

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

Office of the Chief Investigations Officer





July 1, 2025

The Honourable Minister Pamela Gross
Minister of Justice
Office of the Premier

Government of Nunavut
P.O. Box 2410
Iqaluit, NU
X0A 0H0

Dear Minister,

In accordance with Sec. 49(1)(c) of the *Corrections Act*, it is my privilege to submit to you the first Annual Report of the Office of the Chief Investigations Officer (CIO). This report represents a significant milestone for the corrections system in Nunavut, marking the beginning of an annual, transparent overview of the CIO's oversight activities and findings.

As an independent office, the CIO is mandated to monitor and review the decisions and practices within Nunavut's correctional facilities. In addition, the CIO reviews grievances filed by individuals who have experienced distress or dissatisfaction within the system. This report serves as a comprehensive account of the issues and grievances reviewed by the CIO over the past year, as well as recommendations for systemic improvements where necessary.

I would like to thank the staff within the Department of Justice and the individual correctional facilities that I have visited and worked with for their willingness to share their expertise, experiences, and concerns. Their jobs are challenging and often carried out in difficult circumstances. I have great respect for the work that they do, even though my role may focus on pointing out where it is necessary to consider doing that work differently. I hope this report will be a valuable resource as we work together to strengthen the Nunavut correctional system and uphold the principles of justice and oversight.

Respectfully,

Kim Cholette
Chief Investigations Officer
Office of the Chief Investigations Officer

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Acronyms and Definitions

ACHF	Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility in Iqaluit
CIO	Chief Investigations Officer
CRC	Uttaqivik Community Residential Centre (CRC) in Iqaluit
Investigation	A thorough examination of incidents, policies, procedures, or conditions within the facility to identify problems, determine causes, and/or recommend corrective actions.
Grievance	Complaint submitted by a client about an issue or concern regarding treatment or conditions/operations within the facility.
KIC	Kugluktuk Illavut Centre in Kugluktuk
NWCC	Nunavut Women’s Correctional Centre in Iqaluit
PASS	Pathway to Adult Secondary School
RIHF	Rankin Inlet Healing Facility, in Rankin Inlet

Chief Investigations Officer's Message

I am pleased to submit this first report as the Chief Investigations Officer (CIO). The first year of operations has been a productive one that included establishing the office and operational procedures as well as familiarizing myself with the context of Nunavut corrections. The CIO's Office is a key mechanism established under the new *Corrections Act*, which came into force in 2024, to increase transparency and accountability within Nunavut's correctional services and to reinforce the principles of a fair correctional system. With the establishment of this new office, clients¹ in Nunavut have a pathway to justice beyond correctional walls through the Office of the Chief Investigations Officer. This report reflects what has been accomplished in the inaugural year as well as my observations and reactions thus far.

Correctional facilities operate beyond the view of the public, making it even more important to ensure that the rule of law is being respected and that clients are treated with humanity and dignity. As an independent body, the CIO plays a critical role in overseeing Nunavut's correctional system, ensuring that clients' rights are respected and that there is public reporting on how the government carries out its responsibilities under the *Corrections Act*. The CIO's role is similar to that of an Ombudsperson, meaning that my office is a tool that can be used by clients to raise concerns about the conditions of their incarceration – how government acts or fails to act.

Jail administration must balance multiple objectives including safety, security, and client rehabilitation, as well as respect for clients' rights. Modern correctional facilities exist not just to protect the security of the public, but also to assist clients to address issues that may have contributed to their incarceration to help them make a more successful transition when they are released. Facility rules and procedures cannot, therefore, be based simply on the most efficient ways to regulate clients or maintain security; they must also consider the need to build an individual's capacity to be successful within the larger society. While this includes enabling an appropriate respect for authority, it also requires a primary focus on healing and rehabilitation.

¹ In this report, all inmates will be referred to as "clients"

Since assuming my role as CIO, I have visited all correctional facilities in the territory, some on multiple occasions, and have met with staff and clients in each location. I appreciate the time, insights and concerns that have been shared with me during these visits, as they have helped enrich my understanding of the successes and challenges in corrections in Nunavut.

It is my hope that my efforts to support human rights and effective rehabilitation in Nunavut correctional facilities will be actively supported by the Government of Nunavut. I want to acknowledge that the delivery of correctional services is impacted by many of the same obstacles affecting the provision of other public services in Nunavut, in particular the shortage of appropriate housing, and the difficulties in hiring and retaining staff. While the focus of my role is to point out where improvements are needed, I recognize that government staff are juggling numerous tasks in their efforts to meet their departmental objectives and fulfill their responsibilities. It is my intention to build a collaborative environment to support this new endeavour to achieve sustained improvements in the areas that require attention.

Before proceeding, it is important to mention that my observations in this report are but observations. I have not undertaken detailed investigations into the reasons why certain areas in the institutional fabric are lacking. There are many reasons why a facility may be failing to deliver on its mandate in a fully successful manner – everything from lack of caring and commitment, to lack of financial resources, to the inability to hire due to housing issues, to name just a few. This report should be taken with that in mind. In cases where I identify a shortcoming, I am not presupposing a reason for why such a breakdown has occurred; I am noting the observation. I trust that senior officials will be better suited to undertake the required investigations as to the reasons.



Part I – Office of the Chief Investigations Officer

This section of the Annual Report provides a detailed overview of the core functions of the Office of the Chief Investigations Officer (CIO) as well as a brief statement on the statutory framework and processes surrounding the establishment of the office of the CIO.

New Corrections Act

Nunavut's amended *Corrections Act* received Royal Assent on June 14, 2019, and came into force in January of 2024. One of the key changes to this Act involves the creation of a Chief Investigations Officer (CIO) who works independently from Nunavut Corrections and is responsible for oversight and review of correctional decision making. Sections 39 to 56 of the *Corrections Act* provide an overview of the appointment, role, and duties of the CIO. This position is consistent with the provisions of most provincial Ombudsperson legislation, though it is specifically focused on corrections. It is also similar in nature to the role of the federal Correctional Investigator.

The CIO is also responsible (under section 49(c) of the Act) for producing an Annual Report that describes any reviews and investigations conducted and any recommendations made in those matters. This is the first Annual Report produced by the CIO.

Facilities Under the CIO Purview

The Chief Investigations Officer (CIO) has oversight over five adult correctional and community residential facilities in Nunavut:

1. Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility (ACHF) in Iqaluit (143 beds)
2. Nunavut Women's Correctional Centre (NWCC) in Iqaluit (17 beds)
3. Rankin Inlet Healing Facility (RIHF) in Rankin Inlet (48 beds)
4. Kugluktuk Illavut Centre (KIC) in Kugluktuk (15 beds)
5. Uttaqivik Community Residential Centre (CRC) in Iqaluit (12 beds)

While the Isumaqsungittukvik Young Offender Facility (YO) is also located in Iqaluit, the Nunavut Department of Justice determined it does not fall under the CIO's purview. This decision was made despite the CIO's recommendation to include the youth facility under its oversight. The CIO argued that the *Young Offenders Act* lacks provisions for external grievance processes and placing YO under CIO jurisdiction would address this gap and provide young offenders with the same external redress mechanisms available to adults.

Correctional Oversight

As part of the new *Corrections Act*, the Nunavut Legislative Assembly decided to establish the role of the CIO to provide external oversight. A key value of this function is that it creates visibility into decision-making processes, helps hold individuals accountable for their actions, and provides insight into progress towards meeting the objectives and standards established for the operation of Nunavut's correctional facilities. While the focus of the CIO role may appear to be a negative one, that is, one that points out issues and challenges within the operation of the correctional facilities, that view overlooks two key functions in providing oversight. First, the role helps ensure that the rights of clients are upheld. Second, the CIO can play a pivotal role in helping navigate the tension between the aspirational commitments established for creating facilities that genuinely support client healing, and the practical transition of operations and relationships to support that objective.

To that end, I have placed a strong emphasis in my first year on establishing collaborative and constructive relationships with those who do the day-to-day work of managing Nunavut's correctional facilities. I believe that we are working towards the same objectives and will be more successful if our interactions actively contribute to developing the culture and practices that will bring the vision of the *Corrections Act* into reality. Plainly put, my recommendations will be better informed and received if they are generated in a respectful, reflective and constructive environment.

This first annual report from the CIO will likely be somewhat different from the ones that will appear in future years. This report provides more description of the role and operations of the CIO to help familiarize readers with this new function. In addition, this report may capture a broader range of activity as a result of including the work undertaken to prepare for the *Corrections Act* coming into force. However, I expect future reports to take the same approach to focusing on the highest priority areas warranting attention from the Department of Justice.

Responsibilities of the Chief Investigations Officer

The CIO operates independently from the public service and plays a vital role in ensuring all clients receive fair treatment. Client concerns are addressed through a dual approach, including reviewing decisions and independently initiating investigations when necessary.

Reviews

The *Corrections Act* (s. 49(1)(a)) sets out specific areas where the CIO has a duty to conduct a review. The sections below describe these areas and the requirements for the CIO.

Grievances

The term grievance is not a defined term under the *Corrections Act*, but the CIO defines this as meaning a complaint. Under the Act (s.57(2)), clients may submit grievances about a wide variety of matters, such as their treatment, living conditions or anything that causes distress or dissatisfaction, at any time.

Typically, clients need to first raise their concern to a person appointed to receive grievances within the institution and, if dissatisfied with the response, clients can then appeal to the Warden. If clients find the Warden's response unsatisfactory, they can then appeal to the CIO. Grievances involving a Warden's actions or inactions can be submitted directly to the CIO.

In addition, the *Corrections Act* (s.50) gives the CIO broad authority to conduct investigations. Therefore, even if a client does not submit a grievance about a particular issue, the CIO may still choose to investigate it.

Disciplinary Board Decisions

The CIO has the authority to review disciplinary board decisions upon receiving a written request from a client, as outlined in section 21(a and b) of the *Corrections Act*. If the disciplinary board's decision includes ordering segregation or imposing forfeiture of earned remission, the CIO has the power to confirm, vary, or quash the decision. In all other cases, the CIO only has the power to make recommendations.

Segregation Orders and Extensions

The CIO conducts reviews related to the extension of administrative segregation orders in accordance with section 23(1) of the *Corrections Act*. When a Warden issues an extension order under section 22(6) that results in a client being segregated at least five days, the Warden is required to immediately forward a copy of the order and the written reasons for it to the CIO. The CIO is required (under s.23(5)) to review the circumstances surrounding the segregation as soon as practicable, but in any case, no more than five working days after receiving the copy of the order, and has the power to confirm, vary, or quash the order. Additionally, the CIO's authority in this area is not limited to reviewing orders that extend a client's time in segregation; the CIO may initiate a review or investigation if any concerns or issues related to confinement or segregation arise.

Investigations

The CIO also conducts investigations, which may be initiated by the CIO (s. 50(1)(a)) or may be requested by the Director or Minister (s. 50(1)(b)). The CIO has broad authority to conduct investigations into any matter believed to be relevant to this Act or its purposes (s.50(2)). The CIO may choose to investigate an issue or incident impacting a single client, or an issue, pattern, or problem that appears systemic and affects multiple clients. For example, the CIO may investigate incidents, policies, procedures, or conditions to identify problems, determine causes, and/or recommend corrective actions. An Investigation may focus on a particular institution, multiple institutions, or the system as a whole.

Powers of the CIO When Conducting Review and Investigations

The CIO has broad powers when conducting a review or investigation. The *Corrections Act* provides the CIO with the powers of a Board under the Public Inquiries Act (s.51(1)(a)), and with access to every part of a correctional center and to every person confined in a correctional center (s.51(1)(b)). This includes the authority to enter the correctional center, examine its records and materials, investigate the conduct of employees or individuals present, summon and interview clients, and require employees to provide testimony under oath on matters related to legal violations or the interests of the facility.



Part II – Establishment of the Office of the CIO

This section describes the key activities undertaken by the CIO during the first year of operations. The CIO position was filled in October of 2022, but the amended Act was not in force until January of 2024. This allowed the CIO to spend time designing how the role would be implemented prior to the Act being in force.

Procedures Design

Grievances are the most complex process under the CIO's purview; establishing effective and efficient procedures to manage them required significant effort. Several challenges were noted during this design phase, including uneven access for clients to the grievance process across different facilities. For instance, some facilities use "Synergy", which is an online application that enables clients to submit various requests electronically. Using Synergy, clients can submit grievances to the CIO without the involvement of staff. Clients in some facilities do not have access to this online system and must make requests in other formats (such as handwritten notes) which in some cases are submitted to the CIO via Canada Post.

Procedures have been documented in an operational manual that outlines in detail the various protocols and guidelines for responding to grievances.

Communications

This initial period also included the design of communication materials to be made available to all clients, to ensure that they fully understand their rights in relation to this role of the CIO. Brochures and one-page handouts were created in all official languages and were made available in all facilities.

Tracking

The office has also developed a tracking mechanism to allow us to report annually on the work that we do in relation to client grievances. This tracking system allows us to track the number of grievances received; by type; and by facility. This system, through its ability to track grievances by type and facility, thus also serves as an indicator of potential systemic issues arising within various facilities, supporting the monitoring function of the CIO.

Resourcing

Consistent with section 46 of the *Corrections Act*, the CIO was able to retain access to legal counsel and policy support (on an "as and when needed" basis). The office has no full-time employees (including the CIO which is also an "as and when needed" contract) and, consistent with the *Corrections Act*, the CIO is not a member of the public service.

CIO Led Training

The CIO has offered basic training to staff within correctional facilities on disciplinary hearings and the duty of fairness in administrative hearings. These sessions included an overview of how the CIO would review disciplinary hearing decisions and the markers to be used to adjudicate decisions.

Site Visits to Facilities

During this time period, the CIO visited all facilities to better understand how they operate and to speak with clients in order to become familiar with key issues. The CIO visited each facility three times to better understand how they operate in summer, winter and fall, especially from the perspective of outdoor time and land-based activities. The CIO also participated in various land-based activities at several facilities.



Part III – 2024/2025

Investigations and Reviews

This section focuses on the key responsibilities of the Chief Investigations Officer as mandated by the *Corrections Act* Section 50 – Investigations and Reviews.

50. (1) The Investigations Officer

(a) may conduct an investigation at the Investigations Officer's own initiative; and

(b) shall conduct an investigation when requested by the Director or the Minister.

Summary of Policy Issues Raised by the CIO

While reviewing client grievances (s. 59 of the *Corrections Act*) I have identified three policy issues related to the Act and its implementation in Nunavut's correctional facilities.

1. Record Keeping at ACHF;
2. Wording of the *Corrections Act*;
3. Remission in Nunavut's Correctional Facilities.

Record Keeping at ACHF

When conducting reviews of client grievances, the CIO must examine all relevant information to gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation. The CIO has identified a concern that some records at ACHF are incomplete or missing, impacting the CIO's ability to fulfill their statutory obligations. These obligations include reviewing grievances and issuing evidence-based decisions.

Wording of *Corrections Act*

The CIO has identified several areas of concern related to the interpretation and application of Sections 21, 57, and 59 of the Act. These sections pertain to client requests for review of decisions and grievances. The CIO has requested clarification from the Government of Nunavut regarding these concerns, however no such clarification was provided.

Key issues of CIO concern include:

1. Sections 21(1) and 57(2) of the Act state that client requests for review and grievances must be submitted in writing. The CIO raised concerns that this requirement disadvantages clients who are not comfortable writing in English.
2. Section 57(2) outlines clients' right to file grievances. The CIO raised concerns about ambiguity in the wording of this section. The current wording could be interpreted to mean clients are only able to submit grievances in response to a formal decision made by the facility. The CIO recommended a broader interpretation of this section, so clients can submit grievances related to more general concerns.
3. Section 21(8) of the Act grants the CIO the authority to vary or quash decisions made regarding serious disciplinary breaches, however, it does not outline the process for implementing those decisions. The CIO recommended when a decision is quashed, it be returned to the original decision-maker and any imposed dispositions be rescinded. A varied decision should become binding.
4. The online system used for client requests is only offered in English. The CIO expressed concern that this may violate clients' language rights. Support is required from the Government of Nunavut to ensure French and Inuktitut speakers are supported throughout the grievance process.

Remission in Nunavut’s Correctional Facilities

The *Corrections Act* states that a client can request a review by the CIO of a decision made by a Disciplinary Board. The Act also states that a client may present a grievance to the CIO in writing. These sections of the Act are relevant to decisions regarding client remission.

The CIO has recommended an institutional approach to the application of remission that promotes consistency and transparency across facilities. This recommendation is based on the CIO’s understanding of the purpose and application of the earned remission system as set out in the *Prisons and Reformatories Act*.

The *Prisons and Reformatories Act* states that clients can earn 15 days of remission each month. Remission can be earned by obeying rules, following conditions governing temporary absence, and participating in programs that promote rehabilitation and reintegration. The CIO has observed that in Nunavut, clients can lose remission as the result of a disciplinary process. They can also earn remission for good behaviour. The CIO emphasized that clients continue to have residual liberty interests, even while incarcerated. Therefore, remission decisions should be proportionate, and clients should not lose remission for minor misconduct.

The CIO has also highlighted the tension that can arise between the disciplinary process and the allocation of monthly remission. The CIO noted that while the *Prisons and Reformatories Act* states that clients earn remission by following rules, the disciplinary process can reduce the amount of remission that can be earned if a client is found to have breached the rules. The CIO recommended that staff consider any corrective measures already taken by a disciplinary board when making decisions about remission. The CIO cautioned that refusing to award remission to a client who has been convicted by a disciplinary board and was subject to a disciplinary penalty, amounts to additional punishment.

The CIO has offered a list of considerations to help guide staff when making remission decisions and highlighted the importance of respecting clients’ right to due process, emphasizing that any encroachments on procedural fairness would be viewed negatively by the CIO.

Part IV – 2024/2025 Grievances

This section focuses on the key responsibilities of the Chief Investigations Officer as mandated by the *Corrections Act* Section 59 – Grievances. Clients have been able to submit grievances to the CIO since the new *Corrections Act* came into force in January 2024. To ensure accessibility, clients can bring concerns to the CIO through various channels. Complaints may be made through Synergy, during site visits², via mail, and with the assistance of translators when language barriers exist. By facilitating communication and prioritizing transparency, the CIO ensures that every voice is heard and that systemic and individual issues within correctional facilities are addressed effectively.

Number of Grievances Submitted

This section provides a comprehensive analysis of grievances filed by clients during the 2024/2025 fiscal year, detailing methods of submission, frequency, topics, and resolution processes.

Grievance Submission Overview Data

A total of 167 grievance submissions were put forward by clients across all facilities between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025. These submissions were submitted by 59 separate clients. Of these 167 submissions, 129 were classified as grievances, while 27 were classified as a “Follow Up Item”. A “Follow Up Item” refers to an additional grievance form submitted by a client on Synergy that is related to an issue they had previously raised. The remaining 11 submissions were classified as “Not a Grievance” and deemed non-actionable. This classification is used when a client’s submission does not meet the criteria of a grievance—for example, if the content is not a complaint, is illegible, or is simply a request for information. The grievance submissions were received through multiple methods including:

- **Synergy:** 126 submissions
- **Site Visits:** 39 submissions
- **Mail:** 2 submissions

Frequency of Same-Client Submissions

Of the 167 grievance submissions, 30 clients filed more than one submission, with 9 clients submitting more than five. The client with the most submissions filed 20, followed by another client with 17, and a third with 11. The remaining 29 clients submitted only one grievance.

² When the CIO visits the correctional facilities, a sign-up sheet is made available for clients to arrange a time to speak privately with the CIO.

Facility-Specific Data

Grievance submissions were put forward by clients located in various facilities. The distribution by facility is as follows:

Facility	Unit	Submissions
ACHF	Antiguiliqtuq East (Min. Unit)	31
	Antiguiliqtuq West (Min. Unit)	11
	Attiliurvik: Admission & Discharge	2
	Ikajuqtauvik (Flex Unit)	13
	Makigiarvik North (Med. Unit)	17
	Makigiarvik South (Med. Unit)	17
	Pigiarvik North (Max. Unit)	27
	Pigiarvik South (Max. Unit)	24
	Saimasarvik Unit (Calm Unit)	1
	ACHF Total	160
RIHF	RIHF Total	3
NWCC	NWCC Total	3
CRC	CRC Total	0
KIC	KIC Total	1
	Total	167

Key Observations:

- ACHF is the largest correctional facility in Nunavut and accounts for the majority (96%) of grievance submissions.
- 72% of all grievance submissions came from five of the eight ACHF living units. These included:
 - » Antiguiliqtuq East (Minimum Security) which had the most grievance submissions with 31 (19% of total submissions).
 - » Pigiarvik North and South (Maximum Security) which together submitted 51 grievances (31%).
 - » Makigiarvik North and South (Medium Security) which submitted a combined total of 34 grievances (20%).
- Some facilities had few or no grievances:
 - » CRC reported none, and KIC reported only one.

Internal Process Compliance

An essential aspect of the grievance process is ensuring that submissions follow the proper internal protocols before being escalated to the CIO. During the 2024/2025 fiscal year, most grievances submitted were found to have bypassed initial internal resolution processes. These instances highlight the need for ongoing education and training for clients and facility staff regarding grievance procedures.

Submission Topics and Subtopics

Grievance topics covered a wide range of issues, reflecting the diverse concerns of the client population. Below is a brief description, of each type of grievance topic and subtopic:

Physical Health

Description: Issues related to a client's physical well-being, access to medical services, and/or treatment of injuries or illnesses.

Mental Health

Description: Issues related to psychological well-being, access to counselling or the treatment of psychiatric conditions.

Staff Related Issue

Description: Complaints or incidents involving the conduct of correctional officers or other staff members including staffing conduct and/or the use of force.

Issues with Other Inmate(s)

Description: Conflicts, violence, bullying, harassment, or threats from other clients.

Privileges or Restrictions

Description: Concerns about access to certain entitlements or the imposition of restrictions such as segregation and/or dorm confinement; access to programming and/or outdoor time; requests for cell changes; visitations, etc.

Institutional Resources

Description: Complaints about services and supplies provided by the institution such as commissary and/or food services.

Facility Rules/Decisions

Description: Grievances about how institutional policies are applied or decisions made by the administration.

Summary of Data on Grievances Received by Topic and Subtopic

The topics and subtopics and their respective counts are as follows:

Topic	Subtopic	Submissions
Physical Health	Access to Care/Medication	10
	Other	1
	Physical Health Total	11
Mental Health	Mental Health Total	1
Staff Related Issue	Staff Conduct	60
	Excessive Force	7
	Other	9
	Staff Related Issue Total	76
Issue with Other Inmate(s)	Issue with Other Inmate(s) Total	1
Privileges or Restrictions	Segregation/Dorm Confined	7
	Access to Programming/Outdoor Time	10
	Move Rooms/Units	19
	Visitations/Phone Calls	3
	Other	5
	Privileges or Restrictions Total	44
Institutional Resources	Commissary	8
	Food	7
	Other	4
	Institutional Resources Total	19
Facility Rules/Decisions	Facility Rules/Decisions Total	2
Not a Grievance	Not a Grievance Total	13
Total		167

CIO Grievance Investigations

Thirty-eight grievances required an investigation, which represents a total of 22.75% of all grievance submissions.

Most of the submissions received from clients were about concerns unrelated to the formal disciplinary process. My review of one grievance from a client at KIC, however, was related to the disciplinary process and revealed several significant procedural concerns. While the details of the circumstances cannot be described here, I can confirm that I quashed the original disciplinary decision due to the fact that: (1) the client was charged with offences under the old version of the *Corrections Act* and regulation, rendering the charges inoperative; (2) there a breach of procedural requirements under the *Corrections Act* which substantially impaired the client's rights; and (3) the process inappropriately conjoined two separate incidents into one disciplinary process, contrary to procedural fairness. The *Corrections Act* and regulations contain express provisions related to client rights linked to the disciplinary process. These rights were not reflected in the procedures followed in this disciplinary process.



Part V – Client Supports and Rehabilitation

This section focuses on the range of supports and rehabilitation services available to clients within the Nunavut correctional system. These topics are central interests for the CIO for three principal reasons. First, a key context for the CIO when conducting a review or investigation is the *Corrections Act*, in particular its guiding principles and purpose, which set out a clear intention for Nunavut correctional facilities to provide responsive, culturally appropriate supports for clients to enable their healing and rehabilitation. Second, the oversight function of the CIO includes attending to how the rights of clients are managed in the context of the *Corrections Act*. Third, my review of client grievances has raised questions about both the approach to and adequacy of support for clients within Nunavut’s correctional facilities. The purpose of this section is to draw together findings and observations from the past year which can help guide improvement in facility operations and client outcomes and reduce client grievances.

Client Rights

In Canada, incarcerated individuals retain a range of rights, grounded in legislation and case law. These rights aim to balance the need for public safety with the humane treatment of clients, ensuring respect for their dignity and access to justice. Some of the primary sources of legislation and standards that protect client rights include the *Corrections Act* and the federal *Prisons and Reformatories Act*.

In addition, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees essential rights and freedoms to all individuals, including incarcerated individuals. The court has affirmed that individuals sentenced to imprisonment retain all rights that are not specifically limited by their sentence or incarceration.³ This principle is further supported by paragraph 3(a) of the *Corrections Act*, which explicitly states that clients maintain the rights and privileges of all members of society, except for those lawfully or necessarily removed or restricted.

³ R. v. Solosky, [1980] 1 S.C.R. 821

Healing and Rehabilitation

Nunavut Corrections Division is guided by a vision and mission that prioritize respect, *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, safety, and culturally relevant programming:

Nunavut Correction’s vision statement is:

Corrections in Nunavut is a dedicated and respectful workforce inclusive of Inuit Societal Values, representative of the people of Nunavut supporting public safety, and offering innovative, culturally relevant programming for the guidance and supervision of Nunavummiut in conflict with the law.

The mission statement is:

The Mission of Corrections in Nunavut is to actively promote safe and healthy communities through fostering responsibility and self-reliance of Nunavummiut in conflict with the law and managing risk in the least restrictive manner.

The *Corrections Act* further emphasizes the importance of rehabilitation and healing alongside community protection. Section 2(2) of the *Corrections Act* states “the purpose of the Corrections Division is the correction and rehabilitation of probationers and inmates, the protection of the community and the promotion of safe and healthy communities.”⁴ That section of the act goes on to list seven action items to achieve this goal, two of which are focused on security and five which detail the ways in which Corrections should assist clients with rehabilitation and healing. Specifically, those action items are:

- Providing probation supervision and programs to probationers
- Providing supervision and culturally appropriate rehabilitation of probationers and clients
- Providing culturally appropriate training and counselling to probationers and clients with a view to their rehabilitation
- Fostering the responsibility and self-reliance of probationers and clients; and
- Promoting and assisting programs designed to prevent and diminish crime within a community.

⁴ Nunavut. (2019). *Corrections Act* (Chapter 13). Nunavut Consolidated Laws. Retrieved from <https://www.nunavutlegislation.ca/en/consolidated-law/corrections-act>

According to the Nunavut Correctional Facility Strategy, “The mission of Nunavut Corrections, in carrying out the sentence of the courts, is to provide a correctional system that promotes healing, and provides appropriate security and management.⁵ Creating a truly healing environment within a correctional facility requires a multifaceted approach where security, relationships, community connections and the physical environment are interwoven. This approach requires institutional commitment and diligence in all aspects of facility operations, from staff training and client case management, to programming, daily interactions, and security measures. *Qaujimajatuqangit* suggests that healing is a holistic process that restores balance, harmony, and well-being in individuals, families, and communities, with a strong emphasis on relationships and the collective good. Similarly, rehabilitation can be understood as guiding an individual back to a state of balance, respect, and accountability within themselves, their relationships, and their communities.

In my view, there are three essential elements for the development of effective healing and rehabilitation within the correctional system: case management; programming; and communication.

Case Management

Case management plans are required by each facility and are intended to be created during client intake. These plans include an assessment of the client’s needs, psychological background, education level, employment skills, and social support networks followed by monthly progress reports where the initial assessment and plan is examined, and a discussion is had on progress made towards goals in the plan. This information is critical as a planning tool and is used to set individual goals and determine appropriate programming that aligns with the client’s personal development and rehabilitation journey.⁶ These plans are meant to be periodically reviewed and revised based on the client’s progress and emerging needs. This process is supplemented by monthly progress reports where case workers meet with clients to discuss their needs and goals and to review progress towards goals.

5 McCready Consultants Ltd. (2012). Nunavut Correctional Facilities Strategy. Government of Nunavut. Retrieved from <https://assembly.nu.ca/library/GNedocs/2015/001802-efi.pdf>

6 Correctional Service Canada. (n.d.). Offender Intake Assessment and Correctional Planning. Retrieved from Correctional Service Canada website.

CIO Findings – Case Management

The findings below are primarily focused on secure custody facilities, with comments on halfway houses included when relevant.

Given the Department of Correction’s clear commitment to rehabilitation, I expected to see case management used as a key tool in support of this objective. However, the current state of case management in Nunavut facilities is inadequate, with many facilities lacking plans or not understanding their importance. This gap highlights a misalignment between the stated goals of rehabilitation and the actual practices within the institutions. It is recommended that facilities undertake a review of case management practices including ensuring that they are done consistently and that the content of such plans can be used as a useful planning tool for client’s healing and rehabilitation.

ACHF

While my audit of files in November of 2024 revealed that ACHF had not been creating case management plans and was not doing monthly progress reports, my audit in January 2025 suggested a noticeable commitment from staff to address this issue and I am confident that there is a plan in place to ensure that these tools are more fully utilized. ACHF has made considerable progress in past months in creating case management plans (what they call clients needs assessments); they have developed a detailed tracking sheet that will allow management to track progress on these plans as well as monthly progress reporting and have made staff training available on this system. While it is unfortunate that for several years case management was not being done, this latest effort should be applauded.

NWCC

While there has been some improvement over the course of the year at NWCC, it has not reached the level witnessed at ACHF. At NWCC, it was noted in November of 2024 that plans were missing from all files audited by the CIO and a commitment was made by the Warden to remedy this situation. When I returned in January of 2025, the situation had been remedied, and case management plans were found in almost all files audited (In one instance, I was told that staff had in fact done the plan but had not placed in the client file). I noted however, that there is an insufficient link between such plans and the monthly progress reports and that the facility would benefit from ensuring that staff ensure that goals and objectives developed in the case management plans are reviewed each month as part of the progress reporting process. This facility also has no tracking mechanism and no easy way for the Warden to audit progress reports for compliance.

RIHF

At RIHF, I found that while the facility had completed more needs assessments and monthly progress reports than other facilities, I found most to be sub-standard. In many cases, the following concerns were noted:

- There was no link between initial clients' needs assessment and subsequent monthly progress reports.
- Goals were, in most cases, much too vague for the purposes of helping plan out client programming while in the facility. (As an example, multiple times I found the following goal: "take land base program when available".)
- In some cases, I was unable to find a client needs assessment on file.
- In many cases, the goals were copied from a previous month with no information about why the goal is being repeated or why no progress was made towards achieving the goal.
- In some instances, monthly progress reports were not signed by a supervisor.

Programming

It is important for correctional facilities to offer a range of programs that support rehabilitation, including those focused on academic development, life skills, cultural awareness, and substance recovery. Under Section 33 of the *Corrections Act*, the Director is responsible for establishing and operating correctional programs aimed at rehabilitating clients. These programs may be delivered within correctional centres, in the community, or on the land, providing a diverse range of opportunities for client rehabilitation.

Correctional programs must respect the cultural and linguistic background of participants and must be designed to align with Inuit societal values and culture. Clients may be authorized for release from a correctional centre for up to 60 days to participate in programs outside the centre.

CIO Findings - Programming

In general, programming is unevenly available across facilities. While efforts are made at ACHF to offer a wide range of programs, this is not the case at RIHF or NWCC. Given the organizational commitments to rehabilitation and healing, greater emphasis is needed on providing programming that offers clients opportunities for self improvement and to change their post incarceration position. In addition, participation in programming can alleviate the tremendous boredom that can arise in incarceration and can therefore help reduce conduct issues in facilities and ease related security concerns. It is recommended that a thorough review be undertaken of all programming to ensure both that quality programming is available and that it is being offered on a regular basis.

Many clients have complained about the lack of programming to support their efforts to position themselves for a better outcome upon release, or simply in response to being extremely bored daily.

I have heard many reasons for why programming is not offered in a more consistent manner, including poor access to Elders, a lack of instructors, and a lack of community-based programs. However, when probed on efforts taken to rectify these issues, few steps seem to have been taken to tackle this extremely important issue.

Even though at RIHF there is a full-time program coordinator, a lack of programming persists. (There is a full-time program coordinator and four newly created program officer positions at ACHF; and a full-time program coordinator at RIHF. There is no program coordinator at NWCC as they draw on ACHF's resources for programming.) Programming details by facility are below.

Programs	RIHF	ACHF	NWCC
Secure Side ICSP		✓	
ICSP on the Land		✓	✓
In House ICSP		✓	
Town Crew		✓	✓
Maintenance Crew		✓	
Carving		✓	
Reformer's Unanimous		✓	
Bannock Making		✓	✓
CRA Outreach – Support Clinic		✓	
Alpha Program		✓	
United for Literacy		✓	✓
Sewing Program		✓	✓
Inunnguiniq Parenting Program		✓	
AA Meetings		✓	✓
Healing by Talking		✓	
Elder's Men's Healing Group		✓	
Connecting Streams		✓	
Financial Literacy		✓	
Driving Course / Class 7 & 5 Driver Training	✓	✓	
Art Program		✓	
Culinary Arts		✓	

Programs	RIHF	ACHF	NWCC
Elder Counselling		✓	
Book Cart/Library Visits		✓	
Pilimmaq̃sarniq Education Program (PEP)	✓	✓	✓
Community Clean Up Event		✓	
Mental Health First Aid		✓	
Fishing Activity	✓	✓	✓
Softball Activity		✓	
Elder's Feast		✓	
Thinking Outside the Box		✓	
Career Exploration		✓	
Canadian Red Cross Standard First Aid & CPR w/ AED Level C	✓		
Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)	✓		
Pass Program	✓	✓	
Math Upgrading	✓		
Identification Replacement	✓		
Hunting	✓		
Ice Pick for Elders	✓		
Foraging	✓		
Ice Drilling	✓		
Counselling	✓	✓	
Tool Making Workshop	✓		
Elder Visits		✓	✓
Working in Kitchen		✓	✓
Unit Interpreters		✓	
Unit Representatives		✓	

RIHF

At RIHF in August of 2024, there were no program offerings other than 4 clients going char fishing. In September, there were only 3 activities in 31 days. These activities included 2 clients gathering soap stone; 2 clients going fishing; and 5 clients going hunting. In October, there were no programs offered at all and in November, 2 clients were able to participate in a tool making class; 4 clients went hunting; 2 clients set fish nets and returned to check them. There were no other offerings such as addictions related programs, or anger management. The programming focus in RIHF is on land-based activities with limited opportunities for clients to engage in other areas. Overall, at RIHF, I would say that the program offerings are lacking tremendously and would benefit from more management attention.

With respect to academic programming, it appears that there is a slight improvement in terms of the type and number of offerings. Academic upgrading is available at RIHF through the PASS program but very few clients participated in the program (2 clients) in the past year. Clients can also upgrade their math skills Monday to Friday, as a drop-in class. In addition to the PASS program, First Aid training was offered to 11 clients and the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) was offered to 10 clients in 2024. In 2024, the facility also offered class 7 & 5 driver training to eight clients. It has come to our attention that clients at RIHF who are awaiting trial are not able to participate in programming. We understand that this departs from headquarters policy. To better support client rehabilitation and skill development, RIHF should expand and diversify its program offerings beyond the current land-based focus.

ACHF

I find that ACHF makes tremendous efforts to offer programming to their client population, however, program availability is uneven across living units. Clients in minimum security have the greatest access to programs. On average, there are eight different types of programming interventions offered each month in the minimum-security unit. In the medium security units, there are on average five program offerings a month, while in the maximum-security units there are far fewer programs offered monthly with on average, two programs per unit. While I understand the constraints imposed by maximum security in terms of the profile of some of the clients in that unit, I am of the view that it would be beneficial to extend additional programming to clients who are able to participate. I also found that there is an ineffective tracking of program participation in some program areas. When asked for data on when certain programs were offered and how many clients participated, I was told that for some programs, staff do not really know as the programs are offered by people external to the facility. I would recommend that the facility develop mechanisms to better track participation in these programs.

In addition to what would typically be described as 'programs', ACHF also has client committees where each unit elects a representative and their role is to liaise with facility management on operational issues. ACHF also has put in place a client interpreter program and interpreters can receive payment for interpreting for other clients under certain circumstances.

NWCC

There is also a shortfall in programming at the women's facility.

- The facility offered the AA program, but it was suspended as the program leader left in September.
- The facility offers a sewing program twice a week.
- The facility offers an Inuit Cultural Skills Program once a week.
- In addition, the facility was offering a seal skinning program, but it too was suspended as the program leader left.
- The Pilimmaqsarnik Educational Program is also available to clients with an emphasis on the introductory topics of the eight Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles. This program is offered once a week.
- Women also can participate in the town crew program, but this is ad hoc and irregular. In discussion with the Warden, it is obvious that this is a rare event and is dependent on staff availability.
- Women may attend church twice a month.
- The facility engages women weekly in Bannock making but this too is dependent on availability of someone to facilitate.

I did ask the Warden for details on why certain programs were suspended and what actions were taken to address any programming gaps but did not receive a response. A comprehensive review of the NWCC programming should be undertaken to address critical gaps and inconsistencies.

CRC and KIC

Both facilities offer cultural programming to clients, but the frequency differs. At KIC, it appears that land-based programming is a weekly priority while at CRC, the focus appears to be more on work release with land-based programming access only once a month. It is recommended that KIC develop more effective program tracking mechanisms in order to track when programs are being made available.

Summary Comments on Programming

There is a paucity of programming at RIHF and NWCC with a predominant focus in these facilities, on security over programming. The current focus on security over meaningful activities not only hinders rehabilitation but also fosters boredom, potential conduct issues, and a less healing environment. Collaborations with Inuit Associations and community organizations could offer valuable support but are not presently incorporated into institutional programming efforts. The overall lack of programming at these facilities remains a pressing concern.

While land-based activities are offered in some facilities, there is a glaring absence of meaningful programs addressing addiction, anger management, academic upgrading, and other crucial areas at both NWCC and RIHF. This lack of comprehensive programming, coupled with the lack of a coordinated approach to address the issue, poses a significant barrier to rehabilitation and suggests a systemic problem that demands immediate attention from management. It is recommended that a comprehensive review be undertaken of the programming available through RIHF and NWCC to ensure that a variety of life skills, cultural, and academic programs are available to clients.

Communication

Communication between staff and clients plays a pivotal role in creating a healing environment. Respectful and positive communication can foster trust and encourage clients to engage in their own self-reflection and management.

CIO Findings – Communications

Nunavut Corrections, like many across Canada, has embraced the dynamic security model. This model prioritizes regular staff-client interactions to build trust, assess risks, and ensure safety and good order. In practice, however, its implementation raises concerns. Dynamic security relies on engaged and alert staff who actively interact with clients, foster positive relationships, and maintain a strong awareness of jail dynamics. Yet, observations (at ACHF and RIHF) often reveal staff stationed in control booths or walking the floor in passive oversight roles, with little meaningful client engagement. This limited interaction suggests a gap in understanding the model's purpose and undermines its potential to create a safer, more constructive environment. Addressing this gap is essential to fully realize the benefits of dynamic security. Staff receive a small amount of training in case management and in the dynamic approach to management. An examination of the curriculum for new recruits shows that the bulk of the time spent in training is on security measures. The hours dedicated to learning the duties of a caseworker is one half day out of a 7-week program. It is recommended that a review of staff training be undertaken to ensure sufficient coverage of communication skills and that staff understand the role that their interactions have in the healing process.

In conversations with staff, I found differences in how they see their roles and approach their work. Overall, communication between staff and clients mirrors jails in other jurisdictions, with a focus on security and monitoring over healing. While many staff maintained a balanced attitude and supported the respectful treatment of clients in a manner aligned with the organizational goals of rehabilitation, several staff presented a more 'punitive' orientation towards clients. Some staff believe it is unwise to get to know clients or initiate conversations as this may compromise their ability to manage them. I am concerned that the singular focus of some staff on security and control significantly detracts from both constructive communications with clients and an environment supporting rehabilitation.

How facilities manage the tension between punishment, healing and rehabilitation on a day-to-day basis impacts the effectiveness of corrections. A punitive approach relies on the deprivation of liberty and loss of personal control. Where correction administration relies on a punitive philosophy, these beliefs are internalized and infuse all aspects of the system regulating daily transactions. In such cases, the corrections machinery exercises control over clients with depersonalized, routine, and regimented control mechanisms. This is not rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation and healing are not simply about offering services such as land based or cultural programming. It is about structuring the jail experience in a manner that reflects rehabilitation objectives and incorporates that into how jail life unfolds. Clients cannot be "sent to a program" and be expected to emerge "rehabilitated." They must learn to engage positively in community. How they are treated in jail teaches them how to engage. Rehabilitation, therefore, is critically dependent on how communication and interactions between clients and staff are actively shaped and managed. Ensuring staff have the training and guidance to effectively communicate and support the healing environment is critical. Now, it may seem odd for the CIO to comment on communication, but I do because the system in Nunavut has a commitment to their facilities being 'healing' facilities (hence the names) and the Act emphasizes rehabilitation. As such, I believe that these are important matters for facilities to turn their minds to.

By concentrating on the security aspect of client interactions, valuable opportunities are overlooked. Daily interactions become infused with negative connotations which perpetuate a sense of nonbelonging and diminished importance. Many clients have provided comments or complaints to the CIO concerning communications with staff. Although client comments provide only one stream of information and cannot be said to definitively describe the communications culture, they provide some insight into how interactions with staff are perceived. Multiple clients at ACHF have described such feelings and have alluded to a dehumanizing culture and a sense of being "punished".

Staff's daily interactions with clients are even more pivotal if the facilities are not providing healing and rehabilitative programming. The interactions that staff have with clients speak clearly about how staff see clients; these interactions can reinforce the division between 'them' and 'us' or they can blur the lines to create a healing environment; they can celebrate and favour power, or humility and connection.

Summary Comments on Communication

Although there have been efforts made by Nunavut Corrections staff to incorporate healing practices, a comprehensive approach to healing and rehabilitation is lacking. Observations reveal an institutional focus on security that overshadows the rehabilitative components of the Act. A misalignment exists between the stated goals of healing and rehabilitation and the actual practices within the institutions. To achieve comprehensive rehabilitation, a larger shift in the institutional ethos towards a coordinated path to healing is required. This would most likely include developing an institutional definition of healing and rehabilitation in consultation with Elders and in line with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit to provide a clear framework for staff and administrators.

While current staff training promotes that staff engage in self-reflection and client-centered communication, the frequency of communication-related complaints received by the CIO shows a gap between theory and practice. This discrepancy underscores the need for continuous training and support. By prioritizing the key elements of healing and shifting the institutional focus towards a more holistic and client-centered approach, Nunavut Corrections can create an environment that truly supports healing and rehabilitation as they are statutorily obligated to do. Without healing interactions; substantive case management; and regular, meaningful programming, 'healing' stands bare. If staff's priority is in imposing institutional norms and rules, healing is displaced, and we are left with a missed opportunity. The conclusion emanating from this situation is simple: without increased direct efforts to address the challenges noted, healing may remain an aspirational concept that isn't anchored in operational practices

Mental Health Supports

Mental health support is important for clients in correctional facilities, as it helps them manage mental health challenges that may be intensified by the stresses of incarceration. Treatment and rehabilitation programs can play a significant role in helping individuals manage symptoms and develop coping strategies.

CIO Assessment – Mental Health Supports in Nunavut Correctional Facilities

I note that in most Nunavut facilities there is limited access to the kind of care, treatment, resources and interventions clients may need. There is inadequate access to substance abuse supports both while incarcerated and upon release. It is recommended that a review be undertaken of mental health supports to identify creative options for increasing such supports. Such a review would seek to ensure comprehensive access to care, treatment, and interventions, including adequate substance abuse support, both during incarceration and upon release.

Culturally Relevant Supports

Access to culturally relevant supports is vital for clients in correctional facilities. These supports, such as access to Elders, traditional practices, and land-based activities, foster connection to identity and promote healing.

Elders play a key role by offering guidance, wisdom, and a supportive presence. Their teachings provide clients with tools for reflection, healing, and rebuilding their sense of self. Creating opportunities for clients to engage with Elders can help establish trust, promote well-being, and ensure cultural perspectives are integrated into their rehabilitation.

CIO Finding – Culturally Relevant Supports

A gap remains in the availability of Elders at some facilities. While Elders attend regularly at ACHF and NWCC, staff reported that no Elders have attended at RIHF. All correctional facilities have reported challenges in bringing Elders into the facilities and in finding Elders willing to commit the necessary time. When asked about specific steps taken to recruit and attract Elders, the response from ACHF was satisfactory while the response from RIHF was inadequate. ACHF has relied on the role of Cultural Advisor to promote ACHF and to foster goodwill within the Elder community. In addition, ACHF holds two Elder feasts each year. NWCC relies on ACHF's efforts as it relates to Elders. RIHF's recruitment efforts consisted of hosting one Elders dinner this year. It is recommended that a review be undertaken at RIHF on the availability of Elders and that immediate action be taken to address the lack of Elders at RIHF.

While there is a strong commitment to providing male clients with access to land-based programming, opportunities for women in this area remain more limited. These programs are valuable in fostering a connection to cultural practices and supporting rehabilitation. Further attention to determining the types and schedule of offerings for land-based activities at NWCC is required.

Access to the CIO

The CIO plays a vital role in ensuring oversight, accountability, and transparency within the Nunavut correctional system. To ensure accessibility, clients can bring concerns to the CIO through various channels. Complaints may be made through Synergy, during site visits, via mail, and with the assistance of translators when language barriers exist. By facilitating communication and prioritizing transparency, the CIO works to ensure that every voice is heard and that systemic and individual issues within correctional facilities are addressed effectively.

CIO Finding – Access to the CIO

At ACHF and the women's facility, clients have access to a system called Synergy, an online platform that allows them to make electronic submissions about various matters, including submitting grievances to the CIO. Unfortunately, this system is only available at those two facilities, which means that clients in other facilities must use the mail to submit grievances. This, in my view, gives rise to issues of fairness, because mail service can be disrupted by weather or such things as labour action.

Not only is access to the CIO not consistent across facilities but in some cases, some Wardens had not taken proper steps to inform clients of their rights of appeal under the new Act. As an example, when the CIO visited RIHF in July of 2024 (a full 7 months after the new Act came into force) clients had not been made aware of the new CIO provisions and their

ability to submit grievances. All facilities had been provided with a 2-page handout, a longer pamphlet, envelopes and grievance forms which were supposed to be provided to clients in all units, at all facilities. This had not been done in the Rankin Inlet facility. While these documents had been made available at the women's facility, they were buried behind other materials with the result that when I visited in November of 2024, the women in the facility stated that they were not aware of any such role. Similarly, at KIC, when I was there in August of 2024, while there was information available to clients, it was buried behind other materials and when I asked clients whether they knew about my role, they responded that they did not.

In addition, I note that the platform (Synergy) as it relates to the grievance process, is only available in English. This likely is not consistent with official language obligations.

Employment

Meaningful Employment Opportunities

Work programs for clients in correctional facilities play a crucial role in fostering rehabilitation. These programs are associated with improved employment prospects upon release, which can greatly aid in the reintegration process.⁷ There are different approaches to employment opportunities across the different facilities in Nunavut.

With respect to employment in the community, both CRC and KIC offer clients an opportunity to be gainfully employed, earning market wages. While NWCC houses women from minimum to maximum security, none of the women classified as minimum security are accessing paid employment in the community.

Compensation for Institutional Work

In Canadian correctional institutions there is ongoing discussion around compensation for incarcerated individuals engaged in employment. Individuals working in Canadian correctional facilities are typically paid low wages. Compensation generally ranges from \$5 to \$7 per day, depending on the type of work and the facility.⁸ These wages are not designed to provide financial independence but rather to promote rehabilitation, skill-building, and a sense of responsibility.

CIO Finding - Employment and Compensation

Most clients in both halfway houses are employed out in the community and work full time earning wages that reflect market rates, rather than the internal remuneration for chores that is typically offered in some facilities. These external jobs offer meaningful employment, which is an essential component of the rehabilitation and reintegration process outlined in the *Corrections Act*. Clients at CRC are responsible for daily chores within the facility (either cooking; cleaning, etc.) but are not paid for such work while clients at KIC are paid. The differences between the facilities may be attributed to the difference in focus at both facilities. At CRC, I note a strong focus on work release whereas the focus at KIC seems to be on land-based programming.



⁷ O'Donnell, I. (2016). Exploring the relationship between education and rehabilitation in the prison context. ERIC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED585975.pdf>

⁸ Office of the Correctional Investigator. (2023). Office of the Correctional Investigator Annual Report 2022-2023. Government of Canada. <https://oci-bec.gc.ca/en/content/office-correctional-investigator-annual-report-2022-2023>.

Below is a table summarizing the wages paid to client for institutional work (meaning not the work that they do out in the community as a market-based job).

Employment Opportunities by Institution

RIHF Wages	ACHF Wages	NWCC Wages	KIC Wages	CRC Wages
Town Crew/Shop Steward & Maintenance Crew				
\$15/day	\$14/day	\$14/day	\$14/day	N/A
Kitchen				
\$20/day	\$21/6 hours <i>At ACHF there are 3 kitchen crews, each paid differently:</i> Morning crew 6 am to noon, paid \$21 per shift. Afternoon crew 12 to 6 pm, paid \$17 per shift Night crew 6 pm to 8 pm, paid per \$12	\$21/day	\$14/day	N/A
General Cleaning				
\$15/day	\$14/day	\$7/day (for cleaning their room and general cleaning)	\$14/day	N/A
Laundry				
\$15/day	\$10	N/A	N/A	N/A
Elected client presentative				
N/A	\$10	N/A	N/A	N/A
Unit Interpreters				
N/A	\$10	N/A	N/A	N/A
Participating in programs				
\$15/day	\$50 for program completion	\$7/day	N/A	N/A
	ICSP in class participation \$10 ICSP on the land participation \$14	N/A	N/A	N/A

I do note a discrepancy in the pay for institutional employment. It appears that there is no agreed upon wage for institutional jobs.

The issue of wage discrepancies across facilities is a significant one, and it is recommended that further discussions take place between the Wardens and the Director to ensure that wage policies are standardized across all facilities in Nunavut.

Access to Working in Kitchen

In many facilities (although to a much lesser extent at the women’s facility) clients can work in the kitchen to participate in food preparation and to learn basic food preparation skills.

ACHF

At ACHF, clients may work in the kitchen as one of their paid employment opportunities. At this facility, there are three shifts daily of four clients on each shift.

KIC

At the halfway house in Kugluktuk, clients prepare meals along with staff (this is part of their paid employment - \$14/day).

CRC

At CRC clients do not prepare meals other than their own breakfast and help with meal preparation on weekends. During the week, staff prepare all meals.

NWCC

At one time, women were able to assist in the kitchen in preparing food but following an incident, this was discontinued. At one point, women were again allowed to work in the kitchen, but again, this was discontinued. I would suggest that the uneven access to work in a kitchen is an area that deserves further policy examination.

RIHF

At RIHF clients work in the kitchen, also as part of their paid employment.

Client Supports and Rehabilitation – Recommendations

Healing and Rehabilitation

- A thorough review should be conducted to evaluate how well facilities promote healing and rehabilitation, supporting a broader shift toward a healing-focused institutional ethos.

Case Management

- A comprehensive review should be conducted to ensure case management practices are consistent and that such plans serve as effective tools for client recovery and rehabilitation.
 - » Regular audits should be conducted to maintain consistent quality and effectiveness.

Programming

- A comprehensive review should be conducted to ensure that quality and meaningful programming is available and offered regularly. This would include:
 - » Conducting a detailed review of available programming at NWCC and RHIF including a review at RHIF of why clients who are awaiting trial cannot access programming.
 - » Ensuring that the totality of programs offered align with a rehabilitation and healing mandate.
 - » Ensuring that clients in medium and maximum-security units at ACHF have equitable access to programming.
 - » Implementing more effective program tracking mechanisms at ACHF and KIC to monitor availability and client participation.

Communication

- Staff training should emphasize the principles of rehabilitation, healing, and effective communication to reinforce their importance in client recovery.
- Regular reviews should be conducted to ensure comprehensive coverage of communication skills, supporting staff in understanding the critical role their interactions play in the healing process.

Mental Health Supports

- A thorough review should be conducted to identify creative options for expanding mental health supports, ensuring comprehensive access to care, treatment, and interventions, including substance abuse support, both during incarceration and upon release.

Culturally Relevant Supports

- A review should be conducted at RHIF to assess the availability of Elders, and immediate action should be taken to address any gaps.
- Types and scheduling of land-based activities should be expanded for women at NWCC.

Access to the CIO

- Clear, accessible, and consistent information about the role, functions, and responsibilities of the CIO should be made widely available across all facilities.
- A feasibility assessment should be conducted to evaluate extending Synergy to all facilities, ensuring it supports official languages.

Employment

- A consistent wage policy should be established and implemented across all facilities.
- A review should be conducted to assess the availability and frequency of job opportunities across facilities.
- A review should be conducted at NWCC to assess the potential for minimum security women to have same work opportunities in the community, in alignment with CRC and KIC.
- A review should be conducted at NWCC to assess the potential for women to be able to work in the kitchen on a more regular basis.

Part VI – Administrative and Disciplinary Matters

This section outlines the operational and disciplinary practices within correctional facilities and administrative matters such as record-keeping and the responses to site visit reports from the CIO. The section also discusses client discipline, focusing on disciplinary processes and sanctions.

Administrative Matters

Data Availability/ Inadequate Record Keeping

In many instances, requests for data revealed that facilities do not collect data on many aspects of their operations. In addition, I found many instances of inadequate record keeping in matters related to the disciplinary process and/or client requests. On multiple occasions, I requested details on client requests and follow up by facility staff, only to find out that such records were unavailable, and no reasonable explanation has been offered as to why records were unavailable (this occurred more often at ACHF). It is recommended that ACHF investigate ways to improve record keeping (both related to client requests as well as related to the disciplinary process) to ensure that the appeal process is supported by adequate information.

It may be advisable for the Director to discuss this matter with Wardens and to develop a protocol for record keeping.

Untimely Responses to Information Requests

When the CIO initiates an investigation pursuant to a client having raised a concern, there is usually a need for facility staff to provide information to the investigative process. In some instances (at ACHF) there have been excessive delays in getting the CIO the required information to undertake such investigations. In one particularly troubling case, the information delays were so extreme that the CIO never did receive the requested information and the client was released. (In that case, the delays in receiving information from the Warden was over three weeks). While not a chronic issue at ACHF, it remains an issue of concern as it undermines the usefulness of the process if investigations are not timely.

The CIO has requested that the Director consider developing a guideline for response times in matters of CIO investigations. The Director has agreed to develop such a guideline, and it is my hope that this will address this concern.

Lack of Consistency Across the Jurisdiction

Halfway Houses

There are two operational halfway houses in Nunavut: CRC in Iqaluit and KIC in Kugluktuk. There has been a halfway house in Rankin Inlet, although this facility is not currently open and has not been for some time. With respect to the CRC and KIC, they are run quite differently.

With respect to CRC and cultural skills programming (ICSP), clients are offered land-based programming once a month at CRC whereas at KIC, such programming is offered on a more frequent basis, although they do not keep data on specifics.

With respect to client's ability to move about freely and act as autonomous agents, there is more freedom allowed at CRC where clients are given 'free time' which is earned, and they can do whatever they wish during this free time (providing it meets conditions of their release). At KIC, clients can only access free time if they have a sponsor in the community. I see this a slightly problematic in that clients at KIC who are not from Kugluktuk may not be able to exercise as much free time as clients who know someone in the community who is willing to 'sponsor' them for free time.

With respect to financial matters, clients at CRC have easy access to their bank accounts, whereas clients at KIC must request access to their bank funds and/or wallets. It is recommended that a review be undertaken of various internal policies within KIC related to client rights, access to community, personal banking, and other related issues.

Another key difference between both halfway houses is that clients at KIC can be referred to the facility directly from court whereas this is not the case at CRC, where clients must apply as they approach their institutional 1/6 date (the date at which the offender will have served 1/6 of the total aggregate sentence.) This means that clients who arrive at KIC directly from court are managed like a client who is in a closed custody facility where fewer freedoms are available to them. Those 'freedoms' only become available once they have served 1/6 of their sentence and get moved to an open custody facility.

Secure Facilities

Client Handbook

In many of my visits to facilities, the client handbook – a document that describes the facility rules and client responsibilities and rights – had not been consistently provided to clients upon their arrival. Early in my mandate I brought this to the attention of all Wardens. At ACHF and NWCC, this problem was remedied immediately, but the problem persisted at RIHF and KIC. At RIHF, during my visit in July 2024, I asked staff for a copy of the handbook. I was told that they do not keep hard copies but print them when a client arrives. While in the Admissions and Discharge area – the location in the facility where clients arrive – I asked staff to print off a copy of the handbook for me. Staff were unable to find where on the hard drive the handbook was saved, suggesting a difficulty in their ability to provide the handbook to all clients upon arrival. Following this, I asked the last 5 clients who arrived at RIHF if they had received the handbook, none had. At KIC, I was also told that clients receive the handbook upon arrival but when I asked the last client who arrived at the facility if he had received it, he stated he had not.

It is recommended that each facility ensure that handbooks are provided to new clients upon arrival and that Wardens undertake random audits to ensure that this is being done.

Client Discipline

Discipline within correctional facilities is a critical aspect of maintaining security, order, and the overall functioning of the facility. Discipline is not solely about enforcing punishment but also about establishing clear boundaries, expectations, and consequences for behavior, which are vital for creating a safe and structured environment that ultimately supports rehabilitation.

The Nunavut *Corrections Act* outlines disciplinary rules and procedures for clients, emphasizing the dual purpose of correction and rehabilitation of clients to protect the community and promote safe and healthy communities. Section 16 of the Act and Section 14 of the Regulations outline specific disciplinary rules that clients are expected to follow.

When clients are suspected of violating these rules, they are charged with an offence and their charge is reviewed by a disciplinary board. This board is responsible for handling client misconduct by conducting hearings to determine if correctional rules, regulations, and/or policies were violated.

The disciplinary hearing process allows clients the opportunity to present their side of the story. The board is responsible for determining appropriate sanctions. These sanctions can range from warnings, loss of privileges, and additional duties, to more serious measures like segregation and forfeiture of earned remission. The goal is for the sanctions to be both corrective and rehabilitative, supporting the client's reintegration into the community.

CIO Finding - Client Discipline

Inadequate Staff Training

The disciplinary process in Nunavut's correctional facilities faces several challenges. One of the most significant findings is inadequate staff training. Staff members have not received enough training on key aspects of the disciplinary process such as adjudication, administrative fairness, and the nuances of regulatory offenses. As a result, they are not well-equipped to understand the different types of regulatory offenses and the specific requirements for disciplinary procedures related to each type of offense. This lack of understanding impacts their ability to conduct disciplinary hearings that meet legal standards and ensures procedural fairness for all parties involved.

Breach of Duty of Fairness

Another critical issue identified is a breach of the duty of fairness. The duty of fairness is a fundamental legal principle that requires individuals be given a chance to explain themselves and for decisions to be made based on complete information. The CIO found this duty was not consistently upheld during disciplinary proceedings. In some instances, clients were not given an adequate opportunity to respond to charges before a disposition was reached, raising concerns about the fairness and validity of the process.

Record-Keeping and Documentation

To ensure procedural fairness and transparency in disciplinary hearings, comprehensive record keeping and documentation is essential. A full written record of the proceedings must be maintained, including detailed documentation of all evidence considered, how it was assessed, and a summary of any evidence presented by the client. Disposition documentation must follow a standardized format, with a detailed account of the hearing process, a summary of evidence from both sides, and a comprehensive and well-reasoned explanation for the decision reached.

Current written decision documents are often inadequate, lacking sufficient detail and rationale to justify the decision reached. For a decision document to be considered adequate, it should include a robust account of the hearing process itself, a summary of any evidence presented by the client, and a thorough explanation of the decision and how it was reached. This is particularly important should a client seek to appeal a decision.

Charge Reports Lack Sufficient Detail

Charge reports provided to clients lack sufficient information about the evidence against them, which hinders their ability to adequately prepare for their hearings. This lack of information impedes their right to a fair and informed defense, as they are not fully aware of the case against them. In addition, I also found that at KIC, the charge sheet that clients are given when they are charged with an institutional offence had not been updated since the changes were made to the *Corrections Act*. I was in Kugluktuk in August of 2024, eight months after the new Act had come into force, and the charge sheet did not reflect the new Act. This resulted in clients being charged with offences that in some cases, were not consistent with the Act.

Administrative and Disciplinary Matters – Recommendations

- Additional training should be provided for staff involved in the disciplinary process on adjudication, administrative fairness, and proper documentation of decisions.
- A standardized protocol should be developed for recording and maintaining institutional data.
- A policy should be created detailing timelines for responding to the CIO inquiries on investigations.
- Timeline-related expectations should be incorporated into annual performance plans for management.
- ACHF should investigate ways to improve record keeping (both related to client requests and the disciplinary process) to ensure that the appeal process is supported by adequate information.
- A review should be conducted at KIC to assess the policy regarding sponsors and free time.
- A complete review should be conducted at KIC to assess the disciplinary process.
- A comprehensive review should be conducted to assess various internal policies within KIC related to client rights, access to community, personal banking, and other related matters.

Conclusion

Overview of Recommendations

The following recommendations apply to all correctional facilities, providing a framework for consistent practices and improvements across the system.

Healing and Rehabilitation

Assess Institutional Commitment to Healing

- A thorough review should be conducted to evaluate how well facilities promote healing and rehabilitation, supporting a broader shift toward a healing-focused institutional ethos.

Case Management

Conduct a Comprehensive Review of Case Management

- A comprehensive review should be conducted to ensure case management practices are consistent and that such plans serve as effective tools for client recovery and rehabilitation.
 - » Regular audits should be conducted to maintain consistent quality and effectiveness.

Programming

Enhance and Expand Program Offerings

- A comprehensive review should be conducted to ensure that quality and meaningful programming is available and that it is being offered regularly.

Awareness of Program Goals

- Programs should be reassessed to confirm they effectively support rehabilitation, including those focused on academic development, life skills, cultural awareness, and substance recovery.

Communication

Emphasize Rehabilitation, Healing, and Communication in Staff Training

- Staff training should emphasize the principles of rehabilitation, healing, and effective communication to reinforce their importance in client recovery.
 - » Regular reviews should be conducted to ensure comprehensive coverage of communication skills, supporting staff in understanding the critical role their interactions play in the healing process.

Mental Health Supports

Improving Access to Comprehensive Support Services

- A thorough review should be conducted to identify creative options for expanding mental health supports, ensuring comprehensive access to care, treatment, and interventions, including substance abuse support, both during incarceration and upon release.

Access to the CIO

Enhancing CIO Information and Awareness

- Clear, accessible, and consistent information about the role, functions, and responsibilities of the CIO should be made widely available across all facilities.

Review and Expand Synergy Implementation

- A feasibility assessment should be conducted to evaluate extending Synergy to all facilities, ensuring it supports official languages.

Employment

Standardize Wage Policies Across Facilities

- A consistent wage policy should be established and implemented across all facilities.

Improve Client Employment Opportunities

- A review should be conducted to assess the availability and frequency of job opportunities across facilities.

Administrative and Disciplinary Matters

Expand Training on Administrative Fairness

- Additional training should be provided for staff involved in the disciplinary process on adjudication, administrative fairness, and proper documentation of decisions.

Improve Data Collection and Record-Keeping

- A standardized protocol should be developed for recording and maintaining institutional data.

Ensure Clients Receive Facility Handbooks

- Periodic audits should be conducted to confirm that all new clients receive facility handbooks.

Timely Responses to the CIO

- A policy should be created detailing timelines for responding to the CIO inquiries on investigations.
- Timeline-related expectations should be incorporated into annual performance plans for management.

Disciplinary Process:

- It is recommended that a complete review be undertaken of the disciplinary process at KIC with a view to ensuring that procedures reflect a commitment to administrative fairness and that the process is brought up to date to reflect the new *Corrections Act*.

Recommendations for Specific Correctional Facilities

In addition to the above recommendations, the following table outlines recommendations that are unique to facilities.

	Programming	Culturally Relevant Supports	Employment
RIHF	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To better support client rehabilitation and skill development, RIHF should expand and diversify its program offerings beyond the current land-based focus. A review should be conducted to assess the policy on access to programming for clients who are awaiting trial. 	A review should be conducted to assess the availability of Elders, and immediate action should be taken to address any gaps.	A review should be conducted to assess the policy on access to employment for clients who are awaiting trial.

	Programming	Administrative and Disciplinary Matters
ACHF	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> More effective program tracking mechanisms should be developed to track when programs are being made available. A review should be conducted to assess the range and availability of program offerings in the maximum-security units. 	ACHF should investigate ways to improve record keeping (both related to client requests and the disciplinary process) to ensure that the appeal process is supported by adequate information.

	Programming	Culturally Relevant Supports	Employment
NWCC	A comprehensive review of the NWCC programming should be undertaken to address critical gaps and inconsistencies.	Types and scheduling of land-based activities should be expanded for women.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A review should be conducted to assess the potential for minimum security women to have same work opportunities in the community, in alignment with CRC and KIC. A review should be conducted to assess the potential for women to be able to work in the kitchen on a more regular basis.

	Administrative and Disciplinary Matters
KIC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A review should be conducted to assess the policy regarding sponsors and free time. A complete review should be conducted to assess the disciplinary process. A comprehensive review should be conducted to assess various internal policies within KIC related to client rights, access to community, personal banking, and other related matters.

	Programming
CRC	A review should be undertaken to determine whether sufficient cultural programming is available.



