



Multnomah County Sheriff's Office

501 SE HAWTHORNE BLVD., Suite 350 • Portland, OR 97214

MICHAEL REESE
SHERIFF

Exemplary service for a safe, livable community

503 988-4300 PHONE
503 988-4500 TTY
www.mcso.us

September 27, 2021

Jennifer McGuirk, MPA, CIA
Multnomah County Auditor
501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Room 601
Portland, OR 97214

Dear Auditor McGuirk,

I would like to thank you and your staff again for your ongoing examination of the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) response to the COVID-19 pandemic and for this opportunity to provide written feedback to the working draft of your Recommendation Status Evaluation. MCSO continues to place the highest value on the compassionate and safe care of all persons in our custody. I have the following updated status information to report regarding MCSO's progress toward implementation of Recommendation 4.

Recommendation 4

"With normal no-cost visiting options suspended because of COVID-19 precautions, the MCSO should either expand the use of free-phone calls or modify lobby video visit operations to allow for safe use as soon as possible and no later than 90 days within issuance of this report."

Auditor's Note

The MCSO has not yet reopened the free jail lobby video visit operations. Although the MCSO did not expand the program as recommended, it did secure enough money, via a combination of federal and county general funds, to continue to pay for two 10-minute phone calls per week for adults in custody.

MCSO continues to recognize the critical need for Adults in Custody to maintain contact with family, friends, and other members of their support system. We have explored every option to maintain these positive connections and will continue to do so.

I am happy to report the funding we secured to pay for the two 10-minute phone calls per week for each adult in custody has been extended through September 30, 2022.

MCSO's Correction Services Division had also developed a plan to reopen jail lobbies to provide no-cost visitation access via lobby kiosks as COVID-19 case numbers declined and mitigation measures were lifted throughout the state during the early months of summer 2021. Like many other County Reopening plans, however, the Corrections Services Division determined it was appropriate to delay these plans due to the mid-

summer surge in COVID-19 cases related to the Delta variant. As case numbers decline again, MCSO will move forward with reopening no-cost visitation opportunities in the jail facilities' public lobbies. Our tentative reopening date is October 16, 2021. The implementation plan will initially include opening every other kiosk to allow ample social distancing between visitors. Scheduling for these visits will be managed through the Securus website used for all MCSO video visitation.

As a result of these ongoing steps toward implementation, I respectfully request that your Recommendation Status Evaluation identify Recommendation 4 as being In Process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Reese".

Michael Reese
Multnomah County Sheriff