

**STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION**

In the Matter of the Ward County Detention Center, Minot, North Dakota

ORDER OF NONCOMPLIANCE

This order is issued in accordance with N.D.C.C. § 12-44.1-25.

The North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (“DOCR”) makes the following:

Findings of Fact

I.

The Ward County Detention Center (WCDC) is a grade one (1) correctional facility in Minot, North Dakota. The WCDC is a correctional facility under N.D.C.C. §§ 12-44.1-06; the facility is located at 204 Front Street Minot, North Dakota. WCDC is operated under the authority of the Ward County Sheriff Robert Roed, Jail Commander Paul Olthoff, and the governing authority of the Ward County Commission Correctional facility inspectors previously inspected WCDC on March 20, 2025.

II.

WCDC was constructed in 1983 with an expansion project completed in 2018. The detention center and the sheriff's office are on five (5) floors within the building.

III.

WCDC physical plant consists of twenty-four (24) units. The detention center master control room is located on the first floor. There are two (2) secondary control stations located on the first and third floors. The facility has program rooms, a large vehicle sally port, booking area, observation cells, kitchen, laundry attorney-visiting rooms, property storage rooms, IVN rooms, janitor closets, restrooms, medical treatment areas, chemical storage closets, library, and two (2) inside recreation areas with louvers for outside air, interview rooms, and dayrooms.

IV.

Services available to inmates include a parenting program for women, inside-out dad parenting program for men, Believe Program (art therapy), anger management, educational programs, AA, ministry programs, medical, commissary, food service, laundry, and library. A law library is available on a laptop and kiosks throughout the facility.

V.

WCDC has a maximum capacity of two hundred eighty-six (286) within twenty-four (24) units. The first floor contains booking, intake units K-1 through K-7, units A, B, C, D, and an indoor recreation area. The booking and intake area has one (1) search room, shower, washbasin, and toilet. This area also has two (2) property storage areas, and an attorney visit room. In addition, there are two (2) group-holding units containing benches, a washbasin, and a toilet. There are three (3) safety/observation cells, and two (2) cells have a washbasin and a toilet. One (1) safety/observation cell has a flushing floor toilet mounted in the floor. The controls are located outside of the cell.

VI.

The safety/observation cells are used temporarily for inmates under the influence of alcohol or drugs who display violent behavior, self-harm, or inability to exercise self-control. The safety cells are located near the booking officer station. The booking officer does not have direct personal visual observation into all cells from the booking desk. All group housing units and cells within the booking area have cameras, intercoms, and duress lights. Monitoring is accomplished by electronic camera(s), which are continuously monitored in the master control room, the booking officer station, and by personal observation.

VII.

WCDC has an authorized staff consisting of Jail Commander Paul Olthoff, fifty-one (51) full-time security staff, and two (2) administration staff. The staffing levels of one (1) employee to sixteen (16) inmates. In the year 2024, three thousand seven hundred ten (3,710) people were booked into custody. Two thousand five hundred sixty-five (2,565) were males and one thousand one hundred forty-five (1,145) were females. The average length of stay for inmates is fourteen (14) days.

VIII.

On August 8, 2025, the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) was notified of the in-custody death of Troy Christianson (Christianson) at WCDC. DOCR correctional facility inspectors initiated an administrative inspection in accordance with N.D.C.C. §§ 12-44.1-24 and 12-44.1-25 and current North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards (NDCFS).

IX.

Christianson, a 62-year-old male, arrived at WCDC at 03:11 on August 8, 2025, after being arrested by the Minot Police Department on a charge of domestic violence and two outstanding bench warrants. Christianson was able to walk unassisted from the sally port to the pre-book search area. Officer Morales was the booking officer and later described

Christianson as cooperative and able to interact appropriately, following directions and answering questions.

X.

Christianson was processed into the facility by completing a preliminary partial booking. This process included the observations from staff that Christianson was showing indications of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, as documented on the Adult Officer Observation form. The booking process was not fully completed upon intake. WDCD policy identifies when delayed booking is allowed. Christianson did not meet the requirements for a delayed booking.

XI.

Christianson was housed alone in booking holding cell 132 from 03:42 to 04:13 when he was moved to and secured in cell 139 in D block. Video review showed Christianson begin to display erratic behavior in hand movements and balance. Christianson was provided a jail issued uniform and blanket. Christianson did not attempt to put the uniform on.

XII.

D block had five (5) other inmates in the area. Facility practice allowed inmates to sleep out in the dayroom on "boats" or temporary bunks on the floor, if they chose to for convenience. Their cell doors were left unsecured to allow inmates access to water and bathrooms.

XIII.

Through video monitoring control room officer Emmylou Halver observed Christianson at 04:46 motionless in his cell and called for staff to respond. Emergency care was provided by Officers Gavin Bruce and Juan Morales until fire and EMS arrived. Officers Bruce and Morales allowed inmate Nicholas Cecil to assist with CPR and administration of naloxone (Narcan) at 0450 and a second dose by Officer Morales approximately 13 seconds later. AED pads were applied side by side on the chest.

XIV.

Emergency responders from Minot Fire Department and Trinity Health Community Ambulance arrived and took over life saving measures. Dr. John Nelson of Trinity Health pronounced Christianson dead over the phone while talking with EMS personnel.

XV.

Autopsy of Christianson was completed by the state forensic medical examiner on August 12, 2025. The preliminary cause of death for Christianson was acute methamphetamine toxicity.

Correctional Facility Standards Violations

XVI.

Standard 4 requires WCDC to follow their policies. WCDC did not follow their established policy of completing the medical screening at the time of intake. WCDC did not require all inmates to be in their assigned cells at 22:30 hours as required by policy. Inmates were allowed to remain in the dayroom sleeping on "boats." Policy requires the control room officer to not allow anyone to leave the facility and to announce an emergency lockdown of the facility. A count was started however this count was not finished as required by policy. These incidents violate standard 4 Facility Review of Policy and Compliance.

XVII.

Standard 21 requires a medical screening at the time of intake. Christianson's medical screening was not completed at the time of intake. This practice is inconsistent with WCDC policy 2.04 Admissions Medical Screening and correctional facility standard 21. There was no documentation provided to indicate a medical screening was unable to be conducted at the time of admission.

XVIII.

Standard 23 identifies what is required in the intake file. The intake files did not contain the required information contained in sections of; g. Nationality, j. Height, k. Identifying marks, including scars marks, and tattoos, l. Name, address, and phone number of emergency contact, m. Occupation, n. Name of Employer, o. Time and date of admission to correctional facility, s. Medical screening form, t. Mental health and suicide screening form, u. PREA notification, screening and acknowledgement, v. Primary language the inmate reads and understands, and bb. Name and contact information of the victim(s) or the parent or guardian of the victim(s) if the victim is a juvenile. This information was not completed at the time of intake. Institutional practices were found to be inconsistent with WCDC policy 2.04 Admissions Medical Screening and WCDC policy 4.02 Admissions.

XIX.

Standard 33 requires a daily written record that includes the date, time, and staff member completing the round. Institutional logging was found to be inconsistent with WCDC policy and standard 33 Daily Written Record Requirements. The Guardian system showed security checks made by another officer. The status of the inmate was "OK" which was not the correct status of Christianson during this event.

XX.

Standard 52 requires health care training for staff that includes response to emergency health related situations, recognition of signs, symptoms, and knowledge of action required in potential emergencies, administration of first aid, CPR, and recognition of

signs and symptoms of chemical dependency and withdrawal symptoms. WDCD staff allowed an inmate to provide CPR and administer medication to another inmate. The level of medical training of the inmate was not known to staff. Standard 52 requires health care training of staff. Trained staff were present and available but did not recognize Christianson's continued deterioration.

XXI.

Standard 59 requires a policy and procedure for individuals who appear intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances. Christianson was not properly assessed for intoxication upon intake and staff did not recognize the signs to indicate intoxication. The Adult Officer Observation Questionnaire indicated that Christianson appeared to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The #81, Behavioral Watch/Suicide Intervention as required by policy and Standard 59 Intoxication Management were not completed and Christianson was not properly assessed to determine frequency of checks or further follow up needed as also required per WDCD policy 3.07. The #80 Security and Safety Assessment form was not completed by the shift supervisor upon acceptance in WDCD and Christianson continued to deteriorate.

Based on the above Findings of Fact, the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation ("DOCR") makes the following:

Conclusions of Law

I.

The Ward County Detention Center is a county correctional facility subject to N.D.C.C. ch.12-44.1.

II.

N.D.C.C. § 12-44.1-24 requires the DOCR to prescribe rules establishing minimum standards for the construction, operation, and maintenance of county correctional facilities, prescribe rules for the care and treatment of inmates, cause the rules and regulations be made available to inmates, and to appoint a correctional facility inspector qualified by special experience, education, or training to inspect correctional facilities. Inspection must include health and safety, fire and life safety, security, rehabilitation programs, recreation, treatment of persons confined, and personnel training.

III.

The DOCR has promulgated rules in accordance with N.D.C.C. § 12-44.1-24 and has appointed a correctional facility inspector in accordance with the requirements of N.D.C.C. § 12-44.1-24.

IV.

N.D.C.C. § 12.44.1-25 authorizes the Director of the DOCR to issue a report of non-compliance if a correctional facility is in violation of any required minimum standards, applicable state or federal law, or DOCR rules for correctional facilities.

V.

When the DOCR determines that the nature and extent of deficiencies in a correctional facility subject to N.D.C.C. ch.12-44.1 are such that an immediate order of full, partial, or temporary closure is necessary to protect the health and safety of the inmates, correctional facility staff, law enforcement, visitors, or the public, §12-44.1-25 authorizes the Director of the DOCR to issue an order of full, partial, or temporary closure.

VI.

N.D.C.C. § 12-44.1-13(4) requires each correctional facility to maintain sufficient law enforcement officers with correctional training or trained correctional facility staff to perform all functions relating to the intake and booking, security, control, custody, and supervision of inmates.

X.

- a) Standard four (4) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards requires WCDC to demonstrate the correctional facility's compliance with its policy.
- b) WCDC is in violation of Standard four (4) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards because WCDC failed to secure inmates at 2230 as required by policy, allowed persons to leave the facility during the emergency, and failed to complete an emergency headcount.

XI.

- a) Standard twenty-one (21) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards requires a medical screening at the time of intake.
- b) WCDC is in violation of standard twenty-one (21) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards because the medical screening was not completed at the time of admission.

XII.

- a) Standard twenty-three (23) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards requires WCDC to establish individual files at intake. At a minimum certain identification data and information must be recorded for each inmate in correctional facilities.

- b) WCDC is in violation of Standard twenty-three (23) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards because the required sections g, j, k, l, m, n, o, s, t, u, v, and bb were not documented at the time of intake.

XII.

- a) Standard thirty three (33) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards requires correctional facilities to maintain a daily written record, including the date and time and name of staff member who completed the record.
- b) WCDC is in violation of standard thirty three (33) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards because WCDC staff recorded logs under another officers name and did not correctly identify the status of an inmate in distress.

XIII.

- a) Standard fifty-two (52) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards requires WCDC to have health care training for staff that includes response to emergency health related situations, recognition of signs, symptoms, and knowledge of action required in potential emergencies, administration of first aid and CPR, and recognition of signs and symptoms of chemical dependency and withdrawal symptoms.
- b) WCDC is in violation of standard fifty-two (52) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards because staff allowed an inmate to provide mouth to mouth resuscitation when qualified staff were available to provide respirations and staff handed naloxone (Narcan) to an inmate and allowed him to dispense the medication.

XIV.

- a) Standard fifty-nine (59) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards requires WCDC to have a policy and procedure for intoxication management.
- b) WCDC is in violation of Standard fifty-nine (59) of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Standards because WCDC did not complete medical screening at intake, #80 Security and Safety Assessment, and #81, Behavioral Watch/Suicide Intervention to properly assess Christianson or determine frequency of checks.

XV.

Ward County Detention Center will remain subject to the Order of Noncompliance until vacated by the DOCR.

ORDER OF NON-COMPLIANCE

Based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the DOCR issues this Order of Noncompliance.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, in accordance with N.D.C.C. Section 12-44.1-25, that WCDC comply with the following requirements:

1. WCDC shall be subject to more frequent inspections and monitoring by DOCR Correctional Facility Inspectors. WCDC shall pay to the DOCR the reasonable and actual costs incurred by the DOCR for additional inspections and monitoring which occur due to this order.

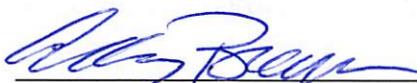
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED WCDC shall remain subject to this Order of Noncompliance until the WCDC can provide evidence to support an approved plan and demonstrated compliance to include appropriate intake procedures, medical screening, and information obtained upon intake. Guidelines shall be established as to when delayed bookings may be appropriate and a process where those bookings are submitted to administration for review.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED WCDC shall remain subject to this Order of Noncompliance until the WCDC can provide refresher training for all staff on the proper use of Naloxone and emergency medical equipment. WCDC shall develop a plan to ensure refresher training is completed for staff on levels of intoxication and the signs/symptoms of impairment as required in Standard 52 and 59.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED this order shall remain subject to the DOCR's continuing jurisdiction and authority under N.D.C.C. Chapter 12-44.1 to continue to inspect WCDC and establish and amend or modify conditions and requirements the DOCR may determine are necessary for the safety of the inmates, staff, visitors, and the public based upon its inspections.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED if WCDC fails to comply with any of the requirements of this order, any of the requirements of the DOCR, or any of the requirements of the North Dakota Correctional Facility Rules and N.D.C.C. Chapter 12-44.1, the DOCR may exercise its authority under N.D.C.C. Section 12-44.1-25 and order WCDC be reclassified or closed.

Dated this 17th day of February 2026.



Colby Braun, Director
North Dakota Department of Corrections and
Rehabilitation



Joseph Charvat, Chief of Facility Inspections
North Dakota Department of Corrections and
Rehabilitation

ADMISSION OF SERVICE

I hereby accept service of the February 19, 2026, North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Ward County Detention Center Order of Non-compliance.

Name: Robt Roehl Date: 2/19/2026 Location: WCSD

Name: POD OREN Date: 2-19-26 Location: WCDC

Name: [Signature] Date: 2-19-2026 Location: WCDC

Served by: [Signature] Date: 02-19-2026
S. Charvat

This order is issued in accordance with N.D.C.C. § 12-44.1-25

