



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 557

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 89

Senate, April 9, 2026

The Committee on Judiciary reported through SEN. WINFIELD of the 10th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT UPDATING PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION STANDARDS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 18-81cc of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3 (a) Any executive branch agency of the state or any political
4 subdivision of the state that incarcerates or detains adult or juvenile
5 offenders, including persons detained for immigration violations, shall,
6 within available appropriations, [adopt and] comply with the
7 [applicable standards recommended by the National] standards of the
8 Prison Rape Elimination [Commission] Act, 34 USC 30301 et seq., in
9 effect as of January 1, 2024, for the prevention, detection and monitoring
10 of, and response to, sexual abuse in adult prisons and jails, community
11 correctional centers, juvenile facilities and lockups.

12 (b) Such standards include, but are not limited to:

13 (1) Zero tolerance of sexual abuse;

- 14 (2) Contracting with other entities for the confinement of inmates or
15 detainees;
- 16 (3) Inmate or detainee supervision;
- 17 (4) Heightened protection for vulnerable detainees;
- 18 (5) Limits to cross-gender viewing and searches;
- 19 (6) Accommodating inmates or detainees with special needs;
- 20 (7) Hiring and promotion decisions;
- 21 (8) Assessment and use of monitoring technology;
- 22 (9) Evidence protocol and forensic medical examinations;
- 23 (10) Agreements with outside public entities and community service
24 providers;
- 25 (11) Agreements with outside law enforcement agencies;
- 26 (12) Agreements with the prosecuting authority;
- 27 (13) Employee training;
- 28 (14) Volunteer and contractor training;
- 29 (15) Inmate education;
- 30 (16) Detainee, attorney, contractor and inmate worker notification of
31 agency's zero-tolerance policy;
- 32 (17) Specialized training: Investigations;
- 33 (18) Specialized training: Medical and mental health care;
- 34 (19) Screening for risk of victimization and abusiveness;
- 35 (20) Use of screening information;
- 36 (21) Inmate or detainee reporting;
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- 37 (22) Exhaustion of administrative remedies;
- 38 (23) Inmate access to outside confidential support services or legal
39 representation;
- 40 (24) Third-party reporting;
- 41 (25) Staff and facility or agency head reporting duties, including, but
42 not limited to, mandatory transmission to the Office of the Correction
43 Ombuds of a copy of any report or complaint of a sexual assault;
- 44 (26) Reporting to other confinement facilities;
- 45 (27) Staff first responder duties;
- 46 (28) Coordinated response;
- 47 (29) Agency protection against retaliation;
- 48 (30) Duty to investigate;
- 49 (31) Criminal and administrative agency investigations;
- 50 (32) Evidence standard for administrative investigations;
- 51 (33) Disciplinary sanctions for staff;
- 52 (34) Disciplinary sanctions for inmates;
- 53 (35) Referrals for prosecution for detainee-on-detainee sexual abuse;
- 54 (36) Medical and mental health screenings: History of sexual abuse;
- 55 (37) Access to emergency medical and mental health services;
- 56 (38) Ongoing medical and mental health care for sexual abuse victims
57 and abusers;
- 58 (39) Immediate and ongoing access to sexual assault crisis services;
- 59 [(39)] (40) Sexual abuse incident reviews;

- 60 ~~[(40)]~~ (41) Data collection;
- 61 ~~[(41)]~~ (42) Data review for corrective action;
- 62 ~~[(42)]~~ (43) Data storage, publication, and destruction; and
- 63 ~~[(43)]~~ (44) Audits of standards.

64 (c) The agency head of any executive branch agency of the state or the
65 chief elected official or governing legislative body of any political
66 subdivision of the state that incarcerates or detains juvenile offenders
67 shall, annually, not later than January fifteenth, certify its compliance
68 with the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section to the
69 Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the Office of Policy
70 and Management.

71 (d) Not later than January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the
72 Commissioner of Correction shall report, in accordance with the
73 provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committee of the
74 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the
75 Department of Correction, concerning the following: (1) Training
76 provided to department staff concerning compliance with the Prison
77 Rape Elimination Act, 34 USC 30301 et seq., in effect as of January 1,
78 2024; (2) the number of reports of sexual assault and the types of sexual
79 assault reported; and (3) how many of such reports were investigated
80 and the outcome of each such investigation.

81 (e) The Commissioner of Correction shall, not later than January 1,
82 2027, adopt regulations in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54
83 to implement the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section.

84 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 18-81qq of the 2026 supplement to the
85 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
86 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

87 (a) (1) There is, within the Office of Governmental Accountability
88 established under section 1-300, the Office of the Correction Ombuds for
89 the provision of ombuds services. The Correction Ombuds appointed

90 pursuant to section 18-81jj shall be the head of said office.

91 (2) For purposes of this section, "ombuds services" includes:

92 (A) Evaluating the delivery of services to persons who are
93 incarcerated by the Department of Correction;

94 (B) Reviewing periodically the nonemergency procedures
95 established by the department to carry out the provisions of title 18 and
96 evaluating whether such procedures conflict with the rights of persons
97 who are incarcerated;

98 (C) Receiving communications, including telephone calls and
99 electronic mail from persons who are incarcerated, who shall be
100 permitted to make such telephone or electronic mail communications
101 free of charge, regarding decisions, actions, omissions, policies,
102 procedures, rules or regulations of the department;

103 (D) Conducting announced or unannounced site visits of correctional
104 facilities administered by the department, without restrictions on such
105 visits, including during periods when a facility is locked down or
106 experiencing a facility-wide emergency, provided the department may
107 restrict access to a portion of a facility in an emergency situation for the
108 duration of the emergency. For the purpose of this subparagraph, a
109 situation or event constituting an emergency shall be determined by the
110 commissioner or the commissioner's designee, to be a situation
111 constituting a significant risk to the safety or security of the facility, or
112 the health, safety or security of department staff or persons who are
113 incarcerated, or an event that significantly compromises the operations
114 of the facility;

115 (E) Reviewing the operation of correctional facilities and
116 nonemergency procedures employed at such facilities. Nonemergency
117 procedures include, but are not limited to, the department's use of force
118 procedures;

119 (F) Recommending procedure and policy revisions to the
120 department;

121 (G) Taking all possible actions, including, but not limited to,
122 conducting programs of public education, undertaking legislative
123 advocacy and making proposals for systemic reform and formal legal
124 action in order to secure and ensure the rights of persons in the custody
125 of the commissioner. The Correction Ombuds is not authorized to
126 institute litigation;

127 (H) Conducting surveys by sending or distributing during facility
128 visits, confidential written and electronic communications or
129 questionnaires to persons who are incarcerated or employees of the
130 Department of Correction concerning conditions of confinement,
131 working conditions or other subjects within the scope of the duties of
132 the Office of the Correction Ombuds, without prior approval of the
133 department. Such persons who are incarcerated or employees shall be
134 permitted to complete and return to said office such surveys either in
135 written format or electronically. No survey may be sent or distributed
136 to an employee of the Department of Correction, unless the Correction
137 Ombuds previously made such survey available for review and
138 comment by the bargaining units representing such employees;

139 (I) Publishing on an Internet web site operated by the Office of the
140 Correction Ombuds a semiannual summary of all ombuds services and
141 activities during the six-month period before such publication; [and]

142 (J) Receiving and reviewing each (i) copy of any report or complaint
143 of a sexual assault transmitted to the Office of the Correction Ombuds
144 pursuant to section 18-81cc, as amended by this act, or (ii) report or
145 complaint of a sexual assault made directly to the Office of the
146 Correction Ombuds; and

147 [(J)] (K) Evaluating the provision of health care services, including,
148 but not limited to, medical care, dental care, mental health care and
149 substance use disorder treatment services, to persons who are
150 incarcerated by the Department of Correction.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	18-81cc
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	18-81qq(a)

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which (1) requires executive branch agencies that incarcerate or detain offenders to comply with federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards, (2) requires the Department of Correction to adopt regulations to implement PREA standards and submit a report to the general assembly, and (3) expands the existing responsibilities of the Office of the Correction Ombuds to include receiving and reviewing sexual assault reports and complaints, results in no fiscal impact to the state as the affected agencies have the capacity and resources to meet the requirements of the bill.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 89*****AN ACT UPDATING PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION STANDARDS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the state's executive branch agencies and political subdivisions that incarcerate or detain adult or juvenile offenders to, within available appropriations, comply with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) in effect as of January 1, 2024 (see BACKGROUND). Current law requires them to, within available appropriations, adopt and comply with the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission's recommended standards.

Current law specifies the commission's prison rape elimination standards to prevent, detect, deter, and respond to sexual assault incidents, among other things. Under the bill, these standards are substantially the same with two changes. The bill (1) adds immediate and ongoing access to sexual assault crisis services as a new standard and (2) specifies that staff and facilities or agency heads must transmit a copy of any sexual assault report or complaint to the Office of the Correction Ombuds as part of their reporting duties under the current standards.

The bill also requires the Department of Correction (DOC) commissioner to adopt regulations to implement the PREA standards by January 1, 2027. Starting by that date, the department must also annually report to the Judiciary Committee on (1) training provided to DOC staff on compliance with PREA, (2) the number and types of sexual assaults reported, and (3) the number of reports investigated and their outcomes.

It also expands the services provided by the Office of the Correction Ombuds to include receiving and reviewing sexual assault reports or

complaints that are (1) transmitted to the office under the bill’s reporting standard above or (2) made directly to the office.

Lastly, it makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

BACKGROUND

Federal PREA

PREA established a zero-tolerance standard for all acts of sexual abuse and sexual harassment in confinement facilities and created a set of national standards for the detection, prevention, and punishment of such acts in confinement facilities. Among other things, the PREA standards cover inmate safety, staff training, and reporting procedures (34 USC § 30301, et seq.).

Related Bill

sHB 5477, favorably reported by the Judiciary Committee, requires state agencies and political subdivisions to adopt and comply with the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission’s standards and revises the application of some of the standards.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 41 Nay 0 (03/23/2026)