



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2025

DOJ OIG Releases the Results of Six Concurrent Inspections of BOP Food Service Operations

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz announced today the release of a web-based interactive report detailing the results of a series of unannounced, concurrent inspections assessing the administration of food service at six Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) institutions.

Our inspections occurred June 4—June 6, 2024 at a facility in each BOP region:

- Mid-Atlantic Region—U.S. Penitentiary (USP) McCreary in Pine Knot, Kentucky;
- Southeast Region—Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) Marianna in Marianna, Florida;
- South Central Region—Federal Correctional Complex (FCC) Pollock in Pollock, Louisiana;
- North Central Region—Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) Chicago in Chicago, Illinois;
- Northeast Region—FCC Allenwood in Allenwood, Pennsylvania; and
- Western Region—FCI Mendota in Mendota, California.

During on-site inspections, we found that food service operations at FCC Allenwood and MCC Chicago appeared to be well run, were generally clean, and had few issues. However, we identified various issues with USP McCreary, FCI Marianna, FCC Pollock, and FCI Mendota. Many of the issues we observed are manifestations of longstanding BOP-wide issues our office has previously identified.

Our findings include:

- **Lax Enforcement of Contraband Mitigation Procedures.** At USP McCreary, we found a large unattended and untethered knife in a food preparation area. Further, FCI Mendota and FCI Marianna did not have functional pallet x-ray machines to detect possible contraband in large food shipments being brought into the institution. Based on our discussions with food service staff, it is likely that neither institution has had a functional pallet x-ray machine for at least 2 years prior to our inspection.

- **Lack of Security Cameras in Food Warehouses.** Although the BOP has made progress in updating camera systems and adding cameras at its institutions, of the six institutions we inspected, five (USP McCreary, FCI Marianna, FCC Pollock, MCC Chicago, and FCC Allenwood) did not have security cameras in food service warehouses. This was especially concerning at USP McCreary, FCI Marianna, and FCC Pollock, where inmates routinely work in these large areas.
- **Low Staffing Levels.** Staff shortages made it difficult for employees to safely monitor inmates and caused the FCI Mendota to modify the way food is served.
- **Infrastructure Issues.** Due to broken water pipes and poor drainage that damaged the floor of MCC Chicago's kitchen, the kitchen was undergoing a complete renovation with an anticipated cost of at least \$700,000. Additionally, in the inmate cafeteria at USP McCreary, we saw water seeping through broken floor tiles and emitting a strong and unpleasant odor. Separately, at FCI Marianna and FCC Pollock, temperatures in kitchens where BOP employees and inmates work were very hot due to air conditioning and ventilation problems. A Pollock employee told us that the kitchen area is "extremely hot" and that the inmates are "working in brutal heat."
- **Broken Equipment.** Freezers or refrigerators at USP McCreary, FCI Marianna, and FCC Pollock did not maintain temperatures in compliance with BOP standards established for food safety, increasing the risk of foodborne illness.
- **Sanitation.** At USP McCreary, we found a dirty kitchen, day-old food that had not been thrown away, and the pervasive smell of raw meat. We also found that there was no soap in a bathroom used by inmates who prepare food.

As stated above, many of our findings stem from longstanding, enterprise-wide concerns identified in the DOJ Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) body of BOP oversight work. We obtained confirmation from BOP officials that many of the problems we identified during our inspections were addressed prior to the publication of this report. However, given the number of major food service equipment malfunctions we identified during these inspections, we believe that similar problems may exist enterprise-wide. Therefore, in August 2024 the OIG initiated an audit of the BOP's [Acquisition and Life-Cycle Management of Major Equipment Supporting Food Services](#). The OIG anticipates that a forthcoming report will provide greater detail on such issues and will make appropriate recommendations to address them.

Report: Today's report can be found on the [OIG's website](#).