

TO: Professors Andrea Armstrong and Nishi Kumar
FROM: Jackson Myers
RE: "Better Know a Jail" Memo
DATE: November 19, 2023

Morehouse Parish Detention Center

Introduction

Morehouse Parish is one of sixty-four parishes in Louisiana.¹ The parish encompasses a total of 805 square miles and has a population of 24,924 people.² The Morehouse Parish Detention Center was officially opened in 2003.³ It is located at 6444 Patey Road, Collinston, Louisiana.⁴ It belongs to the Louisiana Department of Corrections (DOC) and is under the supervision of Warden Isaac Brown.⁵

Jail Characteristics

The Morehouse Parish Detention Center is a minimum-security correctional center.⁶ Neither the DOC website nor the Sheriff's website provide any figures for demographic information so I had to rely on secondary sources. The detention center has a bed count of 350 beds.⁷ According to Professor Armstrong's spreadsheet on the population of Morehouse Parish Detention Center, there is a total DOC population of 204 inmates.⁸ More specific demographic statistics are available but on a parish-wide basis. However, the demographics of all of the Parish's facilities is made up of 99.04% Black inmates and 0.96% hispanic/latino inmates.⁹ Inmates of all of Morehouse Parish are incarcerated due to several charges and the makeup of those charges is as such: Felony (3rd Degree) at 27.49%, Felony (2nd degree) at 17.17%, Felony (1st degree) at 8.16%, State Jail Felony at 12.97%, Felony (uncategorized) at 13.09%, and misdemeanor (class A) at 21.13%.¹⁰ The inmate sex among Morehouse Parish facilities is made

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<https://www.louisiana.gov/local-louisiana/#:~:text=The%20state%20of%20Louisiana%20is.learn%20more%20about%20each%20parish>.

2 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morehouse_Parish,_Louisiana ;

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/la/morehouse-parish-population>

3 <https://cityofsomerton.com/louisiana/county-jail/morehouse-parish-detention-center/>

4 <https://doc.louisiana.gov/location/morehouse-parish-detention-center/>

5 <https://doc.louisiana.gov/location/morehouse-parish-detention-center/>

6 <https://sabinesheriff.com/louisiana/county-jail/morehouse-parish-detention-center/>

7

<https://www.jailexchange.com/city-and-county-jails/louisiana/morehouse-parish/morehouse-parish-detention-center>

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<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ULxjn4TY1EX4T79OPA2XXk93S4qq6OnuVSMFa95iFD8/edit#gid=1319225265> (this figure was provided for in 2020).

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<https://www.jailexchange.com/city-and-county-jails/louisiana/morehouse-parish/morehouse-parish-detention-center/inmate-search-and-mugshots>

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<https://www.jailexchange.com/city-and-county-jails/louisiana/morehouse-parish/morehouse-parish-detention-center/inmate-search-and-mugshots>

up of 87.88% male and 12.12% female.¹¹ The Morehouse Parish facilities hold people from the ages under 18 to 66-75 years of age.¹² The three largest age ranges that are in Morehouse parish facilities are those aged 31-35, 36-40, and 25-30.¹³

Visitation is permitted. Inmates are permitted one to two visits per week and these visits range from 15 minutes to one hour in time.¹⁴ These visits can occur throughout the week from the time frame of 7:30 am to 9:00 pm.¹⁵ Inmates can call individuals outside of the facility by having outside individuals place money on a Securus Account.¹⁶ These phone calls are monitored and recorded.¹⁷ Inmates also have the opportunity to rent tablet devices and receive “SmartJailMail” through these tablet devices.¹⁸

The facility offers various services to those who are incarcerated in the facility. These services include being able to attain a GED, substance abuse treatment, and anger management courses.¹⁹

Public Records Request and Inmate Mortality

I originally sent my public records request to Craig Frosch, Morehouse Parish’s legal counsel as that was the contact on file within the Google Drive. The attorney who responded to me then informed me that the proper person to contact was cpatrick@mpso.net. This email proved to not get me anywhere in terms of getting a response so I then called the facility and was then provided with a new email address which is as follows: qdouglas@mpso.net. After some time had elapsed, I received an email from qdouglas@mpso.net that informed me that my request had been researched and that I could request the records for a fee from Craig Frosch. I then sent an electronic check to Craig Frosch and was provided the records of the time frame that I inquired about.

Once I received the records, I began to review the records. My request for records for the Morehouse Parish Detention Center was for the following time frame: 2014, 2015, and 2017-2022. I found that my broad request of records (in terms of what Morehouse Parish’s legal counsel sent to me) posited some overlap of what other students had requested in the past from Morehouse Parish. For the time frame that I requested, there were zero deaths at the Morehouse Parish Detention Center. There were 4 deaths in the Morehouse Parish Jail. There were 0 deaths at the Annex facility. As there were zero deaths at Morehouse Parish Detention Center and the scope of this memo focuses on Morehouse Parish Detention Center, there is no need to comment on the trends or patterns of deaths in the facility.

Jail Leadership

Sheriff Zane “Mike” Tubbs is the Sheriff of the Morehouse Parish Sheriff’s Office.²⁰ Pursuant to Article V, Section 27, of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974, sheriffs serve four-year

¹¹ Id.

¹² Id.

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ Id.

¹⁵ Id.

¹⁶ Id.

¹⁷ Id.

¹⁸ Id.

¹⁹ <https://monroecountysheriff.info/louisiana/county-jail/morehouse-parish-detention-center/>

²⁰ <https://doc.louisiana.gov/location/morehouse-parish/> ;

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=10160669908569277&set=pcb.10160669924034277>

terms.²¹ Sheriff Tubbs has served previous terms and just won his reelection this past October.²² He has served a total of 4 terms and is currently serving his 5th term.²³ He assumed office originally back in 2008.²⁴ Sheriff Tubbs is a Democrat.²⁵ His most recent salary according to the 2022 audit report reflects that he makes \$164,508.00 before benefits are factored into this earnings.²⁶

Jail News Coverage and Transparency

There were two news developments available online that were related to Sheriff Mike Tubbs or Morehouse Parish Detention Center. On Friday, June 2, 2023, Sheriff Mike Tubbs was inducted into the Louisiana Criminal Justice Hall of Fame.²⁷ On August 26, 2019, two inmates escaped the Morehouse Parish Detention Center.²⁸ The escapees were Antoine Massey and Trey Westley.²⁹ They were apprehended later that evening in Lancaster, Texas.³⁰ The escapees were subsequently extradited to the Morehouse Parish Detention Center.³¹

Annual Budget, Financing, and Audits

In 2020, there was an annual budget of \$3,964,000.00.³² In 2022, the budget is listed as \$5,430,074.00.³³ An audit was performed in 2022 by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor.³⁴ This audit was conducted by Bosch & Statham, CPA.³⁵ The audit found that there were no instances of

²¹ [https://app.lla.la.gov/publicreports.nsf/0/682270414feaa4d886258943006bb724/\\$file/00000957.pdf](https://app.lla.la.gov/publicreports.nsf/0/682270414feaa4d886258943006bb724/$file/00000957.pdf)

²² <https://www.myarklamiss.com/ylehq/democrat-mike-tubbs-elected-as-the-sheriff-of-morehouse-parish/>

²³ <https://www.facebook.com/p/Re-elect-Mike-Tubbs-for-Morehouse-Parish-Sheriff-100063624103974/> ;
<https://www.thenewsstar.com/story/news/2019/08/08/morehouse-union-sheriffs-face-challengers-final-day-qualifyin-g/1957207001/>

²⁴ <https://www.lsa.org/morehouse-parish>

²⁵ <https://www.myarklamiss.com/ylehq/democrat-mike-tubbs-elected-as-the-sheriff-of-morehouse-parish/>

²⁶

[https://app2.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/682270414feaa4d886258943006bb724/\\$file/00000957.pdf?openelement&.7773098](https://app2.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/682270414feaa4d886258943006bb724/$file/00000957.pdf?openelement&.7773098)

²⁷

<https://www.myarklamiss.com/news/local-news/sheriff-mike-tubbs-of-morehouse-parish-sheriffs-office-was-inducted-into-louisiana-justice-hall-of-fame/>

²⁸

<https://www.knoe.com/content/news/Two-inmates-escape-from-Morehouse-Parish-Detention-Center-558341271.html> ;

<https://www.myarklamiss.com/news/two-inmates-escape-from-morehouse-parish-detention-center-sheriffs-office-now-searching/>

²⁹ Id.

³⁰ Id.

³¹ Id.

³² <https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Morehouse-Parish-Budget-2019.pdf>

³³

[https://app2.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/682270414feaa4d886258943006bb724/\\$file/00000957.pdf?openelement&.7773098](https://app2.lla.state.la.us/publicreports.nsf/0/682270414feaa4d886258943006bb724/$file/00000957.pdf?openelement&.7773098)

³⁴ Id.

³⁵ Id.

noncompliance under the Government Auditing Standards.³⁶ However, the auditors did find that some weaknesses could be improved upon by the Morehouse Parish Sheriff's Office.³⁷ The Sheriff's Office struggles with "risk assessment, information and communication, control activities and monitoring."³⁸ Specifically, the struggles pertained to the following: (1) Bank reconciliation, (2) collections/revenue/receipts, (3) expenditures/disbursements, (4) payroll, (5) special activities, (6) general journal, and (7) policies and procedures.³⁹ The auditors proposed several recommendations for the sheriff's office.⁴⁰ The auditors also presented qualms with other policies as well.⁴¹ For instance, the purchasing policy does not address how vendors are added to the vendor list nor does it address the documentation required for bids and price quotes.⁴² Morehouse Parish Sheriff's Office also lacks several policies on disbursement, receipts, contracting, debt service, and disaster recovery.⁴³ The auditors proposed several recommendations to help the Sheriff's Office with these issues.⁴⁴ First, the Sheriff and Chief Civil Deputy should have formal annual meetings to evaluate internal risks.⁴⁵ Second, the Chief Civil Deputy or a contracted consultant should review budgets, balance sheets, bank statements, bank reconciliations, general ledgers, general journals, deposit details, check registers, and receipt books to deposit every month.⁴⁶

Hearings on Operations by City Council

The parish seat of Morehouse Parish is Bastrop, Louisiana.⁴⁷ Bastrop, Louisiana has a city council. Upon review of the city council's meeting minutes and agenda from 2020-2023, the minutes did not reflect much of a discussion of the sheriff's office or the Morehouse Parish Detention Center. However, on March 31, 2022, the Mayor of Bastrop authorized a resolution seeking the Morehouse Parish Sheriff's Office to assist the City of Bastrop Police Department in issues regarding staffing to better ensure oversight of the City of Bastrop.⁴⁸

Notable Cases or Complaints within the past 5 years

³⁶ Id.

³⁷ Id.

³⁸ Id.

³⁹ Id.

⁴⁰ Id.

⁴¹ Id.

⁴² Id.

⁴³ Id.

⁴⁴ Id.

⁴⁵ Id.

⁴⁶ Id.

⁴⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morehouse_Parish,_Louisiana

⁴⁸ https://www.cityofbastrop.com/_files/ugd/456a7e_c908c39b9ed3422b9bb3d40e86ca91c4.pdf ;
<https://www.cityofbastrop.com/city-council-agendas>

There were three cases that I was able to find about Morehouse Parish. However, one was about another facility and another was about an inmate who was at Morehouse Parish Detention Center but brought forth a claim in regards to his time spent at Bossier Parish Maximum Security.⁴⁹ The one case that I did find where the plaintiff was incarcerated in Morehouse Parish Detention Center was *Moses v. Tubbs*.⁵⁰ In this case, the plaintiff made claims that he was being deprived of his First Amendment rights to practice his religion.⁵¹ Specifically, he asserted that the detention center did not provide Islamic Taleem services.⁵² His arguments stressed the importance of this service as it is mandatory for all Muslims.⁵³ He also made claims that the accommodations to practice Jumma were not adequate as he complained the conditions were unsanitary, loud, heavily trafficked areas, and did not allow him or other inmates to be able to “face East toward Mecca.”⁵⁴ The Court ultimately found that the defendants (Mike Tubbs and MPDC) were entitled to judgment as a matter of law because the plaintiff (Moses) did not exhaust all administrative remedies available to him.⁵⁵ The Court mentioned that the plaintiff could present his claims again at a future date if he proceeded to exhaust all possible administrative remedies.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ See *Culotta v. Holley*, 2023 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 98733

⁵⁰ See *Moses v. Tubbs*, 2020 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 26684

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶ *Id.*