

Dear Employees and Contractors of the Federal Bureau of Prisons:

This Monday marks the 20th anniversary of the enactment of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). As we commemorate the anniversary, I write to underscore the enduring importance of this legislation to the Department's mission and to thank you for your ongoing efforts to render PREA's promise a reality.

In September 2003, Congress enacted this landmark legislation, the first federal law to address sexual violence in prison. PREA responded to a pressing problem—the increasing incidence of sexual assault of individuals in local, state, and federal custody. Congress unanimously enacted PREA in response to that unacceptable reality, and in the two decades since, the Department has taken critical steps to address sexual misconduct in prison. This includes establishing [national standards](#) for preventing, detecting, and responding to sexual assault in correctional facilities; creating the [National PREA Resource Center](#) to provide training, technical assistance, and resources to the field; and [distributing grant awards](#) to support implementation of the Act. The BOP has also embraced PREA's [zero tolerance policy](#) against sexual abuse.

While PREA was an essential step forward, our work to combat sexual abuse remains just as urgent today. We must remain vigilant and resolute in our efforts to eradicate sexual assault perpetrated by adults in custody. We also must prevent and root out sexual abuse perpetrated by BOP personnel. When I spoke to all wardens this April, I emphasized that this is a top priority for me, for the Attorney General, and for Director Peters—just as I know it is a priority for you. When sexual abuse is left unanswered, it leaves everyone less safe. We fail the individuals entrusted to our care. And we fail the BOP employees who work every day to make our facilities safe.

Through your dedicated work and under Director Peters' leadership, we have made progress on our efforts to combat sexual abuse. We also know our work is not done. This summer, I launched [Sexual Abuse Facility Evaluation & Review \(SAFER\) Teams](#) to visit women's facilities in each of the BOP's six regions—FCI Tallahassee, FCI Waseca, FCI Danbury, FDC SeaTac, FMC Carswell, and FPC Alderson. During these visits, Department and BOP officials heard directly from you about the work you are doing and the resources needed to root out sexual misconduct. We saw firsthand the difficulties and dangers you face on the job. We also saw the work that you do every day to change lives. I am grateful to the wardens and employees of these facilities for welcoming our Teams and for their ongoing commitment to this work.

More broadly, I am grateful for all of your work every day to uphold the dual mission of the BOP—ensuring public safety through the safe and humane housing of adults in custody and ensuring that those adults return to their communities prepared to be good neighbors. The full and faithful implementation of PREA is an essential part of those efforts, and your partnership is critical to our success.

Thank you for your dedication to this important work.

Best,
Lisa

Lisa O. Monaco
Deputy Attorney General