



Montana Department of Corrections

Director's Office

Steve Bullock, Governor
Reginald D. Michael, Director

COVID-19: Effects on PREA Audits and Compliance

PREA audit requirements:

- The PREA audit year runs from August 20 of one year to August 19 of the following year.
- The agency must audit one third of its facilities each audit year.
- Audit cycles are three-year periods. All facilities must be audited within the cycle.
- We are currently in the first year of the third audit cycle. The second year starts on August 20, 2020.
- Below is the DOC's schedule for audits and internal compliance work.
- The **Federal Audit** is the only element specifically required under the PREA standards.
- **Self-assessment** and **mock audits** are part of the department's internal processes to ensure ongoing compliance in non-audit years. Self-assessments are conducted by PREA compliance managers at each facility under the guidance of the department's PREA coordinator. Mock audits are conducted by the Quality Assurance Office with assistance from other staff and led by the department's PREA coordinator.
- MWP successfully completed a federal PREA audit in Fall 2019.
- Pine Hills completed a self-assessment in Spring 2020.

	8/2019-8/2020	8/2020-8/2021	8/2021-8/2022
Federal Audit	MWP/CCC	MSP	Pine Hills
Self-Assessment	Pine Hills	MWP	MSP
Mock Audit	MSP	Pine Hills	MWP

Limitations resulting from COVID-19 pandemic:

- The Quality Assurance Office conducted a mock audit of MSP in Spring 2020. The majority of the audit was completed through document review and some staff interviews. The on-site portion could not be conducted due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, the PREA compliance manager at the facility continually monitors onsite compliance. The PREA coordinator conducted several on-site inspections in 2019 and continues to communicate with the PREA compliance manager almost daily.
- The federal PREA audit originally scheduled for MSP in August has been postponed until Spring 2021. Based on the audit schedule, this audit does not need to be completed until August 2021.
- Crossroads Correctional Center, operated by CoreCivic, has postponed the federal PREA audit scheduled for this audit year due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- Some requirements under PREA have specific timeframes for completion, such as risk assessments. COVID-19-related restrictions have resulted in some delays in completion of those tasks. However, facility staff will document the reason for these delays and complete the requirements as soon as safely possible.

PREA compliance continues to be of greatest importance to the department, and as such, the DOC is working hard within its new correctional landscape to ensure all facilities are operating in compliance with PREA standards while taking into account safety precautions related to COVID-19.