

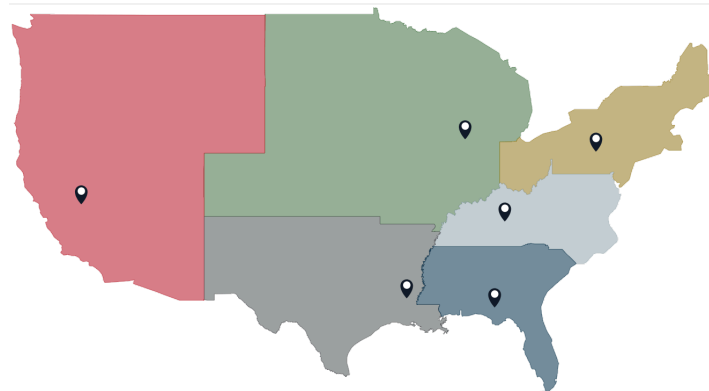


U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General

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Concurrent Inspections of BOP Food Service Operations

Report Number: 25-062 | **Date Posted:** June 17, 2025 | **Division:** Evaluation & Inspections | [Print this page](#)



 Significant Findings

 Results by Institution

[Read BOP's Response](#)

Between Tuesday, June 4, and Thursday, June 6, 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducted a series of unannounced, concurrent inspections assessing the administration of food service at six Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) institutions, one in each of the BOP's six regions:

- Mid-Atlantic Region—U.S. Penitentiary (USP) McCreary in Pine Knot, Kentucky;
- Southeast Region—Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) Marianna in Marianna, Florida;
- South Central Region—Federal Correctional Complex (FCC) Pollock in Pollock, Louisiana;

The DOJ OIG's Inspections Program

The DOJ OIG has determined that it can enhance the effectiveness of its oversight, and its ability to alert the BOP to concerns, by conducting short notice and unannounced inspections of BOP institutions. Since 2023, the OIG has conducted such inspection visits at 13 BOP institutions, including those discussed in this product.

The OIG has released the results of its

- North Central Region—Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) Chicago in Chicago, Illinois;
- Northeast Region—FCC Allenwood in Allenwood, Pennsylvania; and
- Western Region—FCI Mendota in Mendota, California.

completed prior inspections, which include [FCI Waseca](#), [FCI Tallahassee](#), [FCI Sheridan](#), [FCI Lewisburg](#), and [Federal Medical Center Devens](#); its inspection work on [Federal Detention Center SeaTac](#) and [USP Canaan](#) is ongoing.

We focused these inspections on the administration of food service given the serious food service-related issues we identified during prior inspections.

Prior Findings in BOP Food Service

Most concerning, during our inspection of [FCI Tallahassee](#) we observed moldy bread served to inmates, rotting vegetables in a food preparation refrigerator, a food warehouse with insects inside and on top of food, damaged and warped containers of food, and likely evidence of rodent droppings and rodents having chewed through food packaging. Additionally, at FCI Tallahassee and during prior inspections of other institutions, we identified a variety of issues impairing the administration of food service.

As outlined in [Appendix 1](#), at the six institutions we inspected, we toured the institutions and observed operations throughout, including the kitchen, the freezers and coolers, the food preparation areas, the dining areas (dining halls and satellite feeding locations), the food service infrastructure, and the food storage warehouses. We also observed meal preparation and service. Additionally, we interviewed institution leadership, line staff, and inmates regarding food service and food service infrastructure.

Our inspections identified a wide range of food service conditions and operations at the six institutions. As we detail below, the food service operations at some institutions appeared to be well run, were generally clean, and had few if any serious issues identified; others had significant problems in multiple areas; the remaining institutions fell somewhere in between. At several of the institutions we inspected, we observed failures to maintain security and accountability for kitchen knives, the inability to x-ray pallets of food entering the institution for contraband because the facility's x-ray machines were broken, an absence of cameras in food warehouses, Food Service Department staff shortages, and unaddressed repairs in food service areas.

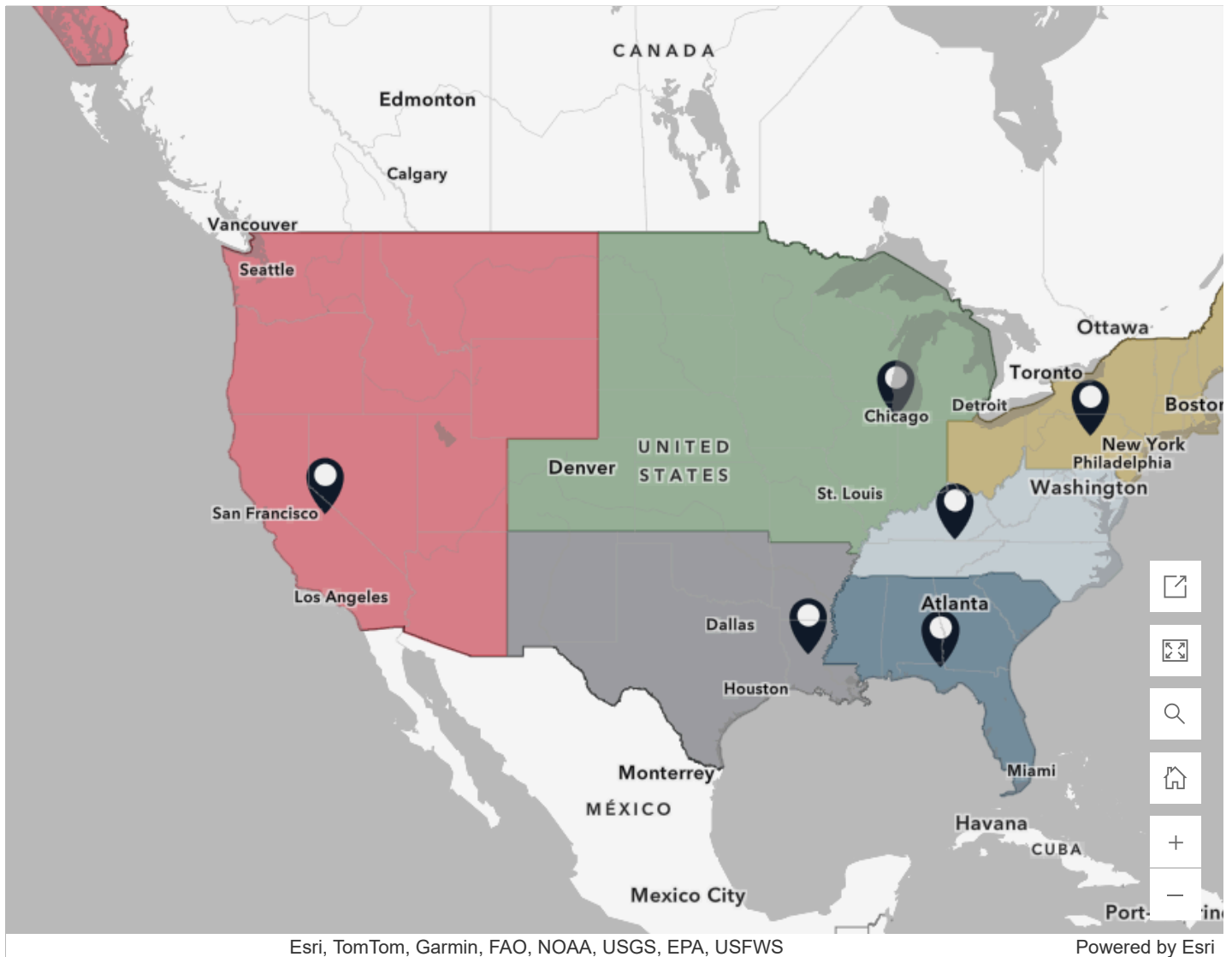
Ultimately, many of the issues we observed are manifestations of longstanding BOP-wide issues the OIG has previously identified, including ineffective contraband mitigation, insufficient security camera coverage, staff shortages, and failing infrastructure. The DOJ OIG's body of BOP oversight work has previously identified these as significant enterprise-wide challenges for the BOP and those prior reports contain recommendations on each of these topics for corrective action by the BOP. This product highlights how those existing findings and recommendations relate to the food service operations at the six institutions we inspected. We also identified several other serious concerns

specific to food service operations including the malfunctioning of major food storage equipment, sanitation failures, and workplace safety issues.

Although we did not identify food quality and food safety issues as egregious as those found at FCI Tallahassee, the issues identified through this project presented concerning risks to both food safety and workplace safety, as well as the general security of some of the inspected institutions. See below for further details on our observations and findings.

Nationwide View

The interactive map below shows the six institutions we inspected within their respective BOP regions. Click on each pin for more details on an institution.



Overview of Significant Findings

Please expand the collapsible content below for an overview of the significant findings from our inspections.

Safety and Security Concerns in Food Service Stemming from Long-standing Management Challenges

Risks to Food Safety Caused by Food Storage Equipment Malfunctions and Sanitation Failures

Workplace Safety Concerns in Food Service

Inspection Results Summary Table

The table below summarizes the deficiencies we identified at each institution and shows that USP McCreary and FCI Marianna had the greatest number of deficiencies. When considering the overall volume and nature of the deficiencies, we also determined that USP McCreary's deficiencies were the most significant of all the institutions we inspected. In comparison, FCC Allenwood and MCC Chicago had the fewest deficiencies of the institutions we inspected, and we came away with a positive impression of their food service operations; however, we note that at the time of our inspection MCC Chicago's kitchen was undergoing a complete renovation and the institution could not always prepare and cook certain items required by the BOP's National Menu.

Issue	Sub-Issue	USP McCreary	FCI Marianna	FCC Pollock	MCC Chicago	FCC Allenwood	FCI Mendota
Safety and Security Concerns in Food Service Stemming from Long-standing Management Challenges	Contraband	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
	Staffing Shortages	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
	Security Cameras	Red	Red	Red	White	White	White
	Infrastructure	Red	Red	Red	Red	White	White
Risks to Food Safety Caused by Food Storage Equipment Malfunctions and Sanitation Failures	Freezers and Refrigerators	Red	Red	Red	White	White	Red
	Mobile Heating Carts	White	White	Red	White	White	Red
	Sanitation	Red	Red	White	White	White	Red
Workplace Safety Concerns in Food Service	Precariously Stacked Food	Red	Red	White	White	White	Red
	Ice Accumulation on Floors	Red	Red	White	White	Red	White

At the conclusion of each inspection’s site visit, we shared our findings with local institution managers. In advance of publication, we also provided the BOP with drafts of this product to ensure that all issues were communicated to senior BOP officials and to facilitate updates on the status of concerning areas. For findings that stem from long-standing, enterprise-wide concerns identified in the DOJ OIG’s body of BOP oversight work, the OIG already has made recommendations that more broadly encompass the problems we identified through this project; accordingly, we do not make new recommendations in the areas of contraband, staffing shortages, cameras, or infrastructure.

For other areas of concern, we obtained confirmation from BOP officials that many of the problems were addressed prior to the publication of this product. For example, much of the malfunctioning major food storage equipment we identified during the inspections has now been repaired and thus we do not make specific recommendations in this product about those pieces of equipment. However, given the number of major food service equipment malfunctions we identified during these inspections, we believe that similar problems may exist enterprise-wide. Therefore, in August 2024 the OIG initiated an audit of the BOP’s [Acquisition and Life-Cycle Management of Major Equipment](#)

Supporting Food Services. The OIG anticipates that a forthcoming report will provide greater detail on such issues and will make appropriate recommendations to address them. Throughout the content below, we have also included updates that the BOP shared on specific issues identified through these inspections.

Methodology

We selected the six institutions for inspection based on their relative scores on the OIG’s prison inspection risk assessment tool, as well as the volume and nature of complaints submitted to the OIG regarding institution operations. While on site, we interviewed BOP employees and inmates, made physical observations of food and food storage areas, and reviewed security camera footage. We also reviewed records pertaining to staffing levels, sanitation, food purchase orders, funding requests for repair and maintenance of equipment and infrastructure, and employee injury and illness reports (see Appendix 1 for more details on the methodology).

Results by Institution

[View Fullscreen](#)

McCreary

FCI Marianna

FCC Pollock

MCC Chicago

FCC Allenwood

FCI Mer



U.S. PENITENTIARY (USP) MCCREARY



Appendices

Appendix 1: Purpose, Scope, Methodology

Appendix 2: DOJ OIG Related Work

Appendix 3: BOP Policies Cited

Appendix 4: The BOP’s Response to the Draft Report

Appendix 5: OIG Analysis of the BOP’s Response

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June 17, 2025

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