



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Office of the State Inspector General

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

Dear Governor Youngkin,

The Office of the State Inspector General (OSIG) conducted an unannounced inspection of Lawrenceville Correctional Center. This report includes a summary of the factors listed in the *Code of Virginia* § 53.1-17.6 (B), recommendations, safety and compliance classification, recommended timeline for the next inspection, and the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) response to the inspection.

Inspection Report: Lawrenceville Correctional Center: April 11, 2025 at 8:19 a.m.

Background

Lawrenceville Correctional Center (LVCC) is a Level III medium-security facility, located in Lawrenceville, Virginia, that the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) took control of following the conclusion of its contract with GEO Group in August 2024. Inmates are housed in six double-cell housing units.. While incarcerated, inmates at Lawrenceville have the opportunity to earn their GED through basic adult education classes. Vocational training available at the facility includes computer courses, electrical wiring, horticulture, carpentry, commercial cleaning, masonry, and plumbing.

The facility has the capacity to house up to 1,536 inmates across Housing Unit Buildings 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, and 80 with all similar layouts. At the time of the inspection, the population was 728 males, since half of the inmate population transferred out during VADOC's takeover. The remaining population consists of parole-eligible, veterans, and older inmates. Lawrenceville is undergoing a multi-million dollar renovation project across the entire facility. Housing Units 30, 40, and 50 were temporarily closed during the inspection due to ongoing renovations. Once

renovations are complete, there will be a housing unit specifically for the veteran program. Lawrenceville currently does not have a Restorative Housing Unit (RHU) or Commissary on-site. Commissary is pre-bagged off site and delivered to the housing units on assigned days.

Inspection Scope

This inspection was not intended to assess compliance with the legislative or regulatory requirements, nor assess compliance with VADOC policies, though both were considered where relevant. The inspection was conducted with the Warden, Assistant Warden, and several housing unit managers. During the inspection, discussions took place about the progress of renovations, ongoing projects, and newly introduced programming. The inspection of the facility included a review of its physical layout and daily operations. Inspectors visited housing units 60, 70, and 80, which had not undergone renovations, as well as housing unit 30, which was near completion of its renovations. Other areas inspected included the administration area, visitation room, kitchen and dining areas for both inmates and staff, medical and dental units, physical therapy, laundry, recreation areas (with two gyms), program offices, and intake and control rooms.

Safety and Security

The facility employed several security measures, including a logbook, a body scanner, a magnetometer, a metal detector chair, cellular device detection, x-ray machine, and pat-down searches for staff, visitors, and inmates. The facility operated a roving vehicle that performed patrols around the clock. The perimeter was secured by double fencing topped with razor wire for added security. Inmates are not permitted to leave the facility unless being transported for outside appointments or permanent transfers out, and they must adhere to security protocols each time they return. Fire extinguishers were accessible to staff throughout the facility, however the fire extinguisher in the control room was missing the annotation of a monthly inspection. The fire extinguisher in the Recreation Supervisor's office was also missing the inspection for the months of February and March of 2025.

Staffing

The Warden advised that the staff levels at Lawrenceville were adequate for the inmate population. On the day of the inspection, inspectors observed staff participating in Homicide and Victim Awareness Day by wearing black and red in support of the victims within the community. The Warden stated they try to participate in different causes weekly. The facility's staff were friendly and helpful in the assistance needed by inspectors and did not voice any concerns. Staff were also knowledgeable regarding the needs of the inmates and the facility.

Medical

The medical department at this facility includes a Nurse Practitioner, a Dentist, a Physical Therapist, and several nursing staff. The Nurse Practitioner, Dentist, and Physical Therapist are on-site five days a week. Inmates can submit medical request forms to receive care for any health issues, and nursing staff are available around the clock. In cases of serious medical needs, inmates are transported to a nearby hospital for further treatment. The medical area also includes five housing cells designed to temporarily house inmates experiencing mental health or medical emergencies.

Housing

Lawrenceville housing unit buildings are similar in structure, and each contain three housing units. Housing unit buildings 40 and 50 were not inspected due to renovations, however inspectors were able to assess housing unit 30, to view how the rest of the housing units will look once the renovations are completed. Lawrenceville did not have a Restorative Housing Unit, as inmates must be free of institutional charges for four years to be housed at the facility. If an inmate commits a “100” series institutional charge, they are immediately transferred out. A 100 series institutional charge can consist of an assault, sexual misconduct, or other serious incident described in the inmate disciplinary handbook. Housing units 81 and 83 contained both top and bottom tiers of double-bunked cells and housed up to 80 inmates each. Four single cells were available in these housing units to accommodate inmates with disabilities. Housing unit 82 had the same layout, but can house up to 96 inmates. The presence of a female staff member was loudly announced prior to entering any unit. Cells were equipped with bunks, mattresses, pillows, linens, a combination sink/toilet, and an intercom, though some intercoms in the non-renovated units were non-functional due to the age of the facility; the Warden indicated that these would be replaced as renovations progressed. The exterior of each cell was secured with a wooden door and a locking latch mechanism.

There were no communal toilets in the common areas of the housing units. The housing units included several metal stationary tables, two microwaves, three televisions, and six phones, though two phones in unit 81 were non-functional when inspected. Each unit had one JPay kiosk and one video visitation station, except for unit 82, which had two JPay kiosks, which were all functioning during the time of the inspection. Inspectors observed 12 individual shower stalls per unit, spread across both the top and bottom tiers. Several showers were found to be non-functional and in poor condition in the non-renovated units, with rust, chipped paint, and damaged shower curtains. The unit temperature was observed to be comfortable at 70°F. No rodents or pests were observed during the inspection, and a Safety Officer was assigned to perform regular pest control throughout the facility. A mold-like substance was noted on the wall in the laundry area on the top tier, which was reported to the Warden. Chemical cleaning supplies were stored in designated closets, and inmate workers were assigned to clean the housing units

and work 40 hours a week. Trash was also disposed of in a sanitary way by the inmate workers assigned to the housing units.

Housing units 70 and 60 were also inspected, but due to the facility's headcount taking place at the time, the phones, JPay kiosk, and video visitation kiosks were temporarily disabled for safety and security reasons. Additionally, inmates were on lockdown during the inspection of these units. The shower areas were found to be in poor condition, with signs of rust, hard water buildup, and inspectors notated at least five non-functional showers throughout the facility housing. During the inspection of housing unit 30, which was nearing the completion of its renovations, new metal sliding cell doors were observed, which will eventually replace the wooden doors in all housing units. Some cells were equipped with steel combination sink/toilet units, while others still had porcelain versions. The Warden noted that any damaged porcelain sinks and toilets would be replaced with steel versions. The units were freshly painted, including the cells and showers, and the Warden mentioned that the roofs had been fixed due to prior leaks.

Gymnasium/Recreation and Programs/Services

Lawrenceville had two large gymnasiums that served as recreational areas and spaces for various programs and services. There was also a centralized outdoor recreational area that consisted of several basketball courts. The Warden advised they will have cornhole and pickleball soon to accompany the recreation yard. Inspectors observed an art class in progress in one of the smaller offices. A peer-taught financial class was being instructed in one of the program rooms, and the rehearsal of a musical performance by an inmate band was in the secondary gymnasium. Inmates also engaged in creative activities like painting, drawing, and sculpting during their free time in the housing units. A small storage area in the second gym was utilized to store equipment, chairs, and other recreational items.

A list of various programming and religious services was provided to the inspectors during the inspection. The list of programs and services provided at Lawrenceville include the following: Thinking for a Change, Harm and Accountability, Domestic Violence, ACT, PRS Art Theory, PEACE, Veteran Committee, Dynamic 4 Change, Recovery Route, PTSD Veteran, Aggressive Alternatives, and host of other rehabilitative programming. Lawrenceville offers the following religious services: Baptist, Pentecostal, Humanism, Shtaut Neter, Orthodox Greek, Roman Catholic, Native American, Integral Yoga, Prison Fellowship Academy, Kairos, Nation of Islam, Wicca, Buddhist, House of Yahweh, Nation of God and Earth, Rastafarian, Asatru, Moorish Science Temple, Sunni Muslims, Jehovah Witness, African Hebrew Israelite, Messianic Jews, and Orthodox Jews. The programs and religious services are offered five days of the week on a rotating schedule.

Visitation and Intake Area

The visitation area, which was located adjacent to the front intake area, was divided by a partition due to ongoing renovations. The area included a small staff break room and was furnished with stackable chairs and tables for visitors on weekends. There was also an adjacent outdoor recreational area for inmates and their visitors. A soundproof space was provided for inmates' parole board hearings, which can take place daily. There was also an inmate intake processing area where inmates who are first received into the facility go through an initial screening, which includes identification, medical and mental health assessment, and various classification procedures. In the intake area, inmates gained access to the disciplinary booklet which provided the rules and regulations of the facility.

Greenhouse

Upon completion of the renovation, the greenhouse will accommodate more than 30 inmate jobs. The greenhouse will feature an aquaponics system, where fish waste is used to nourish plants, and the plants help purify the water for the fish. Both the fish and plants, particularly cabbages, will be harvested for consumption by the inmates at the facility. Lawrenceville is partnering with agribusiness to accomplish this endeavor. Next to the greenhouse was a small goldfish pond that will become the responsibility of the inmates to care for once the greenhouse area is completed.

Sanitation

While some parts of the facility appeared outdated, the housing units were well-maintained and free of trash in the common areas. Inmate workers followed a cleaning schedule, and a log sheet was posted inside each housing unit to track the availability of cleaning supplies. The laundry area was equipped with four commercial-grade washers and four dryers, though one washer and one dryer were out of service at the time of the inspection. Parts for the broken machines had been ordered. The laundry staff maintained a logbook that ensured the proper handling of both personal and state-issued clothing, with new sheets provided to the entire inmate population every six months. Every month the laundry staff utilize a compressor to blow the vents clean to keep the area free and clear of any mold, moisture, and dirt. The laundry unit also contained a sewing machine area where an inmate worker can sew the buttons and threads onto the pre-issued uniforms for the facility.

Food Services

Inmates are required to go to the chow hall for all meals, as food is not served in the housing units, unless the facility is on lockdown. The facility typically has two chow halls, but one was temporarily converted into a staff dining area due to renovations and a reduced inmate population. The inmate chow hall had 57 tables, including three wheelchair accessible tables, which will increase with the renovations of the cafeteria. The dining hall included an open salad bar, and on the day of the inspection, the meal served consisted of a hamburger, sweet potato fries, salad, an apple, and ketchup. Inmates working in the kitchen wore the appropriate gloves

and hairnets, but during the inspection, it was noted that one inmate was kneading bread without the proper gloves on. Compartmented trays were in good condition and when needed, trays that are sent to the housing units are transported in insulated carts. Those carts are warmed in the kitchen and then plugged into the outlets in the housing units to provide the appropriate food temperature. Inspectors observed one sink in the kitchen that was constantly running and leaking. This facility underwent their Food Establishment Inspection in December of 2024 and received no violations.

Accessibility to Complaint and Grievance Forms

Inmates had access to Complaint and Grievance forms from the officer's area overlooking the housing units. Lawrenceville had implemented the "Pod Representative" system, where a designated inmate spokesperson can request forms for the unit, streamlining the process and reducing staff involvement. Several types of forms were available, including Facility Request Forms, Written Complaint Forms, and Commissary Forms. Completed forms can be submitted in drop boxes located at two points in the facility. One housing unit Manager advised emergency grievances are handed directly to staff so they can resolve the issue in a timely fashion. The complaint and grievance forms were not available through the inmate's tablets. Information regarding the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) and the Institutional Ombudsman for VADOC were prominently displayed on bulletin boards when first entering the housing units. Some complaints filed with OSIG have been addressed, while others remain unresolved, pending resolution.

Additional Information

As reported by facility management:

- **Staffing:** As of April 22, 2025, the facility employed 162 correctional staff and 97 non-correctional staff. There are a total of 420 staff positions, including vacancies, due to VADOC absorbing this facility from the GEO Group, along with staff either transitioning or resigning, and a decrease in the inmate population. The total number of staff members who received disciplinary actions within the past year is 64. The average tenure for correctional staff was four years.
- **Lockdowns:** The facility experienced 14 lockdowns in the past three years. The most recent lockdown occurred on February 18, 2025, which was scheduled. The last unscheduled lockdown occurred on August 14, 2021.
- **Physical/Sexual Assault/Deaths:** The facility reported two inmate-on-inmate serious physical assaults in the last year and zero inmate-on-staff serious injuries or physical assaults. The facility also reported zero inmate-on-inmate or inmate-on-staff sexual assaults in the last year.

- **Visitation:** The number of video visitation requests at the facility in the last year were 2,168, with zero video visitation denials. The number of in-person visitation requests at the facility were 2,273 with 14 denials, due to body scan anomalies, smell of marijuana or under the influence, or Assisting Families of Inmates (AFOI) conflict.

Key Findings

- Overall, both inmates and staff seemed satisfied with the environment at the facility.
- Inmates have numerous opportunities to engage in work details, activities, and programming.
- Inmates are provided with operational phones and tablets to stay in contact with family and friends.
- There are health and safety concerns in the shower and housing areas, with issues related to possible mold, rust, cleanliness of showers and nonfunctioning showers.
- The renovations of the facility are providing promising results for a more equipped, safer, and updated complex.

Recommendations

OSIG recommends the following:

- Fix the light fixtures throughout the complex.
- Fix the broken showers throughout the facility.
- Install appropriate lighting for the showers.
- Develop an improved cleaning mechanism for showers to prevent hard water stains, rust, and build up.
- Repair and repave the sidewalks.
- Clean, fix, or replace the ceiling of the dining halls.
- Replace the locking mechanisms and intercoms inside the multiple cells and on the doors.
- Fix the leaking sink in the kitchen area.
- Use battery generated food carts so food trays can be transported at the appropriate temperature.
- Test the mold-like substance from housing unit 80 where the washer and dryer were stationed.

Inspector Comments

Lawrenceville Correctional Center staff were helpful and assisted by answering the inspectors' questions. Staff were courteous and open to coordinating an escort during the inspection of the entire facility.

Facility Classification

Tier III - The facility has adequate conditions of confinement and programming options requiring an inspection within the next 36 months.

VADOC Response

The VADOC appreciates the thorough inspection of Lawrenceville Correctional Center and the opportunity to highlight the Department's first Virginia Model facility (The Virginia Model is a new, incentivized approach to prison operations that is strategically designed to foster a culture of accountability, personal investment, and community by aligning meaningful incentives with consistent, effective sanctions). This inspection report showcases some of these incentives, including the increased recreation and programming available to inmates at Lawrenceville, and demonstrates the positive changes that have taken place since the VADOC took control of the facility in August 2024.

The Department welcomes the opportunity to work with OSIG to identify areas of improvement and has addressed the recommendations set forth in this report as follows.

As noted throughout the report, Lawrenceville is undergoing a multi-million-dollar renovation project across the entire facility. All housing units that are currently occupied are scheduled for renovation. Once the southside buildings are completed, the entire population will be moved into the newly renovated buildings, and work will begin on the northside buildings. This renovation project includes fixing the light fixtures, showers and shower lighting, and replacing the locking mechanisms and intercoms inside the multiple cells and on the doors.

An improved cleaning plan has been implemented for the showers, which includes weekly power washing. The sidewalks have been repaired and repaved. New tiles are currently being installed in the inmate dining areas. The interior kitchen renovation is in progress, which includes fixing the leaking sink. Food trays are transported at appropriate temperatures using electric carts, which are plugged in to maintain proper temperature while being loaded. Once the carts arrive at the destination, they can be plugged in again to maintain safe serving temperatures. No mold was detected where the washer and dryer are stationed in Housing Unit 80.

OSIG appreciates the assistance provided by the VADOC during this inspection. 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 Littell, 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
Holly Cline, Chief of Staff, Virginia Department of Corrections