



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the State Inspector General

Michael C. Westfall, CPA
State Inspector General

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December 23, 2024

The Honorable Glenn Youngkin
Governor of Virginia
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23219

Members of the Virginia General Assembly
1000 Bank Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor Youngkin and Members of the Virginia General Assembly,

Per *Code of Virginia* § 53.1-17.8 (A), “the Office [of the State Inspector General] shall produce an annual report to be made available to the public online and to be delivered to the Governor, the Attorney General, the Senate Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services, the House Committee on Public Safety, the [Corrections Oversight] Committee, and the Director [of the Department of Corrections] by December 31 of each year. The report shall include a summary of the Office’s inspections and complaint investigations conducted that fiscal year, including the Office’s findings and recommendations and the Department responses and corrective actions; a characterization of the conditions of confinement at each facility; a summary of available educational and rehabilitative programming, drug and mental health treatment, and inmate jobs and vocational training at each facility; a summary of visitation policies and procedures at each facility; a summary of medical facilities and medical policies and procedures at each facility; a summary of the lockdowns reviewed by the Office; a summary of staffing at each facility; a summary of physical or sexual assaults reviewed by the Office; a summary of any inmate or staff deaths that occurred at each facility; a summary of the Office’s investigations, findings, and resolutions of any complaints submitted pursuant to § 53.1-17.7; and any recommendations to the General Assembly and the Department.”

Legislation to create the new Ombudsman Unit became effective on July 1, 2024. OSIG hired Andrea Sapone, Corrections Ombudsman, on September 25, 2024. Below is a summary of the work that the Ombudsman Unit has accomplished thus far, as well as the items in process to improve the level of detail OSIG will be able to provide for fiscal year 2025 and subsequent fiscal years.

Please contact me with any questions at 804-625-3255 or michael.westfall@osig.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,



Michael C. Westfall, CPA
State Inspector General

cc: The Honorable John Littel, Chief of Staff to Governor Youngkin
Justin Vélez-Hagan, Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Youngkin
Kate Stockhausen, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff
Jason Miyares, Attorney General of Virginia
Senate Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services
House Committee on Public Safety
Corrections Oversight Committee
Chadwick Dotson, Director, Virginia Department of Corrections
Dave Robinson, Chief of Corrections Operations, Virginia Department of Corrections
Division of Legislative Automated Systems § 30-34.15

Ombudsman Unit Update as of December 2024

Corrections Ombudsman:



- Andrea Sapone, originally from Roanoke, Virginia.
- Completed degree in psychology at Christopher Newport University.
- Earned advanced degree in public leadership at Virginia State University.
- Began career as a law enforcement officer.
- Experience in behavioral health and adult protective services.
- Lifelong student of psychology, personal growth, and human potential.

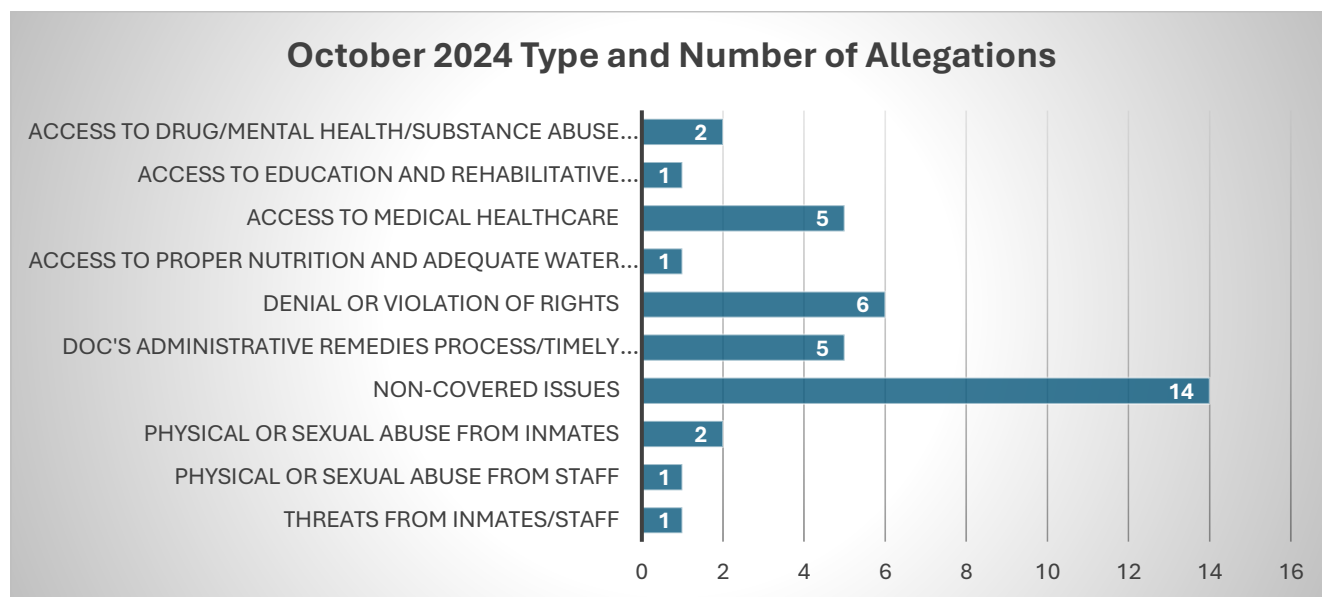
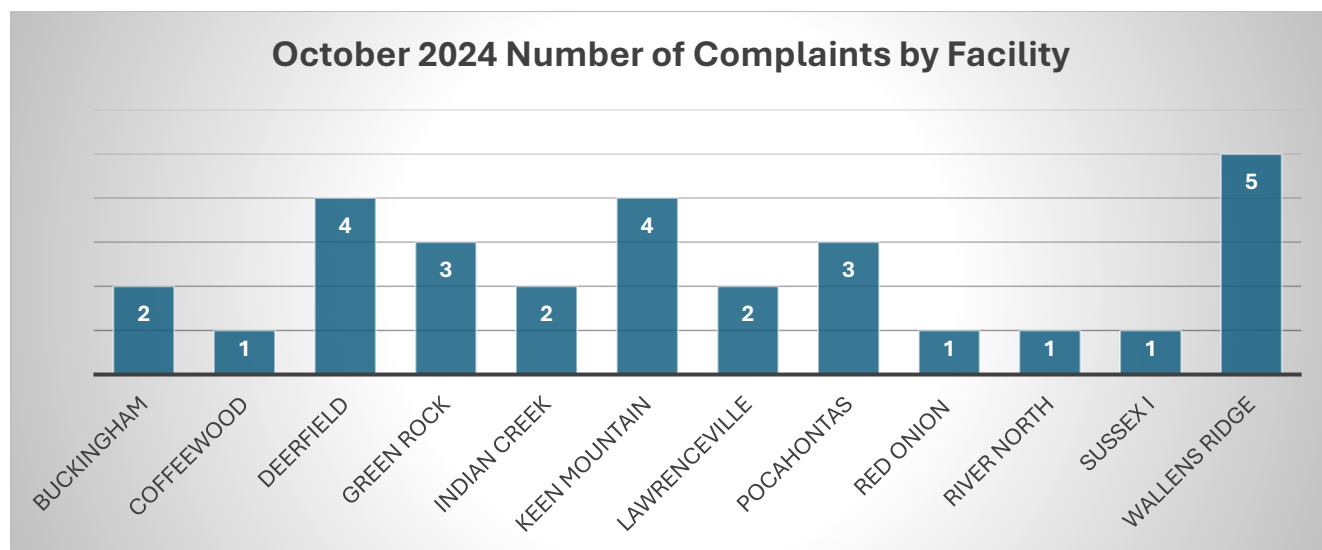
Accomplishments:

- Attended National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) conference to network and learn about national jail and prison oversight.
- Attended United States Ombudsman Association (USOA) conference to network and learn about other ombudsman offices and processes nationwide.
- Recruitment process to fill five Corrections Ombudsman Specialist positions.
- Introductory meetings with VADOC Director, Chief of Corrections Operations, and Chief of Law Enforcement Services.
- Reviewed VADOC current policies and procedures.
- Assisted with preparations for Corrections Oversight Committee meeting.
- Ongoing receipt and processing of inmate/family letters into case management system.

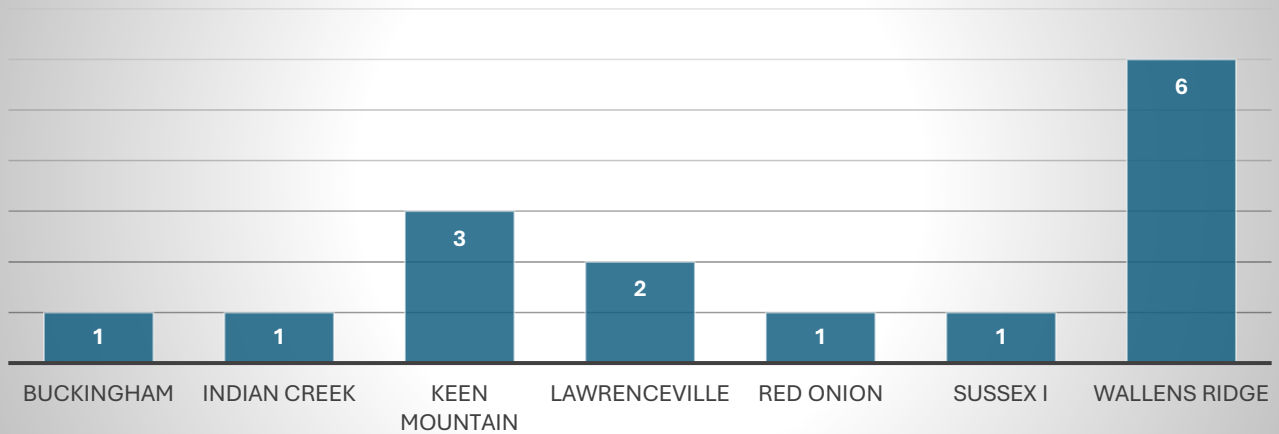
Work in Progress:

- Developing a State Facility Inspections Tool and schedule.
- Writing Ombudsman Unit desk procedures and best practices for handling intake, investigations, and inspections.
- Coordinating with IT Unit to create the Inmate Complaint Line.
- Updating OSIG website to include new Ombudsman Unit, statewide toll-free telephone number, mailing address, and online forms to submit complaints.
- Onboarding (training, support, field work, and supervision) of new Corrections Ombudsman Specialists.

Ombudsman Unit Trends & Stats:



November 2024 Number of Complaints by Facility



November 2024 Type and Number of Allegations

