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# MORGAN CITY JAIL

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## MEMORANDUM ON FACILITY OPERATION, TRANSPARENCY, AND OVERSIGHT OF MORGAN CITY JAIL

### **I. Death Trends Since 2014**

#### **A. Number of Deaths Since 2014**

Between 2014 and 2022, one death was reported in the City of Morgan City Jail, which occurred in 2015. The facility has been contacted and expects to send the 2022-2023 public records by the end of this month.

#### **B. Trends**

There are no trends as to the population of people who have died while incarcerated at Morgan City Jail due to the relatively small number of deaths at this facility. However, trends can be reported as to the inmate population at Morgan City Jail in St. Mary Parish, Louisiana, as of November 28, 2023, showcases a diverse demographic and crime profile. Predominantly Black (72.05%), the population also includes Hispanic or Latino (19.69%), White (4.92%), American Indian/Native Alaskan (1.97%), and Asian (1.38%) inmates. Various criminal charges are present, with a notable prevalence of uncategorized felonies (23.62%), 2nd degree felonies (22.24%), and Class A misdemeanors (20.47%). The majority of the inmates are male (87.80%), while females make up 12.20%. Age-wise, the largest groups are those aged 25-30 (22.64%), followed by the 31-35 (12.80%) and 36-40 (11.81%) age brackets.

### **II. Jail Characteristics**

#### **A. Capacity/size and any available population data**

Morgan City Jail has an average daily inmate population count of 61. The jail's stated inmate capacity is 107. This represents an under capacity of 40%. The jail does not have an estimated average of staff assaults per year on record. It has about 10 full-time staff and 0 part-

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0341192

time Staff per year. The average staff salary for this jail is \$21,360. The ethnic composition of staff at this jail consists of six African American and four Caucasian employees. There are on average fifty-one male inmates and eight female inmates incarcerated at any given time. No inmates participate in inmate educational programs, and only 11 are on work release.

## **B. Address, Location, & Website**

The Morgan City Police Department operates the Jail and Correctional Complex at 723 Myrtle St., Morgan City, Louisiana. The facility primarily holds pre-trial detainees and persons under sentence from the Municipal City Court of Morgan City.

The Morgan City jail sits in the small town of Morgan City. Morgan City in Louisiana, with its entirely urban population of 10,667 as of 2023, is experiencing a demographic shift, having seen a 6.5% decrease since the 2020 census. The city's ethnic composition primarily includes White Caucasian at 62.1%, Black or African American at 18.7%, and smaller percentages of Hispanic and multi-racial communities. Socioeconomically, the median household income in 2021 was \$42,877, with a per capita income of \$23,937, both figures lagging behind the state averages. The poverty rate stands notably higher at approximately 21.8%, compared to the state and local area averages. Educational attainment shows that 82.9% of residents have at least a high school diploma, but only 12.1% hold a bachelor's degree or higher, which is about half the rate in Louisiana.

## **C. Leadership**

The Correctional Facility is supervised by a Jail Supervisor, an Assistant Jail Supervisor, and eight Correctional Officers. These officers work in shifts, with two officers assigned per twelve-hour shift. The Morgan City Police Department is tasked with operating a Jail and Correctional Complex. The primary purpose of this facility is to hold pre-trial detainees and persons under sentence from the Municipal City Court of Morgan City. The Morgan City Police Department is committed to the humane incarceration of these prisoners. The Correctional Facility is supervised by a Jail Supervisor and an Assistant Jail Supervisor. There are eight Correctional Officers who direct and supervise the inmates of the facility and work four, twelve-hour shifts, with two officers assigned per shift.

Chad M. Adams has been serving the Morgan City Police Department since 1996. He has served the department in many different capacities such as Corrections, Patrol, K-9 Officer, Sergeant, Lieutenant of Corrections, Investigations, Narcotics, and Captain. He was appointed as Chief of Police in October of 2022. He will assume the responsibilities of Chief of Police, which oversees the operations of the Morgan City Police Department.

Lieutenant Carl Sofford has been employed with the Morgan City Police Department since 2008. Lieutenant Sofford is currently assigned to the Corrections Division as a Police Lieutenant who is responsible for the supervision of daily operations of the correctional facility. Lieutenant Sofford also is responsible for the supervision of the Sergeant in command of communications, warrants, juvenile services, and records. Lieutenant Sofford has served the department in various capacities in his career such as Partol, Investigations, and Sergeant.

Sergeant Michael Broussard has served the Morgan City Police Department since 2002. Sergeant Broussard has served in the capacity of Patrol, Patrol Sergeant, and his current position as Sergeant of the Correctional Facility.

#### **D. Annual Budget and Financing**

I conducted a thorough search for information regarding the annual budget or financing of the Morgan City Jail in Morgan City, Louisiana, focusing on their funding sources and expenditure details. Unfortunately, specific information about the jail's budget for recent years was not readily available in the search results. I have reached out to Morgan City Council Members and will supplement this memo with any additional information I receive in the future.

In a news article from September 23, 2020, it was reported that the operations and revenues of the city jail in Morgan City were significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The article also mentioned several upcoming events and financial updates. COVID-19 had a significant impact on the city's revenue sources. Lake End Parkway saw a revenue reduction of \$200,000 due to the shutdown of cabins and camping, a result of COVID-19 restrictions. The city jail also suffered from a drop in inmate population, described as "unprecedented numbers," which affected its self-sufficiency. Balancing the funds would require a transfer from the general fund. The proposed budget for the city was approximately \$38.98 million, down \$1.71 million from the previous year. The general fund was expected to have an ending balance of \$981,668, with sales and occupational taxes remaining neutral at \$7.49 million. Utility operations were projected to generate \$24.73 million in revenue. Expenditures for the city were projected to be around \$39 million, which was \$868,986 less than the current budget. Rising health insurance costs were a significant challenge, with an increase of more than \$1.8 million. Additionally, the city planned to implement a 2% longevity raise for employees who completed their one-year anniversary, costing \$145,360. The budget introduction was the first reading of the 2021 budget ordinance.

### **III. Evidence of Oversight**

#### **A. Accreditation by National Associations**

I conducted a search to determine if the Morgan City Jail in Louisiana has any accreditation from national associations but was unable to find specific information confirming or denying such accreditation. The search included checking resources like the official Morgan City Police Department website, which oversees the jail, as well as websites of national accreditation organizations like the American Correctional Association (ACA).

The lack of readily available information online suggests that either the Morgan City Jail may not have such an accreditation, or the information about its accreditation status is not prominently disclosed.

#### **B. Audits Performed**

I conducted a search for audits performed on Morgan City Jail, specifically looking for results from LA-DOC, US-DOJ, LCLE, LA Legislative Auditor, PREA, and other relevant bodies. However, I wasn't able to find specific audit reports or results for Morgan City Jail within the time frame.

### **C. Hearings on Operations by Morgan City Council Members**

According to my research there have been hearings/meetings by the Morgan City Council concerning operations at the Morgan City Jail. However, I was unable to access specific meeting minutes or details about such hearings or meetings. The official website for the City of Morgan City provides access to council meeting minutes, but the ones I am able to access do not concern the operations of the jail.

### **D. Judicial orders (injunctive) or consent decrees in effect currently or previously within last five years.**

I conducted a search to find information about any judicial orders (injunctive) or consent decrees currently in effect or those issued in the past five years involving Morgan City Jail. However, the search did not yield specific results related to such orders or decrees for Morgan City Jail during the specified time frame.

## **IV. Evidence of Transparency**

### **A. Public Briefings on Jail Operations by Jail Officials**

I have not found any articles/documents concerning public briefings on jail operations by jail officials or city council members since the Covid briefing mention in the prior section of this memo.

### **B. Availability of Data**

The Morgan City Police Department does not appear to stay up to date. At first glance, the website appears to be up to date because the website puts the current date where you'd normally see a publication date. Unfortunately many of the pages on the site are obviously not up to date on current news and events. Specifically, the newsroom and breaking news tabs have not been published in weeks. Further, the Police Blotter has not made a new post since November 2021.

As to the intimate locator on the site I have not been able to confirm or deny the accuracy and timeliness of the intimate roster. Over the past two weeks, the inmate roster only accounts for around 13 inmates. However, other resources such as census and city data reports claim the inmate population to be around 60 inmates at any given time. Considering the lack of updated

Jordan Percy  
0341192

information on the website as a whole, I conclude that the inmate roster on the Morgan City Police Department website is not up to date.

### **C. Reports or Research by Advocacy Groups**

There does not appear to be any specific reports or research conducted by advocacy groups on Morgan City Jail. The search did not yield relevant information or documents from advocacy groups in this regard.

### **D. Your assessment of filing and receiving initial PRAs (Assignment #1)**

Efforts to obtain initial Public Records Act (PRA) requests from Morgan City Jail have proven challenging. I reached out to various individuals, including the Assistant, Lieutenant, and Records Clerk, through email and left several voicemails. My situation did not see progress until Police Chief Adams returned my call and learned about my difficulties. Following this, I finally got a response from the Records Clerk. Despite these initial hurdles, I've been promised that the PRAs will be delivered by the end of the month.

## **V. Notable Cases or Complaints on Jail in the Last 5 Years**

Over the last five years, Morgan City Jail has not seen any major incidents. The last significant recent event occurred in 2013, involving a Morgan City Police Department correctional officer, Justin W. Palmature. At 25 years old, Palmature was apprehended following evidence of improper conduct with a female inmate. Chief Travis Crouch announced his arrest, noting malfeasance in office. The investigation, prompted by allegations against Palmature, led to his arrest warrant. Employed for approximately three months before the incident, he was placed on administrative leave pending further inquiry. Palmature was detained with bail set at \$20,000.

## **VI. Resources**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Hyperlinks/Case Citations</b>
Morgan City Police Department	<a href="https://www.morgancitypolice.org/index.php/corrections-facility.html">https://www.morgancitypolice.org/index.php/corrections-facility.html</a>
Inside Prison	<a href="https://www.insideprison.com/county_jails_details.asp?ID=1194">https://www.insideprison.com/county_jails_details.asp?ID=1194</a>
Incarceration Transparency	<a href="https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/louisiana/">https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/louisiana/</a>
World Population Review	<a href="#">Morgan City, Louisiana Population 2023 - World Population Review</a>
Data USA	<a href="#">Morgan City, LA   Data USA</a>

Jordan Percy  
0341192

City-Data.com	<a href="#">Morgan City, Louisiana (LA 70339) profile: population, maps, real ...</a>
Census Reporter	<a href="#">Morgan City, LA - Profile data - Census Reporter</a>
Jail Exchange	<a href="#">Morgan City Police Jail, LA Inmate Search, Information</a>
City of Morgan City Counsel	<a href="https://cityofmc.com/index.php/city-government/meetings/minutes.html#:~:text=,each%20month%20unless%20otherwise%20noted">https://cityofmc.com/index.php/city-government/meetings/minutes.html#:~:text=,each%20month%20unless%20otherwise%20noted</a>
St.MaryNow	<a href="https://archive.stmarynow.com/news/morgan-city-corrections-officer-arrested-malfeasance-office">https://archive.stmarynow.com/news/morgan-city-corrections-officer-arrested-malfeasance-office</a>