Disorders	Self-Esteem Group
Divorce Recovery Class	Cognitive Behavior Therapy	Coping Skills
Sex Offender Phase One	Sex Offender Therapy	Goals Program
Post Traumatic Stress Disorders	Post Traumatic Stress Group	Aftercare
Cinema Therapy	Character Development	Behavior Therapy
Problem Solving/Older Offender		

ATTITUDE PROGRAMS:

Commitment to Change (Criminal Thinking Errors)  
Victim Awareness

COMMUNITY FUNCTIONING PROGRAM: Ohio Reads Program

COMMUNITY SERVICES PROJECTS:

Highway Litter Control	City of Bridgeport Project	Speak-Out Program
Local School Projects	Lafferty Fire Department	Piedmont 4-H Club
Barkcamp State Park	Local Church Projects	Toys for Tots
Paws with Cause	County Animal Rescue	Ronald McDonald Charity
School of Hope Project	Bethesda Boy Scout	Indian Festival
Board of Elections	Recreation Center	Community Action
Golden Endings		Commission
Golden Retriever Rescue		

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS:

Literacy Unit  
Adult Basic Education  
Pre-GED  
GED  
Muskingum Technical College

## FINDINGS:

### Entry/Exit:

The Visitors' Processing Building was clean and orderly. Under the supervision of a Correctional Officer, an inmate worker was cleaning the floor. The Visitor Screening Officer was prompt, courteous, efficient, organized and thorough. Screening by Correctional Officers at the Minimum Camp was also very thorough.

### Institution Grounds:

Grounds were clean, and inmates were moving across the compound in an orderly fashion.

### Food Services:

The institution has two back-to-back dining halls with a reported seating capacity of 260. According to staff, there are 10 to 12 Correctional Officers assigned during meal periods, with five to six Officers for each dining hall, and 10 Food Services Staff assigned to supervise the inmate kitchen workers. It was reported that 220 inmates are assigned to work in food services each day, with approximately 75 inmate workers per meal.

Inmates were observed preparing brown bag meals for Muslims inmates for Ramadan. Inmates and staff working behind the serving lines and in the kitchen area were all following sanitary rules, handling food with gloves and wearing hats. Each person in the CIIC group, and each BCI staff person who went behind the line into the kitchen area, was required to wear a hat as well. Such a requirement is not department wide, but has been enforced at other institutions, such as Richland Correctional Institution. It is a clear indication that sanitation is taken very seriously, as it should be. For the most part, the food services area was excellent in that regard.

The kitchen was clean and orderly, in spite of the fact that a meal was being served and preparations were underway for the evening meal. The floor, walls and ceiling were considered to be in good condition, with no apparent need for repairs. The kitchen equipment appeared to be in good working condition, except for a reportedly chronic problem with a leaking cooler causing ice on the floor. Food storage areas were clean, well ventilated and orderly.

Inmates filed into the dining hall through lanes supervised by an Officer. Inmates swiped an identification card before receiving their food tray. Serving lines proceeded in an orderly fashion. The inmates seated in the dining hall were calm, relaxed and orderly. The noise level was moderate.

The meal consisted of hot dogs with coney sauce, au gratin potatoes, spinach and plums. The quality of the food was less than desirable. The hot dogs in particular had an odd,

unappetizing taste. The potatoes were undercooked, and the spinach or greens were overcooked.

Of inmates exiting the dining hall after their meal, no random pat downs or use of metal detectors were observed.

#### Medical Services:

The entire floor of the medical services building is severely buckling, “heaving” and rising so that it is far more curved than flat, resulting in cracks in the floor and visible gaps in the walls. However, these problems are reportedly being addressed locally and through capital improvement funds to provide a long-term solution by constructing a new building for Inmate Health Services. The medical building was reportedly re-surveyed and expansion shelves were built to temporarily address the problem. Once the new medical building is completed, the current building will reportedly be used as a storage facility.

The same problem with the floor was reported to be in 8 House Dormitory, which used to provide housing for the Therapeutic Community Program. The dorm was vacated three years ago due to the same problem noted above regarding the medical services building. Reportedly, there was a separation between the support beam and roof. It was further relayed that shale compressed around the foundation has caused the floors to rise. Reportedly, the problem was not identified due to improper and/or lack of soil samples prior to construction.

Except for the obvious floor problem noted above, the overall appearance of the Medical Services Building was good. It was clean and in good order. Information on infectious diseases and healthy living was available for inmates in the waiting area, which was supervised by a Correctional Officer.

The Dental Clinic was temporarily closed while an inmate worker cleaned the ceiling vents. According to staff, the Dentist is on site four days per week, and a Dental Hygienist is at the institution three days per week. The Dental Clinic has three dental chairs and was well organized. Staff relayed that routine fillings are done from Tuesday through Friday. Reportedly, the waiting period for fillings is up to three months. The waiting period for dentures is reportedly 60 days.

There are three examination rooms, all which were adequately clean. Tools were locked in a secure tool cart in the Optometry Clinic. The Negative Airflow Chamber and all holding cells were very clean. Equipment in the X-Ray room was clean and in good condition.

The infirmary consisted of one three-bed ward, two crisis watch cells and one negative airflow cell for respiratory isolation. The infirmary was found to be in good condition, in spite of the floor problem noted above.

Reportedly, there are no nursing vacancies at the institution, and they do not use contract nurses. Staff attributed their ability to fill vacancies to the elimination of the previous requirement of six months of nursing experience before nursing school graduates could meet the minimum qualifications.

#### Mental Health Caseload:

Per statistics reported at the end of March, 2004, there were 309 inmates on the total mental health caseload, which comprises 14.06 percent of their total population of 2,198. It was also reported that ten inmates who are on the mental health caseload, were housed in segregation.

#### Segregation:

The segregation unit has 90 beds on three cellblocks, with 40 beds in A block, 10 in B block, and 40 in C block. On the day of the inspection, there were 78 men in segregation. Some were single celled, while others were double celled. Four Officers were assigned to the Unit. Under Officer supervision, Inmate porters delivered the meals to the cells. The noise level was quiet. Inmates were calm or sleeping. Air circulation was considered adequate. Indoor recreation equipment included pull-up and dip bars.

At the front entrance of segregation, there are three safe cells. B block is reportedly used to house the "more aggressive" inmates, as well as those under protective control investigation status. The RIB hearing room is located in close proximity to the segregation unit.

A number of toilets in the empty cells in the segregation unit needed to be cleaned. Vacant cells had small amounts of garbage or trash on the floor, presumably left from the previous occupant. Toilets and floors in two crisis cells were also in need of cleaning. Follow-up communication from the Warden was received the day after the inspection. It was relayed that the segregation unit, including the toilets had been thoroughly cleaned and it was in good condition.

#### General Population Housing Units:

Housing Units are open style dormitory design. Except for the honor dorm in One House, the units consist of rows of double bunks. The Honor Dorm has small cubicles that offer more privacy. According to staff, honor dorm placement requires good behavior, which is determined by lack of RIB convictions for rule violations. In addition, inmates must maintain good personal hygiene, as well as a clean, orderly living area. The Honor Dorm was very quiet and inmates were involved in daily routines.

Inmates are permitted to have individual televisions at their bunks and the standard two by four foot personal locker box to store their belongings. Pay phones are along the walls in the sleeping areas accessible to inmates.

Inmates in their housing units appeared calm, relaxed, orderly and well behaved. It should be noted that the inspection of the housing units occurred for the most part, during count time. The noise level ranged from low to moderate.

All general population housing units had good circulation. There were no foul odors. Both floor fans and wall-mounted fans were noted. The housing provided adequate light for reading and observation. The day rooms were clean and all were equipped with televisions, microwaves and ping-pong tables.

Shower and toilet areas were clean. Shower heads worked, but not all toilets worked. In Five House, a number of urinals, toilets and sinks were inoperable and in need of repair. Reportedly, generators malfunctioned the night before, and were given top priority among the needed repairs. Work orders for the needed repairs in Five House reportedly were submitted that morning. According to prompt follow-up communication from the Warden following the inspection, two of the four inoperable toilets in Five House were repaired, and the remaining repairs were underway.

#### Programs:

The institution staff are justifiably proud of the number, type and variety of programs offered to inmates. It is interesting to note that the Program Listing provided by staff on site shows that two Chaplains serve as Instructors for programs in Marital/Family Relations, Associates/Social Interactions, and Personal/Emotional Functioning.

The vocational, and apprenticeship programs can develop a wide variety of skills applicable to the current job market. The inmates participating in vocational programs appeared eager to learn and enthusiastic. From all indications, Instructors are very knowledgeable of their specialty areas and seem to enjoy their work.

Vocational programs are reserved for inmates with three or more years left on their sentence. Apprenticeship programs do not appear to have the same stipulation. Still, there may be a need to develop intensive, short-term programs for those with less time before release.

#### Recreation:

There are many activities in the Recreation Department for the inmates. A full size basketball court, nautilus machines, ping-pong tables and an outside racquetball court were observed. The arts and craft room was in use by inmates who were working on a wide variety of projects. The quantity of arts and craft supplies available appeared to be adequate.

#### Community Relations:

According to staff, the county welcomed the prison, and the relationship between the prison and surrounding community is constantly improving. Staff noted that the prison is



a good neighbor to the community, and assists with exercises for county emergency management response to natural disasters.

#### Staffing:

Staff turnover at the prison is reported to be very low, perhaps partly due to the fact that the prison has become the second largest employer in the county, and due to the economy of the surrounding areas. However, low turnover is also a factor that tends to reflect good morale and satisfaction among employees. Most of the staff at the Belmont Correctional Institution are reportedly just reaching their fifth year of employment. Because the staff are fairly new, they are reportedly highly motivated and very enthusiastic.

At the time of the inspection, it was reported that there were 11 Correctional Officer vacancies. According to the list of vacant positions as of November 10, 2003, the institution had a total of 28 vacant positions, including 15 Officers, five Teachers for Literacy, ABE/GED, Vocational Bakery, and two other areas. In addition, there is one vacancy for each of the following positions: Librarian, Correctional Specialist, Correctional Program Specialist, General Activity Therapist, Training Officer, Social Work Supervisor, Storekeeper Supervisor, and Deputy Superintendent.

#### Staff/Inmate Relations:

Some inmates expressed fear of retaliation or repercussion when institution staff observed that they were speaking to the CIIC. Many became silent whenever a prison employee was within earshot. Follow-up communication from inmates via correspondence after the inspection, expressed the need to improve staff and inmate relations, a need which was also identified during the inspection.

#### Assaults on Staff:

In calendar year 2003, there were 544 assaults on staff in the entire prison system, an average of 45 per month. Belmont Correctional Institution only had two assaults on staff in the year, the same number as the Correctional Medical Center, Franklin Pre-Release Center, and Grafton Correctional Institution. Five prisons had even less, with only one at Lima Correctional Institution, and no assaults on staff at the Northeast Pre-Release Center, Montgomery Education and Pre-Release, Hocking Correctional Facility and Dayton Correctional Institution. Assaults at other institutions range from three at Warren and Noble Correctional Institution to 130 at the Southern Ohio Correctional Institution during calendar year 2003.

#### Inmate on Inmate Assaults:

In calendar year 2003, there were 484 inmate-on-inmate assaults in the entire prison system, an average of 40 per month. There were no such assaults at the Pickaway Correctional Institution, Montgomery Education and Pre-Release Center, Hocking Correctional Facility, Dayton Correctional Institution and Correctional Medical Center.

The rest of the facilities have assaults ranging from one each at Northeast Pre-Release Center and Grafton Correctional Institution, to 139 at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility.

The Belmont Correctional Institution had 16 assaults in the year, an average of 1.33 per month. Noble and Richland Correctional Institutions had 16 such assaults in the year, as well. Nine institutions had from 17 to 139 inmate assaults on inmates in calendar year 2003.

#### CIIC Correspondence:

Since the CIIC re-start in October of 2003, the CIIC office has received 67 letters from the Belmont Correctional Institution relaying 65 complaints or concerns as follows:

COMPLAINT/ AREA OF CONCERN	NUMBER	PERCENT
Force/Supervision	15	23.07%
Health Care	9	14.52
Legal Services	7	10.77
Staff Accountability	6	9.23
Inst. Assignment	6	9.23
Food Services	5	7.70
Commissary	5	7.70
Non-Grievable	5	7.70
Safety/Sanitation	4	6.15
Visitation	2	3.08
Inmate Account	1	1.54
TOTAL	65	100.00%

The category "Force/Supervision," which comprises the largest number of complaints, includes concerns pertaining to the following sub-categories: Use of force with no report, abusive language, racial or ethnic slurs, conduct report for no reason, intimidation/threats, retaliation for filing a grievance, a lawsuit, or for voicing complaints, privacy violations, and harassment.

Health Care is the second largest group of complaints from BCI. The Health Care category includes concerns pertaining to one or more of the following subcategories: Access/delay in receiving medical care, improper/inadequate medical care, delay/denial of medication, medical records, eye glasses, forced medical testing, medical transfer, prosthetic device, medical co-pay, medical restriction, and medical device.

Inmate Grievance Procedure:

During the inspection, some inmates expressed fear of reprisal for filing informal complaints or grievances regarding staff or conditions. Whether real or perceived, some believe that reprisals will occur if the grievance procedure is used, and that negative consequences will result for voicing concerns. Some alleged that using the grievance procedure is a futile effort that would result in little or no action to resolve the reported problem, not at the Informal Complaint level, Grievance level, or Chief Inspector's level.

In follow-up communication with the Warden regarding inmates' comments about the grievance procedure, it was relayed that few grievances are filed because the inmates often can resolve a problem through kite communication or informal complaints. The Warden seriously doubted the validity of any concerns about retaliation for using the grievance procedure, and relayed definite confidence in the Inspector.

A review was made of grievances filed at the Belmont Correctional Institution from October of 2003 through January of 2004. The following table provides the number of grievances filed each month and the subject of the grievance:

SUBJECT	OCTOBER 2003	NOVEMBER 2003	DECEMBER 2003	JANUARY 2004	TOTAL
Health Care	6	2	7	4	19
Force/Supervision	0	2	6	4	12
Staff Accountability	3	3	3	3	12
Personal Property	0	0	1	4	5
Visiting	2	0	1	0	3
Housing Assignment	0	1	1	1	3
Job Assignment	0	0	2	0	2
Safety/Sanitation	0	0	1	0	1
Commissary	0	0	1	0	1
Mail/Package	0	0	1	0	1
Special Mgmt. Housing	0	0	0	1	1
Non-Grievable Matters	0	0	0	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>UNRESOLVED</b>	10	5	18	12	45 (73.8%)
<b>RESOLVED</b>	1	3	6	6	16 (26.2%)

During the period of October of 2003 through January of 2004, grievances filed in all Ohio prisons totaled 2,273. The 61 grievances filed at the Belmont Correctional Institution comprise 2.7% of all grievances filed. Grievances filed in the prison system ranged from 0 at the Dayton Correctional Institution to 180 at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility. During the period, the Belmont Correctional Institution is ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the number of grievances, out of the 33 Ohio prisons. That is, 15 institutions have fewer grievances than Belmont Correctional Institution, and 17 institutions have more grievances than Belmont Correctional Institution.

A review was also made of the Inspector's monthly reports from September 2002 to January of 2004. Grievances filed per month ranged from six in July of 2003 to a high of 24 in December of 2003. The following table shows the largest percentage of grievances in a particular category filed in each of the 17 months:

MONTH AND YEAR	STAFF/INMATE RELATIONS: Accountability, Force/Supervision, Discrimination	INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS: Health, Safety/Sanitation, Property	TOTAL NUMBER <b>RESOLVED</b>	TOTAL NUMBER <b>UNRESOLVED</b>	TOTAL NUMBER FILED
9-02	8		6	12	18
10-02	15		7	16	23
11-02	11		8	12	20
12-02	8		6	12	18
1-03	3		3	4	7
2-03		5	5	5	10
3-03	5		3	5	8
4-03	6		3	14	17
5-03		6	0	11	11
6-03		5	2	7	9
7-03		3	2	4	6
8-03	5		2	8	10
9-03	5		2	10	12
10-03		6	1	10	11
11-03	5		3	5	8
12-03	10		6	18	24
1-04		8	6	12	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>230</b>
PERCENT	35%	14%	28%	<b>72%</b>	100%

Based on the above, a total of 114 grievances were filed in the period of September of 2002 to January of 2004, pertaining to Staff/Inmate Relations and Institutional Operations, comprising 49.6% of the 230 grievances filed in the period.