

THE HOLISTIC SAFETY INVENTORY



THE FOUR AREAS OF ISOLATION

PHYSICAL ISOLATION OF PEOPLE INCARCERATED

How do we increase quality, out-of-cell time?

EMOTIONAL ISOLATION OF PEOPLE INCARCERATED

How do we add resources that support the ability of people incarcerated to thrive?

EMOTIONAL ISOLATION OF STAFF

How do we add resources that support the ability of staff to thrive?

INTERPERSONAL ISOLATION BETWEEN STAFF AND PEOPLE INCARCERATED

How do we combat the “us vs. them” culture?

WHAT IT IS

Chicago Beyond’s Holistic Safety Inventory is a comprehensive tool designed to support correctional systems in promoting the well-being and safety of both staff and incarcerated individuals.

Focused on the four areas of isolation, the Holistic Safety Inventory helps correctional leaders assess current practices, identify strengths, and uncover opportunities for improvement, fostering a safer and healthier environment for everyone living and working in a carceral facility.

HOW IT WORKS

Review each statement related to the four areas of isolation. For each one, select TRUE, PARTLY TRUE, or NOT TRUE based on the current state of your system. You are welcome

to add any notes or comments as you go through each section. After completing the inventory, we encourage you to use what you learned from the experience to identify areas of opportunity to drive positive shifts to increase safety and wellness in your system.

While reviewing these statements may be an uncomfortable experience, please remember that these statements are not meant to judge or shame your system or its administrators. Every system starts from a different point—the focus is on the commitment and action to move forward.

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REDUCING PHYSICAL ISOLATION OF PEOPLE INCARCERATED

Engagement, not isolation or deprivation: The agency must invest resources to ensure every incarcerated person’s time incarcerated in general population and in restrictive housing is focused on accountability and healing. To do so, the agency must work towards allowing every person incarcerated more time out of cell than in cell to engage with the resources the person believes will be instrumental in helping them to thrive.

	TRUE	PARTLY TRUE	NOT TRUE	NOTES/THOUGHTS
<i>People housed in the general population within a facility have access to more time out of cell than in cell daily.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>People housed in restrictive housing receive as many hours out of cell as possible each day with the goal of achieving several hours out of cell daily.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>A root cause analysis is done before or right after placing someone in restrictive housing to understand why they acted in a way that led to this decision.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Behavior improvement plans are developed before or immediately after placing an individual in restrictive housing.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Frequent and regular reviews of individuals in restrictive housing are conducted by a multi-disciplinary team (e.g. Medical, Mental Health, Security etc.) with the goal of stepping them down to a less restrictive setting that allows for more time out of cell.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>All people incarcerated, including people in restrictive housing, have daily and/or scheduled access to outdoor recreational activities.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>People in restrictive housing have regular and scheduled access to out of cell programming activities.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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REDUCING EMOTIONAL ISOLATION OF PEOPLE INCARCERATED

Engagement, not isolation: The agency must allocate resources to ensure rehabilitation is at the core of incarceration, providing not only physical safety but also psychological safety through comprehensive mental health care, trauma-informed wellness programs, and opportunities for positive connections with family, peers, staff, and the community.

	TRUE	PARTLY TRUE	NOT TRUE	NOTES/THOUGHTS
<i>People incarcerated, including individuals housed in restrictive housing, have daily access to mental health care and emotional wellness programming focused on pro-social behaviors.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>People incarcerated receive initial and ongoing screening and assessment for mental health needs.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>There are wellness programs focused on reducing the impact of trauma related to incarceration.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>There is regular positive engagement between individuals currently incarcerated with each other and with individuals formerly incarcerated, e.g., peer support programs.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Visits are healing-centered, allowing physical touch and employing healing strategies.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Every person incarcerated is allowed to interact frequently and relatively easily with their family through telephone and written/electronic communication.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Services and programs are offered to families of individuals incarcerated to help them understand and cope with the incarceration of their family member.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Community members, community organizations, and businesses are encouraged to provide programming, skill development training, and employment preparation to people incarcerated.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Leadership regularly engages with people incarcerated on issues related to safety and wellness by seeking their feedback, sharing important information, and following up on their concerns and recommendations.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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REDUCING EMOTIONAL ISOLATION OF STAFF

Engagement, not isolation: Due to the isolating nature of corrections, agencies must invest in emotional wellness resources for staff from hire to retirement, ensuring trauma-informed training, mental health support, and access to wellness programs. Leadership should engage with staff to address wellness needs and promote community-building.

	TRUE	PARTLY TRUE	NOT TRUE	NOTES/THOUGHTS
<i>All staff receive training on recognizing and understanding trauma so they can effectively identify and appropriately support people affected, including themselves, other staff, individuals incarcerated, and the broader community.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>All staff receive regular training on emotional wellness, mental health, resilience, and overall well-being.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>A comprehensive range of wellness resources, including employee assistance programs (EAPs), wellness fairs and workshops, peer support programs, and crisis intervention training, is available to staff to address various challenges in correctional systems.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Mental wellness resources are provided to staff going through the disciplinary process.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Families of staff receive training or resources to help them understand the nature of the correctional environment and ways they can be supportive of their loved one and take care of their own mental wellness.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>The agency facilitates opportunities for staff, including retired staff, to build community among each other through unit, divisional, and/or agency gatherings.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Leadership regularly engages with staff (security and civilian) to address employee wellness and has a process for tracking, documenting and following up on staff concerns and recommendations.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>There is a team or individual whose primary focus is to lead staff wellness efforts.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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REDUCING INTERPERSONAL ISOLATION BETWEEN STAFF AND PEOPLE INCARCERATED

Humanization: The us vs. them culture in correctional agencies is foundational to dehumanizing policies and practices against people incarcerated as well as staff. To create more safe and healthy environments, correctional agencies must be intentional about creating training, policies, and practices that allow correctional staff and people incarcerated to see each other as human beings capable of making positive decisions.

	TRUE	PARTLY TRUE	NOT TRUE	NOTES/THOUGHTS
<i>A group of staff (security and civilian) and a group of people incarcerated work together to address the safety and wellness of both groups.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Staff is encouraged to and frequently does engage with people incarcerated as mentors.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>There is regular internal and external communication highlighting positive and prosocial activities and achievements of both staff and people incarcerated, as well as their collaborative accomplishments.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Current and/or formerly incarcerated individuals provide lessons during preservice and annual training to promote safe and healthy interactions between staff and individuals incarcerated, incorporating important perspectives on safety and wellness for both groups.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>People formerly incarcerated provide onsite programming for staff and people incarcerated</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Person-first language is incorporated into policies, procedures, communications, the website, and signage when referencing people incarcerated and staff (e.g., referring to people incarcerated as individuals or people; refraining from use of terms like “inmate”, “guards”, “detainee”, “offender”, etc.)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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STRENGTHS & AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

Based on your responses to the Holistic Safety Inventory, what are some strengths of your facility? What areas present opportunities for improvement?

STRENGTHS

OPPORTUNITY AREAS

From these opportunities, what is one specific objective you can focus on over the next 2-4 months (and beyond) in each area of isolation to drive a positive shift, leading to increased safety and wellness for people living and working in your system?

OBJECTIVES

Thank you for using our tool! To learn more about how it can be applied, we encourage you to read our publication, [**DO I HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE?**](#)

If you have any questions, would like to discuss insights from the tool, or need thought partnership as you explore potential shifts based on your use of these materials, please reach out to us at [**connect@chicagobeyond.org**](mailto:connect@chicagobeyond.org)