November 26, 2024

Brian Morgan, Chairman
Wapello County Supervisors
215 N. Court
Ottumwa, Iowa 52501

Re: Wapello County Jail Inspection

Dear Chairman Morgan,

The Wapello County Jail was inspected on November 26, 2024, by the Iowa Department of Corrections, as required by Iowa Code Section 356, to ensure compliance with Chapter 201-50 of the Iowa Administrative Code. The inspection included an examination of staff training records, required documentation, prisoner files, and a tour of the jail. Please note the following administrative code sections, comments and recommendations for corrective action:

IAC 201—50.9(356,356A) Fire safety and emergency evacuation.

50.9(11) Mattresses. Only fire-resistant mattresses of a type that will not sustain a flame and certified by an independent testing laboratory and that meet the standards established by the state fire marshal shall be used in jails. Mattresses that are ripped, excessively cracked or which contain large holes shall be replaced. Pillows shall be replaced when torn or excessively cracked.

Comment: Several mattresses are showing signs of deterioration, ie: cracks, rips, and tears.

Corrective action: Please ensure all mattresses that are in a deteriorated condition is repaired or replaced.

IAC 201—50.14(356,356A) Cleanliness and hygiene.

50.14(1) Housekeeping.

a. The jail shall be kept clean and sanitary. Toilets, wash basins, showers and other equipment throughout the facility shall be maintained in good working order. Walls, floors and ceilings shall be well maintained.

Comment: During the walk through of the jail, the dayrooms were found to be clean and well-organized. The individual cells were found to be in general disorder and unorganized. Several lights and vents were covered or had recently been covered and a sink drain was clogged.

Corrective action: Wapello County is commended on the cleanliness of the dayrooms. The same effort should be applied to the cells. Several lights and vents are thoroughly cleaned and

remained free of any foreign material, and all drains shall flow freely to ensure healthy and sanitary living and working conditions for the prisoners and staff.

201—50.13(356,356A) Admission/classification and security.

50.13(2) Security and control. The jail administrator shall develop and implement written policies and procedures for the jail which provide for the control of prisoners and for the safety of the public and the jail staff. The policy and procedures shall include:

a. Supervision of prisoners.

(1) Twenty-four-hour supervision of all prisoners shall be provided pursuant to Iowa Code section 356.5(6).

(2) When staff is not within the confinement area of the jail, a staff person shall be in a position to hear prisoners in a life-threatening or emergency situation; or a calling device to summon help will be provided. By policy and practice there shall be a means of ensuring that appropriate personnel will be available on a 24-hour basis to respond to an emergency including, but not limited to, fire, assaults, suicide attempts, serious illness, and to preserve order, within a reasonable time period.

(3) At least hourly, personal observation of individual prisoners shall be made and documented. Prisoners considered to be in physical jeopardy because of physical or mental condition, including apparently intoxicated persons, as indicated by the medical history intake process and by personal observation, shall be checked personally at least every 30 minutes until the condition is alleviated. A CCTV-audio monitoring system may supplement but shall not replace personal observations. In order to use a CCTV-audio monitoring system, the following requirements must be met: CCTV and audio must be operational at all times. Visual and audio must be clear and distinct. Observation of shower and restroom activities shall be at the discretion of the jail administrator.

Comment: Wapello County is currently experiencing issues with maintaining adequate staff. Hourly jail checks documentation is inconsistent.

Corrective action: Wapello County would be well served to complete a staffing analysis to determine the proper staffing levels in the jail. A computerized logging system would enhance the hourly jail check documentation.

Additional comments

Documentation was readily available for inspection.

A review of the policy and procedure manual was completed. It appears the manual is complete and well-written.

I wish to express my appreciation Sheriff Don Phillips, Chief Deputy Marty Wonderlin, Jail Administrator Jason Fuller, Assistant Jail Administrator Chaylee Godvin, and the entire staff of the Wapello County Jail for their cooperation and assistance during the inspection.

Sincerely,
Delbert G. Longley
Chief Jail Inspector

cc: Sheriff
County Attorney
File