December 25, 2024

Standards Compliance-Tennessee Corrections Institute

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (ctas.tennessee.edu). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

The University of Tennessee
County Technical Assistance Service
226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard, Suite 400
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
615.532.3555 phone
615.532.3699 fax
www.ctas.tennessee.edu

Table of Contents

Standards Compliance-Tennessee Corrections Institute

Reference Number: CTAS-1431

The attorney general has opined that a jail is not necessarily unconstitutionally overcrowded simply because it houses more inmates than its Tennessee Corrections Institute (TCI) capacity. Op. Tenn. Atty. Gen. 89-65 (April 28, 1989) (citing *Feliciano v. Barcelo*, 497 F.Supp. 14, 35 (D.P.R.1979)). It is clear that TCI and American Correctional Association (ACA) standards do not establish the constitutional standard. Id. (Citing *Grubbs v. Bradley*, 552 F.Supp. 1052, 1124 (M.D. Tenn. 1982). *See also* Op. Tenn. Atty. Gen. 02-015 (February 6, 2002) (same).

It is important to note that the Constitution does not require the county to operate the jail in accordance with criminological doctrine or to employ only experts in its management. *See Grubbs v. Bradley*, 552 F.Supp. 1052, 1124 (D.C. Tenn. 1982). "And, while guidelines of professional organizations such as the American Correctional Association represent desirable goals for penal institutions, neither they nor the opinions of experts can be regarded as establishing constitutional minima." *Id*. Likewise, a lack of compliance with Tennessee Corrections Institute requirements does not mandate a finding of a constitutional violation. *Bradford v. Gardner*, 578 F.Supp. 382, 384 (E.D. Tenn. 1984). *See also Jones v. Mankin*, 1989 WL 44924, *7 (Tenn. Ct. App. 1989) ("While we find the Tennessee Corrections Institute's staffing recommendations interesting and helpful, they do not provide a basis to conclude that the sheriff is not able to operate the jail with his existing staff.").

Although violations of state minimum standards or the county's policies regarding operation of the jail may constitute negligence, violations of state law do not constitute deliberate indifference. *Davis v. Fentress County Tennessee*, 6 Fed.Appx. 243, 250 (6th Cir. 2001). *See also Roberts v. City of Troy*, 773 F.2d 720, 726 (6th Cir. 1985), *citing Davis v. Scherer*, 468 U.S. 183, 104 S.Ct. 3012, 82 L.Ed.2d 139 (1984) ("The mere failure to comply with a state regulation is not a constitutional violation.").
