

**REPORT ON THE  
INSPECTION OF**

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# **RICHLAND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION**

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**INSPECTION DATE: OCT. 29, 2025**



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OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL



## INTRODUCTION

In the state's 2025-27 biennial budget bill, the 136th General Assembly created the Office of Correctional Facility Inspection Services (CFIS) within the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Established by Ohio Revised Code Section 109.39, CFIS – effective Sept. 30, 2025 – became the primary entity responsible for inspecting Ohio's state correctional institutions, privately operated correctional institutions and youth services facilities. Before that date, the Correctional Institution Inspection Committee (CIIC), a joint committee of the General Assembly, was responsible for inspecting Ohio's correctional institutions and youth facilities. The General Assembly abolished the CIIC and re-constituted it as CFIS in the budget bill.

CFIS's duties are set forth in R.C. 109.39(A), which provides:

“There is, as a section within the office of the attorney general, an office of correctional facility inspection services. The office shall establish and maintain a continuing program of inspection of each state correctional institution used for the custody, control, training, and rehabilitation of persons convicted of crime and of each private correctional facility; any local correctional institution used for the same purposes; and any youth services facility. Each inspection shall include an evaluation of the inmate grievance procedure, compliance with meal requirements, at least one review of rehabilitative or educational programs, and any other compliance area the office determines is appropriate. Not later than the last day of January of each year, the office shall submit a report of its findings from the previous calendar year to the general assembly in accordance with section 101.68 of the Revised Code.”

CFIS is not required to provide a correctional institution or youth facility with advance notice of an inspection, pursuant to R.C. 109.39(A). In addition to its mandatory inspection duties, CFIS may assist the attorney general and correctional facility leadership in developing and evaluating programs to improve the condition or operations of the facilities it is required to inspect. R.C. 109.39(B).

Besides the CFIS inspections, each Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) facility undergoes an annual inspection and accreditation by the American Correctional Association (ACA) and an internal management audit (IMA). Although CFIS staff may review and refer to the ACA and IMA findings, CFIS inspections are separate and independent.

To institute the continuing program of inspection required by Ohio law, CFIS, shortly after its formation, began conducting an initial inspection of the DRC and Department of Youth Services (DYS) facilities that had not been inspected by CIIC in 2025. The initial inspections were designed, in part, to help CFIS familiarize itself with each facility, the warden and the staff. Further, each initial inspection allows CFIS to determine what additional data might be needed for future inspections and what inspection methodology is appropriate. This report details the initial inspection of Richland Correctional Institution (RICI).

## GENERAL OVERVIEW

On Oct. 28, 2025, CFIS completed an initial inspection of RIC1. The staff of Warden Angela Stuff was notified the day before that CFIS would be arriving at 9 a.m. the following day. The CFIS team consisted of Dr. James Wesson, chief of inspections, and Deborah Drummond, lead inspector.

RIC1 is a correctional facility with a minimum- to medium-security level in Mansfield, Ohio. It has an open-dormitory style and is split into units, with each unit housing about 240 incarcerated persons (IPs). RIC1 has a capacity of 2,613; on the date of the inspection, it housed roughly 2,500 IPs. The facility, which opened in 1998, sits on 78 acres.

RIC1's most recent IMA was done on Feb. 11-13, 2025. The annual audit was conducted by an independent auditor, who reviews a facility's compliance with ACA's 5th Edition Standards and the 2025 Ohio Standards and Observations, in preparation for the next ACA audit. All institutional work, industry and vocational educational programs are also audited.

In the 2025 IMA, RIC1 was found to be in compliance with all 64 of the applicable mandatory and all 435 of the applicable non-mandatory ACA standards. It was found to be in compliance with 67 of the 76 applicable Ohio standards. RIC1 is scheduled for an ACA re-accreditation audit in 2026. The table below illustrates RIC1's rate of compliance with ACA and Ohio standards over the past three years.

IMA Audit Scores	2025	2024	2023
ACA Mandatory	100%	100%	100%
ACA Non-mandatory	100%	100%	100%
Ohio Standards	90.5%	87.7%	98.5%

## AREAS INSPECTED BY CFIS

Pursuant to R.C. 109.39, CFIS must inspect the grievance process, food services, and an educational or a rehabilitative program. In addition, R.C. 109.39 empowers CFIS to inspect any other area that it deems appropriate. While at RIC1, CFIS also inspected:

- Medical services
- Recreation area
- Library
- Visitation
- Specialized housing
- Restrictive housing (Transitional Programming Unit)

In advance of their arrival, CFIS inspectors requested for their review copies of the administrative duty officer (ADO) reports from previous seven days and the 15 most recent grievances available. Upon arrival, the CFIS team was greeted by Warden Stuff and her staff. After brief introductions in the warden's conference room, the inspection, led by the warden, began.

## **MANDATED AREAS OF INSPECTION**

### **Grievance process**

DRC's grievance process, governed by Ohio Administrative Code Section 5120-9-31, consists of three steps. It begins with an incarcerated person (IP) filing an informal complaint resolution (ICR) with the supervisor of the area in which the IP has a concern. The IP has 14 calendar days from the date of the incident to file an ICR. The inspector of institution services (IIS) has 14 days to respond and has an option to file an extension. If the complaint is not resolved or the IP is dissatisfied with the inspector's decision, the IP can file a grievance to the IIS within 14 days of the ICR response. Or, in cases in which an IP believes that the warden or the IIS was personally and knowingly involved in a violation of a law, rule or policy – or condoned such a violation – the IP can file a grievance directly to the chief inspector.

The institutional inspector investigates a grievance to determine whether any DRC policy, rule or procedural guideline was violated – and either denies or grants the grievance. If the IP is not satisfied with the inspector's decision, the IP can appeal it to the chief inspector. The Office of the Chief Inspector, housed within DRC's central office, makes the final appeal determination for every grievance that is appealed from the facility level. R.C. 5120.06.

Every IP is issued a tablet computer with access to ViaPath, the system IPs use to electronically file a grievance. Paper grievance forms are also available for those who prefer a manual process. The grievance process is designed to address IP complaints regarding any aspect of institutional life, whether the issue relates to the application of policies or procedures, conditions of confinement, or actions of institutional staff.

During its inspection, CFIS focused on ensuring that RICl staff is systematically logging and tracking grievances in ViaPath, that the staff is responding to grievances promptly, and that the grievance response meets policy guidelines. CFIS also looked for any signs of retaliation against IPs who filed grievances, checked to ensure that the appeals process is accessible, looked for any trends with grievances, and reviewed responses to grievances to ensure that the correct policy was cited and cited appropriately.

CFIS reviewed 15 grievances and 15 ICRs at RICl. All responses were provided on time and all properly cited DRC policy. There was no indication of staff retaliation or any observed trends that would indicate a larger problem in the institution. Grievances were properly logged using ViaPath, and the system was accessible to IPs via their tablets. RICl's grievance process ran efficiently and in accordance with DRC policy.

### **Food services**

The food-services area was inspected to ensure compliance with DRC Policy 60-FSM-02, Food Service Operations, and DRC 60-FSM-06, Safety and Health Protection for Staff and Incarcerated Individuals Assigned to Food Service.

#### **Meal sampling**

CFIS staff sampled a lunch consisting of a chicken patty, carrots and cabbage, cheesy potatoes, bread, ketchup, and a brownie. The portion sampled met policy standards for taste, appearance and temperature. Temperatures for all items served were within acceptable guidelines, according to 60-FSM-02 (hot foods at or above 140 degrees, cold foods at or below 40 degrees).

## Observations

The food-services area was extremely clean and orderly; the correct menu was posted. Incarcerated food-service workers were appropriately dressed in protective clothing (hair and beard nets, rubber gloves). Uniforms appeared to be clean. RICl offers the IN2Work program, designed to teach skills and provide certifications needed for careers in the culinary arts. Participants were actively engaged in meal preparation.

The kitchen tool room was inspected, with all tools accounted for. Tools not present were replaced with a chit, which is an object placed on the peg where the tool should be. A tool control log was being used to indicate the individual to whom the tool was assigned, serving as a safety check. There were no broken tools in the area.

The back-dock area was clean and free of offensive odors. The area surrounding the trash compactor was free of debris. No rodents or pests were observed in the food-services area or on the dock. Coolers and freezers were in proper working order; storage areas were clean and organized. The dish room was clean; dish-cleaning water temperatures complied with DRC 60-FSM-02. Overall sanitation was appropriate, as proper disinfectants were being utilized to clean the area. The CFIS team verified that food-services staff and IP staff had completed sanitation and hygiene training to ensure compliance with 60-FSM-06. Safe Serv Certification was also verified. CFIS spoke to multiple IPs in the food-services area; none reported any concerns that would constitute a violation of DRC policy.

## Educational or rehabilitative program

DRC, through the Ohio Central School System (OCSS), offers educational programs designed to meet the needs of incarcerated people. The programs include adult education courses, vocational training and technical training, all of which incorporate technology into the programming. Collectively, the programs are designed to enhance the incarcerated population's employability upon release. On the date of the inspection, RICl had the following academic and career programs:

- Education:
  - Adult basic education<sup>4</sup>
  - General educational development (GED)
  - Pre-GED
  - Special education
  - Certificate/degree programs through Ashland University
- Career/Technical:
  - Auto collision repair
  - Barber school
  - Drywall
  - Horticulture
  - Turf management
- Apprenticeships:
  - Animal trainer
  - Building maintenance/repair
  - Carpentry

- Cook
- Electrician
- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC)
- Janitorial
- Maintenance
- Plumbing
- Recovery operator

CFIS reviewed RICl's literacy and GED programs and observed the vocational training offered. The facility offered sufficient post-secondary educational opportunities for the population. All instructors appeared to have the appropriate qualifications, and the educational material and technology were up-to-date. Staff appropriately tracked enrollment and attendance. RICl's educational and vocational areas were clean and organized. IPs were observed participating in GED and Pre-GED programming and the carpentry and plumbing programs. The vocational area appeared to have the appropriate safety protocols in place. Overall, the educational and vocational areas appeared to have a strong focus on preparing IPs for a successful return to society.

## **NON-MANDATED AREAS OF INSPECTION**

### **Medical services**

CFIS toured the medical department and spoke to facility staff. The department consists of a dental area, pill call area, examination rooms and an infirmary area. There is office space to accommodate the medical staff (doctor, administrators and nurse practitioners). IPs were receiving medical treatment during the inspection, and the area was extremely clean. There were appropriate health-care and preventative-care memos visible.

### **Recreation area**

CFIS toured the recreation department and spoke with the director. The area was clean and well-maintained. It had music rooms, a new weight equipment, a full-length basketball court and an outdoor recreation area. All equipment appeared to be in good working order. Appropriate cleaning disinfectants were being utilized. Restrooms were inspected; no sanitation issues were observed. No violations of DRC 77-REC-01, Recreation and Leisure Time Activities, were observed or reported.

### **Library/Law library**

RICl has a large library, including a law library. The area, newly remodeled, was clean and organized. In the library, IPs could access LexisNexis and OhioMeansJobs.com, which provides specialized employment services, including re-entry resume support. Re-entry information and hours of operation were posted. The librarian was knowledgeable and expressed pride in her area. No violations of DRC 58-LIB-01, Comprehensive Library Services, were observed or reported.

### **Visitation**

The visitation area provided a positive setting for IPs to engage with family members, especially children. The area was clean and organized, and seating was appropriate for family engagement. A vending area was available for visitors to purchase snacks. RCI allows visitation Wednesdays through Sundays, from 8 a.m.- 10

a.m., 10:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. No violations of DRC 76-VIS-01, Incarcerated Person (IP) Visitation, were observed or reported.

### **Specialized housing**

CFIS inspected RIC1's Unit A1, a specialized unit focused on rehabilitation through peer support and structured programming. In general terms, a specialized unit offers additional programming to meet a specific need. The Unit A1 manager provided a tour and spoke in-depth with CFIS inspectors, explaining that the unit works to create a support system using group therapy and emphasizes personal development. Unit staff members were professional when interacting with CFIS.

A1, which has an open-dormitory style, was clean and organized. No sanitation issues were observed or reported. All toilets and sinks appeared to be in good working order. The unit had an operable ice machine and a laundry room with a washer and dryer. The unit was appropriately staffed with two officers, a sergeant, a case manager and the unit manager. No violations of DRC policy were reported or observed.

### **Transitional Programming Unit (TPU)**

The TPU, a restrictive housing area, was clean and orderly. CFIS verified that IPs in the unit had access to their tablets. Peer supporters were present and actively engaged. These IPs have been trained by the Ohio Department of Behavioral Health to assist other IPs who may be in crisis. Peer supporters assist other IPs using their training and their shared experiences with substance abuse or mental-health challenges. Support occurs within the housing unit – outside the clinical setting – and is meant to promote sustained recovery. Peer supporters also can become certified prior to release, enhancing their employability.

The TPU offered adequate reading materials and religious services. Also offered were recovery services (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous) and mental-health programs. CFIS inspectors verified via the sign-in log, DRC 6011, that executive staff members were conducting rounds on time, in accordance with DRC Policy 50-PAM-02. No sanitation issues were reported or observed during the inspection. Cells that were inspected were in appropriate condition. The TPU laundry area was clean and organized, and proper cleaning products were being utilized.

CFIS reviewed several DRC 4118 reports, which are used to document each IPs essential daily functions, such as acceptance or refusal of meals, personal hygiene and recreation activities. Each DRC 4118 is signed or initialed by a staff member as an indication that these necessities/services have been provided. All DRC 4118s reviewed were completed appropriately; they included dates, times and staff initials documenting the care given. TPU was appropriately staffed with three officers, a sergeant, and a lieutenant. CFIS spoke to numerous IPs housed in TPU; none reported any concerns that would constitute a violation of DRC policy.

## **MISCELLANEOUS INSPECTION MATTERS**

### **Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)**

Congress passed the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) in 2003 to provide for the analysis of the incidence and effects of rape in federal, state and local institutions. PREA also provides information, resources, recommendations and funding to protect incarcerated people from sexual assaults and rapes. PREA applies to all DRC institutions, including privately operated and juvenile correctional facilities.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSP), the law enforcement agency responsible for investigating criminal offenses inside correctional institutions, tracks sexual assaults using the PREA incident system. CFIS inspectors reviewed that system and found no substantiated cases. PREA signs were appropriately posted throughout the facility (housing units, recreation, library, visitation, education, front entrance, and medical, etc.). Contact information for the local rape-crisis center was posted.

### **Staff recruiting and retention**

On the date of the inspection, RIC1 had a vacancy rate below 10%, which does not reflect an immediate need to recruit staff.

### **Naloxone (Narcan) going-home kits**

RIC1 offered Narcan kits to IPs on the day of their release. Each kit contained two doses of naloxone and 10 fentanyl testing strips. The kits are stored in Harm Reduction Vending Machines, which are placed in a discrete area. RIC1 complied with DRC 10-SAF-20, Naloxone Safety and Health Procedures.

### **Administrative duty officer (ADO) reports**

CFIS reviewed the ADO (DRC 50-PAM-02) reports from the week prior to the inspection, which had been provided upon request. Per DRC 50-PAM-02, Incarcerated Person (IP) Communication/Weekly Rounds, an ADO report is completed daily by staff tasked with completing inspection rounds. The designated rounds cover food services, visitation, a housing unit, the recreation area, and any other area designated by the warden. Upon completion of the rounds, the ADO provides the warden's office a summary of his/her findings. The report includes the date and time of the rounds, areas visited, observations, concerns and recommendations. The ADO reports reviewed by CFIS were completed on time and in accordance with policy. No violations of 50-PAM-02 were observed or reported.

### **Security/Facilities**

Units were appropriately staffed by two correctional officers, a case manager, a sergeant and a unit manager. Units were clean and organized. Restrooms were clean; all showers, sinks and toilets appeared to be in good working order. Units had essential items, including a washer and dryer, ice machines, water fountains and microwaves. All appeared to be in good working order.

Fire evacuations plans were posted in highly visible areas. Unit team pictures and programming information (staff/incarcerated adult facilitator, date and time of program) were posted. Cleaning products and supplies were secured appropriately. Dayrooms had televisions and appropriate recreational games and activities. According to the employee sign-in log (DRC-6011), executive staff were conducting rounds according to policy.

No safety or security issues were observed during the inspection. RICl appeared to be fully staffed, and the officers' presence was observed. None of the IPs interviewed during the inspection raised any concerns that would constitute a violation of DRC policy.

## **CONCLUSION**

On the day of the inspection, RICl was very clean. Staff members demonstrated a high level of professionalism and correctional knowledge; they were able to answer all questions. The facility staff emphasized pro-social behavior for the incarcerated adults. Programming and vocational services have a strong focus on preparing IPs for a successful re-entry to society. The grievance process was being used effectively, in accordance with DRC policy. RICl seems to function extremely efficiently.



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