



# *Prison Rape Elimination Act: 2021/2022 Annual Report*

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**Perseus House Inc.**  
**Mario Mezzacapo, PREA Coordinator**

Perseus House is committed to meeting the requirements of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 and thereby enhancing the safety and security of Perseus House residents.

This report is a summary of the agency's efforts in PREA compliance. The examination of aggregated agency data underscores Perseus House's dedication to improving the effectiveness of sexual misconduct detection, prevention, and response.

## **Purpose**

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) requires that, as a residential treatment provider, we collect accurate, uniform data for every allegation of sexual misconduct using a standardized instrument and set of definitions. This information must be aggregated annually, reviewed by the Executive Director of Perseus House, and provided to the public through our website.

This document serves as an annual review to assess and improve the effectiveness of sexual misconduct prevention, detection, and response; also, policies, practices, and training at Perseus House pursuant to §115.387 and §115.388 of the national PREA standards. Therein, the agency is required to:

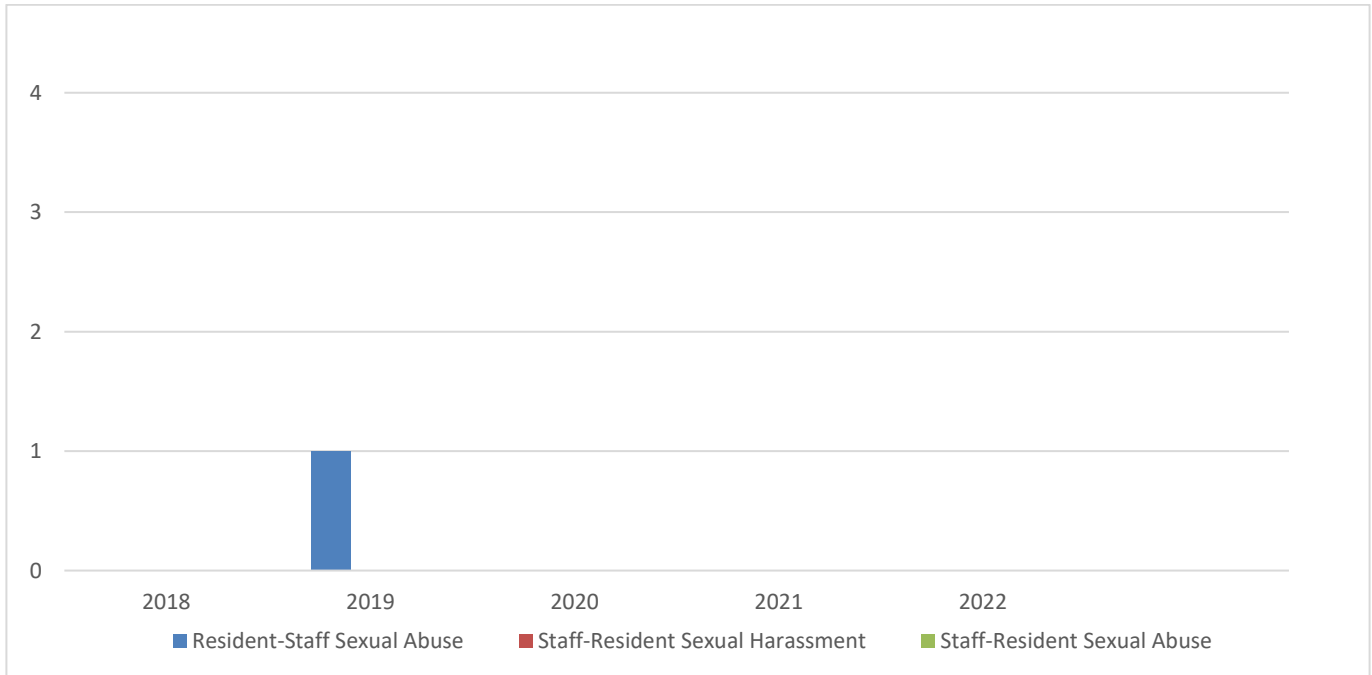
1. Review and aggregate incident-based sexual misconduct data annually to improve the effectiveness of sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response as well as policies, practices, and training to include:
  - a. Identifying problem areas;
  - b. Taking corrective action on an ongoing basis; and
  - c. Preparing an annual report of its findings
2. Compare the current year's data and corrective actions with those from prior years and provide an assessment of the agency's progress in addressing sexual misconduct.
3. Publish an annual report on the Perseus House website of its findings and corrective actions for the agency as a whole.

## **Aggregated Data**

Perseus House collects data from referrals for investigation of sexual abuse and sexual harassment, resident-on-resident sexual abuse and staff-on-resident sexual abuse and sexual harassment. The data in this section contains aggregated data from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

All allegations are entered and tracked through a secure database. The following graph depicts a breakdown of July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2022 sexual abuse and sexual harassment data from Perseus House; included are all allegations of staff-on-resident sexual abuse and sexual harassment, and all allegations of resident-on-resident abuse.

## Prison Rape Elimination Act: 2021/2022 PREA Case Breakdown



- 1 – Resident-Staff Sexual Abuse
- 0 – Staff-Resident Sexual Harassment
- 0 – Staff-Resident Sexual Abuse

### Findings

In the year 2021-2022, we had zero incidents of sexual harassment between staff-residents. In the year 2021-2022, there were zero incidents of sexual abuse between residents. In the year 2021-2022, there were also zero incidents of sexual abuse between a staff and residents.

Perseus House continues to maintain a Zero Tolerance Policy for sexual abuse and sexual harassment. Our staff is trained extensively in child abuse and neglect reporting, maintaining appropriate relationships, behavior management, ethical issues and more to ensure this standard is continuously met.

It is worth noting, as cited in the “Department of Justice National Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Respond to Prison Rape Executive Summary”:

“An increase in incidents reported to facility administrators might reflect increased abuse, or it might just reflect inmates’ increased willingness to report abuse, due to the facility’s success

at assuring inmates that reporting will yield positive outcomes and not result in retaliation. Likewise, an increase in substantiated incidents could mean either that a facility is failing to protect inmates, or simply that it has improved its effectiveness at investigating allegations. For these reasons, the standards generally aim to inculcate policies and procedures that will reduce and ameliorate bad outcomes, recognizing that one possible consequence of improved performance is that evidence of more incidents will come to light.”

## **Problem Areas**

No discernable problem areas were reported during the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

As a result, a focus on general program safety and effectively implementing PREA culture successfully has been adopted at Perseus House throughout the year.

## **PREA Implementation Action Plans**

Initially, Perseus House identified four residential facilities that met the criteria requiring PREA certification. Those facilities were the Boys Residential Treatment Facility and Shelter programs, the Andromeda House Intensive Treatment Unit, Perseus House West 7<sup>th</sup> Street Residential Treatment Facility and Andromeda House Girl’s Residential Treatment Facility. Perseus House participated in a regularly scheduled tri-annual re-accreditation in spring of 2020 and was again PREA-compliant. Perseus House continues to implement best practices and the requirements of the PREA standards to address allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment of residents. All staff who work during sleeping hours and Night Shift supervisors Leadership of Perseus House is dedicated to ongoing monitoring and corrective action to maintain full PREA compliance and most importantly to maximize and maintain the safety of our residents. Creating culture change is a long and arduous process. As an agency, Perseus House is steadily and continually making progress toward systemic change that fully integrates the intent of the PREA standards and the highest level of safety.

The following are PREA Implementation Plans completed at the agency level:

- Acquisition of Transitional Living Program with current PREA compliance
- Revision of policies to enhance PREA policy and practice
- Continuous education for staff and residents
- Implemented specialized training required of specialized staff

## **2021-2022 Initiatives**

*Prison Rape Elimination Act:*

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- Acquisition of Transitional Living Program with current PREA compliance
- Continue to develop culture of safety and prevention of sexual abuse for all clients
- The PREA Coordinator will continue to utilize the PREA Resource Center to keep abreast of standards, updates, and PREA-related materials
- Improve PREA training efforts
- Continue to review and revise policy as appropriate/as needed

**Summary**

PH is committed to continual and progressive culture change. Perseus House will continue to implement the requirements of the PREA standards and adjust on an ongoing basis.

Mario Mezzacapo

June 30, 2022

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Associate Chief Executive Officer

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Date