

Texas Commission on Jail Standards



Customer Service Report 2020

Introduction

As mandated by Texas Government Code Chapter 2114, the Texas Commission on Jail Standards (TCJS) submits a Customer Service Survey to the Legislative Budget Board and Governor's Office of Budget and Planning. With the information gained from the Customer Service Survey, TCJS intends to increase its effectiveness in achieving its mission of ensuring safe, secure, and suitable county jail facilities for correctional personnel, inmates, and the community through proper rules and procedures.

Inventory of External Customers

The chief goal of the Texas Commission on Jail Standards is to assist local governments through effective standards and technical assistance. To that end, local government is the priority population of TCJS, and TCJS chose to focus its customer service survey on this group. This group consists of sheriffs, county judges, and jail administrators in each of the 254 counties and totals approximately 757 individuals. Counties that do not have a jail were included in the survey because they are required to report their inmate population housed elsewhere. Customers served indirectly include the more than 18,000 licensed jailers, and efforts were made to reach them through their professional association, the Texas Jail Association.

Methodology

The Texas Commission on Jail Standards employed an electronic survey format via a commercial vendor. The Commission also sent a request to the Texas Jail Association, the Sheriff's Association of Texas, and the Texas Association of Counties to send out the survey on their list serves.

Description of Services Offered by Strategy

TCJS Strategy	Description of Services	External Customer Served
<p>A. 1. 1. INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT</p> <p><i>Perform Inspection of Facilities and Enforce Standards</i></p>	<p>Inspection activities consist of fair and impartial monitoring and enforcing compliance of adopted rules and procedures. This objective includes development and implementation of uniform inspection process</p>	<p>Sheriff County Judges County Commissioners Jail Administrators Jailers</p>
<p>A. 2. 1. CONSTRUCTION PLAN REVIEW</p> <p><i>Assist with Facility Need Analysis and Construction Document Review</i></p>	<p>The construction planning staff provides consultation and technical assistance to local governments for jail construction that meets standards.</p>	<p>Sheriffs County Judges County Commissioners</p>
<p>A. 2. 2 MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION</p> <p><i>Assist with Staffing Analysis, Operating Plans, and Program Development</i></p>	<p>Commission staff provides jail management consultation through staffing analysis, operational plans, and training programs. Technical assistance on matters such as structural issues, life safety, and overall jail operation is provided on an on-going basis.</p>	<p>Sheriffs County Judges County Commissioners Jail Administrators Jailers</p>
<p>A. 3. 1 AUDITING POPULATION AND COSTS</p> <p><i>Collect and Analyze Data Concerning Inmate Population/Backlogs/Costs</i></p>	<p>This strategy requires the collecting, analyzing and disseminating of data concerning inmate populations, felony backlog, immigration, licensed jailer turnover, use of restraints on pregnant inmates, and jail operational costs.</p>	<p>Sheriffs County Judges County Commissioners Jail Administrators Other planning agencies</p>
<p>A.4.1- PRISONER SAFETY FUND</p> <p><i>Disburse funds to purchase tele-mental/tele-health equipment and electronic sensors/cameras</i></p>	<p>The Commission Grant Administrator evaluates jail applications for and disburses Prison Safety Fund monies to eligible jails to assist them in purchasing equipment for 24 hour tele-mental/tele-health access and for electronic sensors/cameras to record inmate observations.</p>	<p>Sheriffs County Judges County Commissioners Jail Administrators Jailers</p>

Customer Service Element	Description of Survey Questions	Levels of Customer Service Quality
Staff	Customers were asked about Commission staff courtesy, knowledge, and helpfulness	97% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Commission staff was courteous, knowledgeable, and helpful. This is up from 96% in 2018.
Communications	Customers were asked if they received communications in a timely manner	96% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they received communications in a timely manner, the same level as in 2018.
Agency Website	Customers were asked if the agency website was easy to navigate	79% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the website was easy to navigate. This is up from 77% in 2018.
Complaint-Handling process	Customers were asked if the Commission investigates complaints in a fair and timely manner	86% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the Commission investigates complaints in a fair and timely manner. This is up slightly from 85% in 2018. 19 were neutral, and only one respondent disagreed.
Facilities	The Commission did not survey customers about facilities as the Commission travels to stakeholders for jail inspections.	N/A

Analysis

399 survey recipients responded to the survey. The vast majority of survey respondents are satisfied with the Commission’s customer service. The Commission released a new website in early 2020. It is expected that users will experience a period of adjustment to a new website and for that reason may be initially dissatisfied with it. Furthermore, the onset of office staff working remotely because of the COVID-19 concern meant that some of the website improvements that would have increased user satisfaction were delayed. Despite these adjustments and setbacks, user experience improved slightly in 2020. The percent of respondents who are aware of specified TCJS services remained level or improved.

132 respondents wrote narrative comments. Of these, 80% (106) were favorable, which is up from 68% in 2018. 7% (9) were unfavorable, 10% (13) were neutral, and 1.8% (7) made suggestions for improvement. In several instances, comments praised the Executive Director, Assistant Director, and staff by name.

Agency Response

A year-to-year variation in satisfaction results is normal and not necessarily attributable to a variation in actual customer satisfaction. The response rate of 53% from a population of 757 means the actual answers of the entire population of this survey may vary at worst +/- 3.38% from the sample answers,

but at best may vary only +/- 1.3%.

The Commission improved its website in 2020 but will make further improvements after its office reopens following the Governor’s lifting of restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission will continue to analyze customer comments for additional areas of improvements.

CUSTOMER SERVICE PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Number of Customers Surveyed

The survey was sent to 757 county judges, sheriffs, jail administrators, and others. The surveys were delivered directly by email and also using the list serves of the Texas Jail Association, Sheriff’s Association of Texas, and the Texas Association of Counties.

The email contained the first survey question. When the recipient clicked their answer, they were taken to the survey website where they answered the remaining 21 questions.

Survey Response Rate	2018	2020
Response Rate 399 of 757 survey recipients responded to the survey.	51%	53%

Satisfaction Levels	2018	2020
Respondents who expressed overall satisfaction with services TCJS received. This rate was determined by combining the number of all answers by rank, subtracting the number of not applicable answers to obtain a total net number of answers. We then divided the sum of all “Strongly agree” and “Agree” answers by the net total.	94%	95%
Respondents who were neutral or dissatisfied with services offered by TCJS.	6%	5%

Outcome Measures	2018	2020
Respondents who expressed overall satisfaction with services TCJS received	94%	95%
Number of surveyed customer respondents identifying ways to improve service delivery	13	7

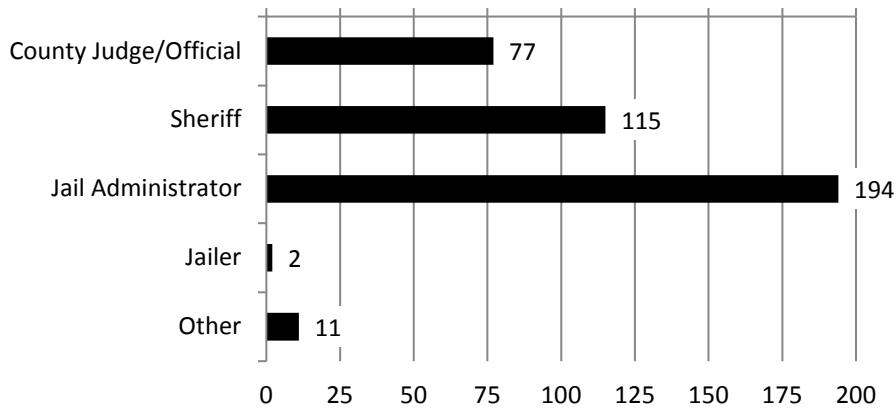
Output Measures	2018	2020
Number of Customers Surveyed	797	757
Number of Customers identified/served	=19,000	=19,000

Efficiency Measures	2018	2020
Cost of survey per customer surveyed	No fiscal impact (existing sources utilized)	No fiscal impact (existing sources utilized)

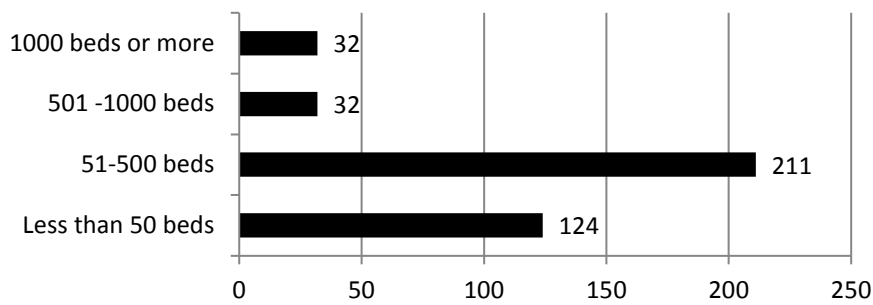
Explanatory Measures	2018	2020
Total Customers Identified	=19,000	=19,000
Total Customers Inventoried	1 Priority Group (County Officials, including sheriffs, judges, jail administrators, jailers)	1 Priority Group (County Officials, including sheriffs, judges, jail administrators, jailers)

Agency Specific Measures	FY 2018	Projected FY 2020
Average number of days from complaint inquiry to final response	15	17
Number of Construction Plan Review documents	27	33
Number of Staffing Analyses	9	5

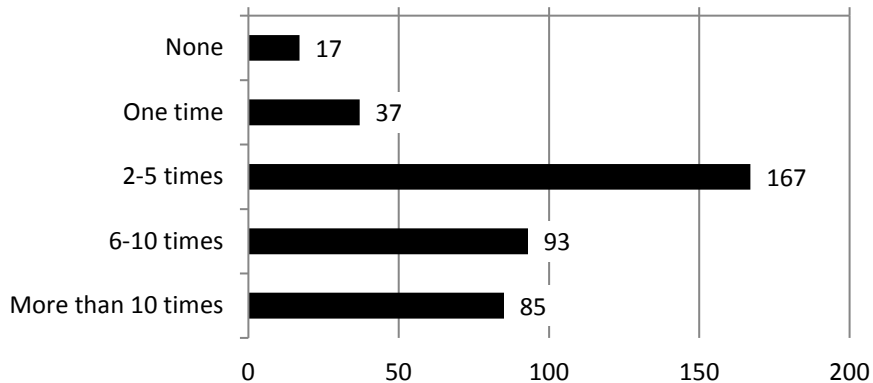
Number of Respondents by Title



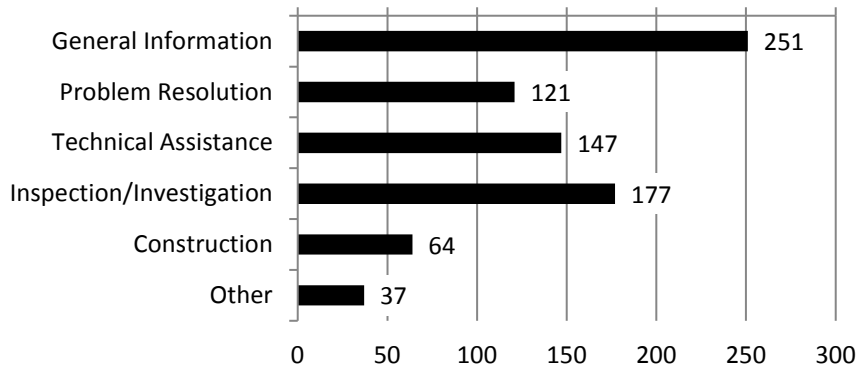
Number of Respondents by Jail Capacity



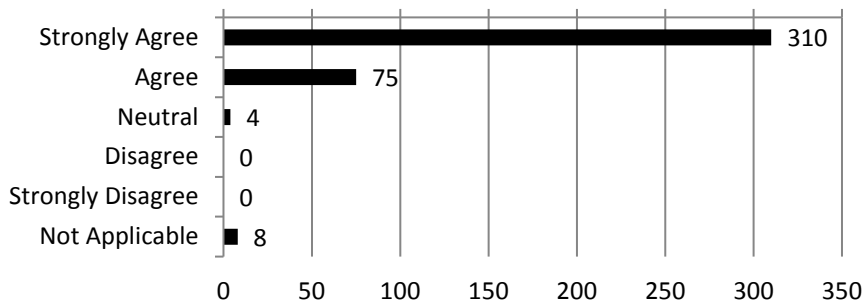
Number of Respondents by Number of Contacts with TCJS in 2019



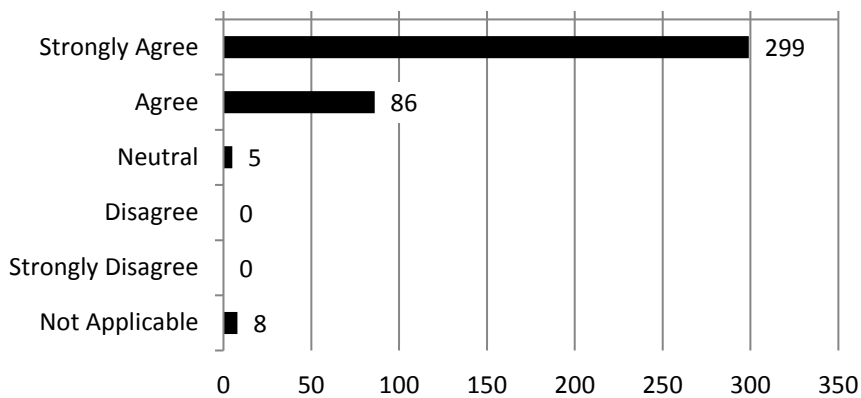
Number of Contacts with TCJS by Reason for Contact



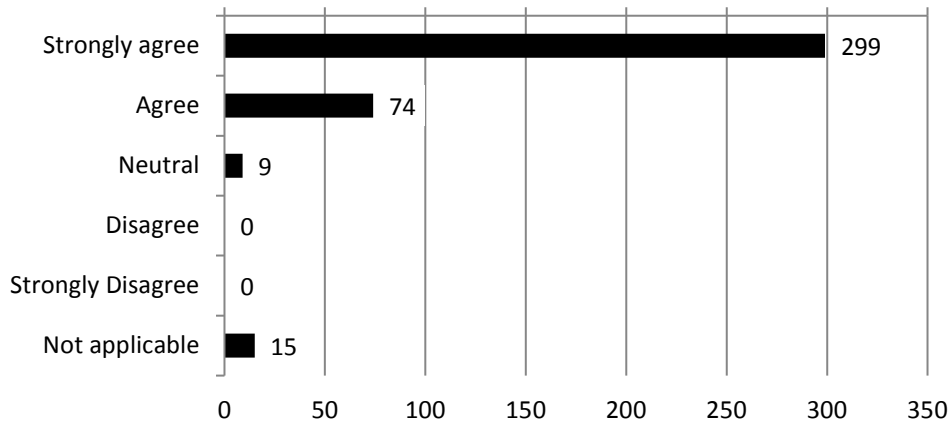
Commission Staff Are Courteous and Friendly



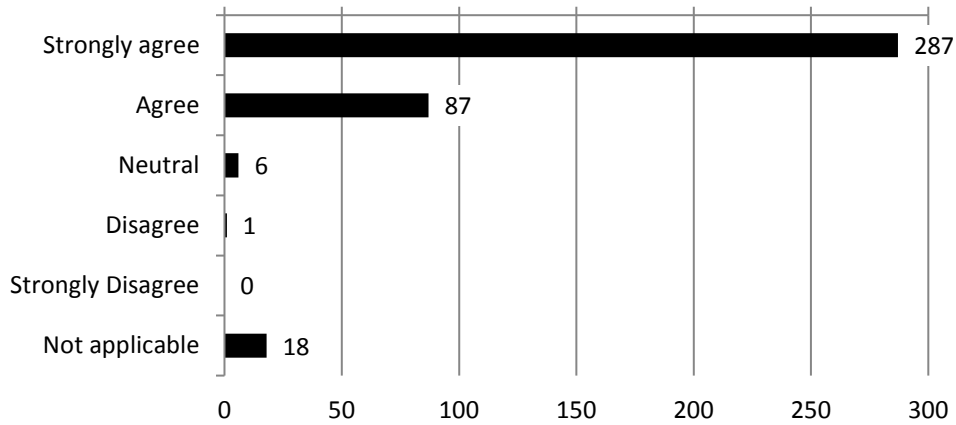
Commission Staff Are Knowledgeable and Helpful



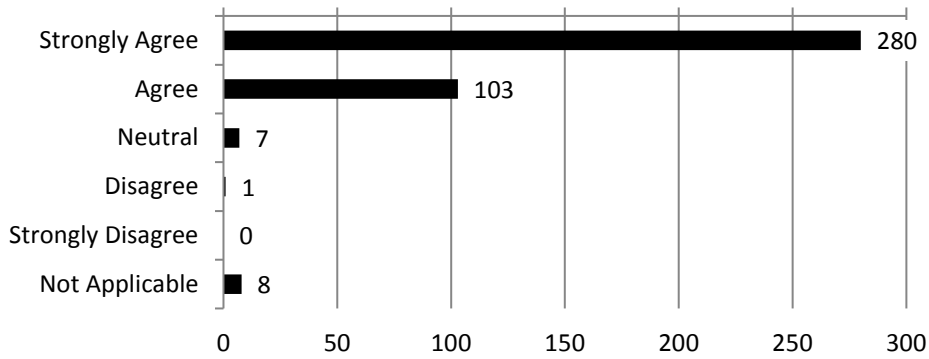
Inspectors Are Courteous During Inspections



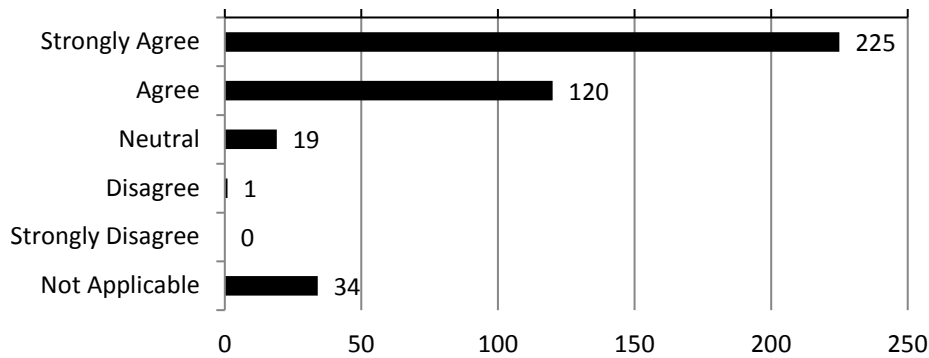
Inspectors Are Knowledgeable And Helpful During Inspections



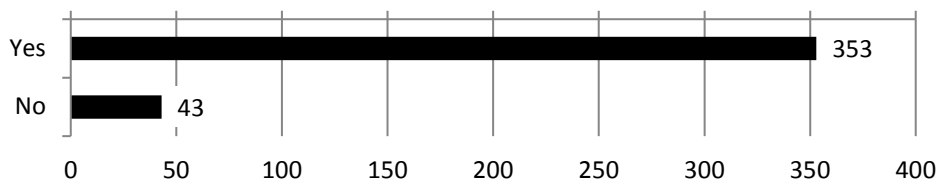
We Receive Communications (I.E. Inspection Reports, Certificates) In A Timely Manner.



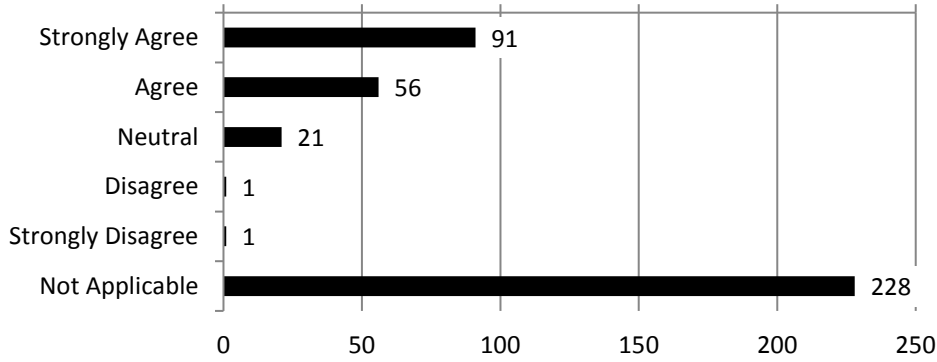
The Commission on Jail Standards Investigates Inmate Complaints in a Fair And Timely Manner.



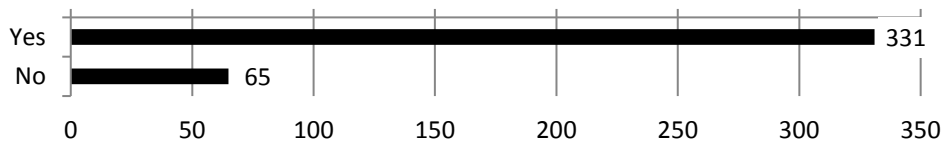
I am aware that the Commission offers Facility Needs Analysis services at no cost to counties.



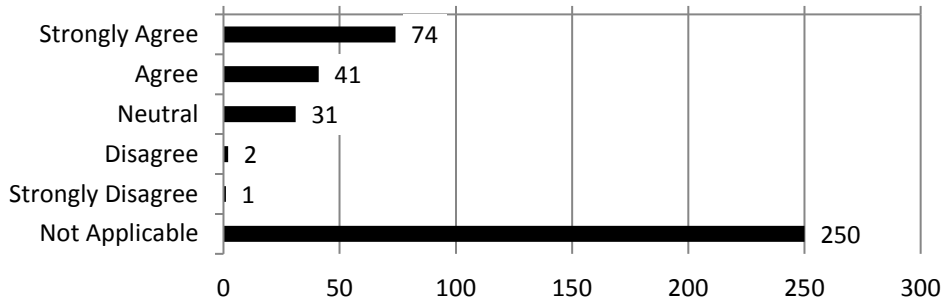
The Facility Needs Analysis Was Helpful With Our Construction Plans.



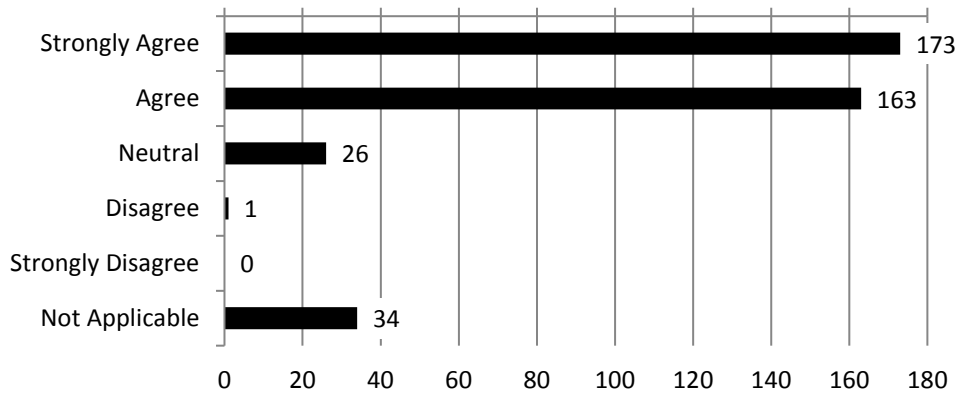
I am aware that the Commission offers Staffing Analysis services at no cost to counties.



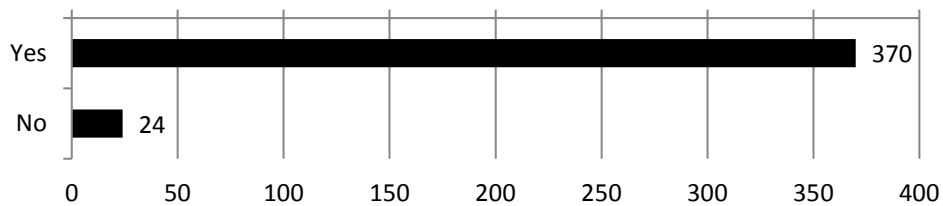
The Staffing Analysis Helped Us to Make Better Decisions Regarding the Staffing of Our Jail.



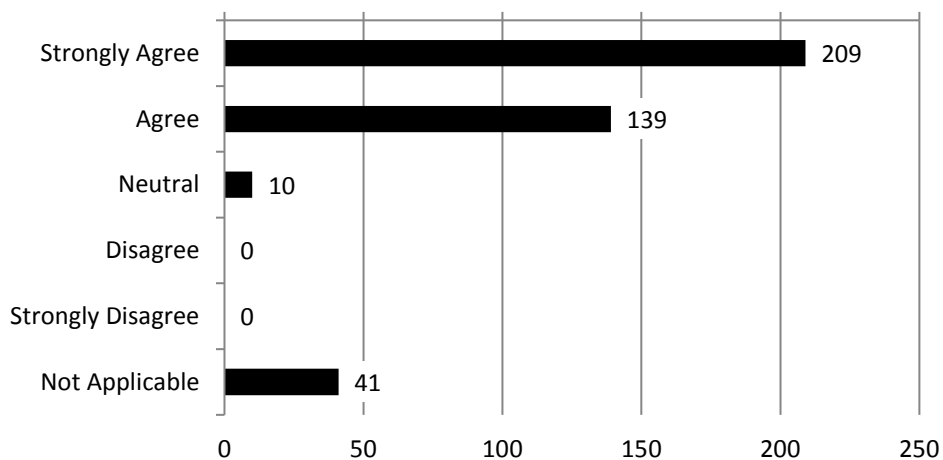
Monthly Population Reports Are Reasonably Easy to Compile.



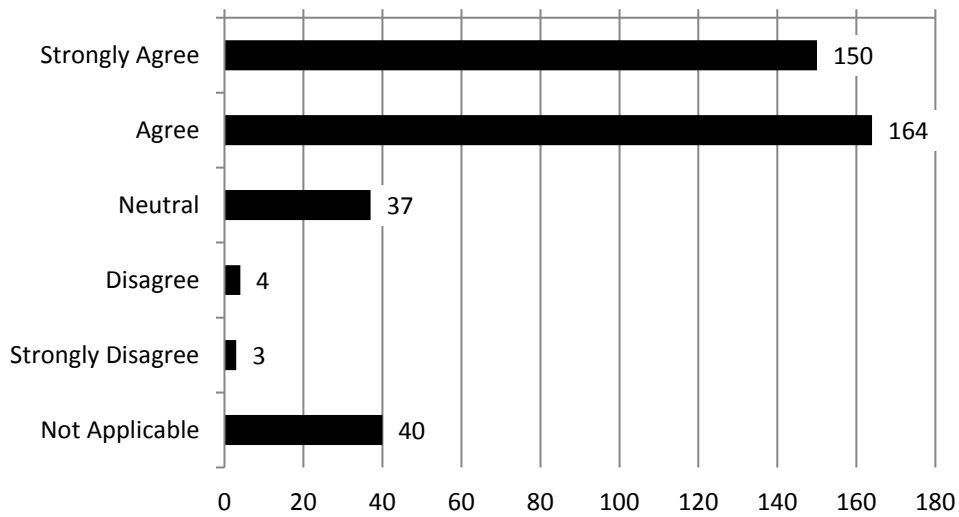
I Am Aware That The Commission Offers Free Training to Counties.



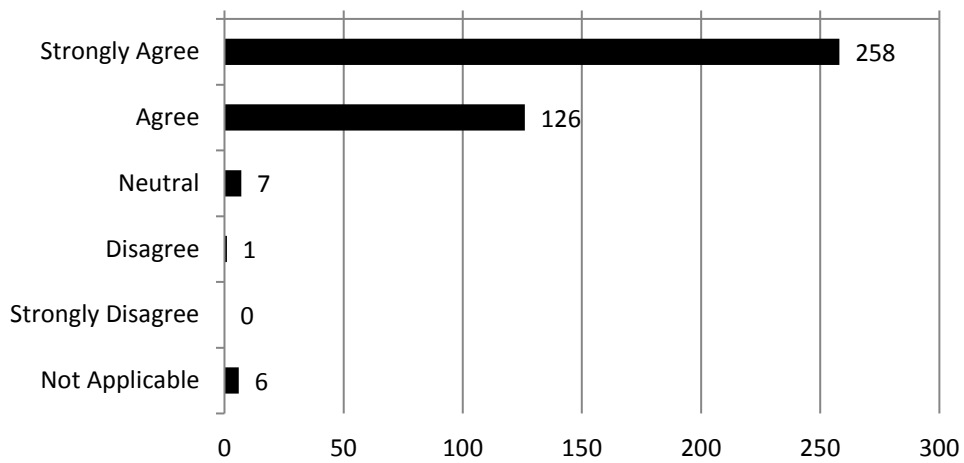
Training Offered By The Commission On Jail Standards Is Helpful And Informative.



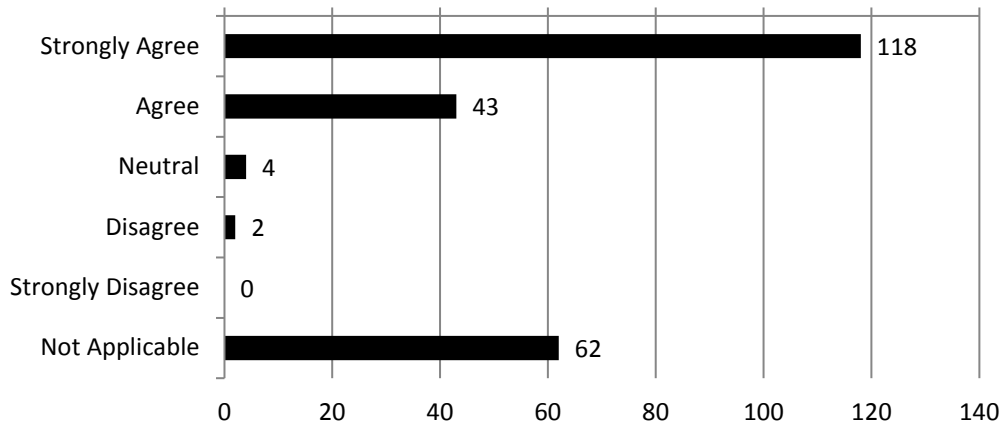
The Commission on Jail Standards' Website is Easy to Navigate



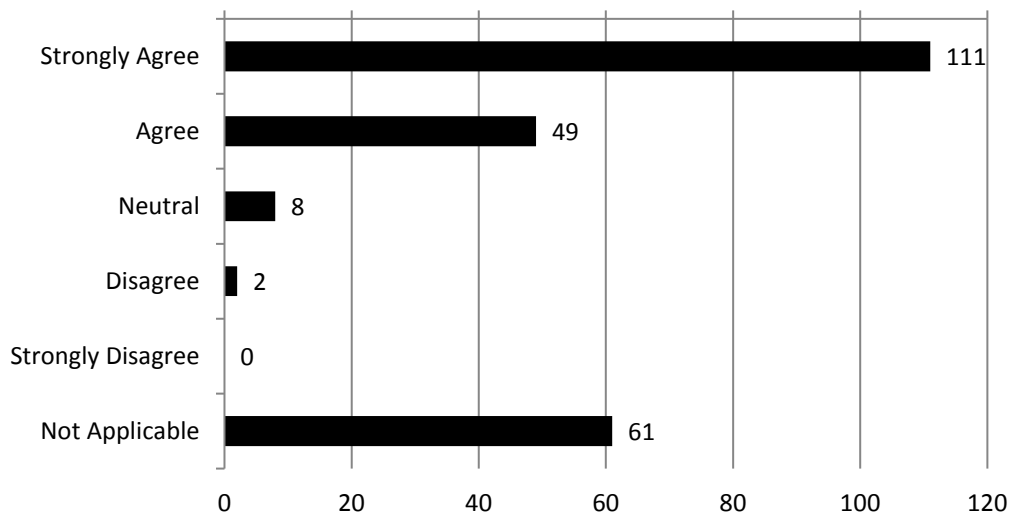
I Am Satisfied With The Customer Service We Receive From the Commission on Jail Standards



The Commission on Jail Standards Staff Are Helpful In Working With Non-compliant Jails



Non-compliant Jails Are Treated Fairly by TCJS.



CUSTOMER COMMENTS

County Judges/Officials

- Always very helpful & positive when I have personally dealt with TCJS staff.
- I am only involved when an inspector comes to inspect our jail and records.
- I just recently took over as County Judge and haven't had a chance to work with the Commission yet.
- As a County Judge, I do not have much contact with the Commission, so I really do not have much of an opinion on this. No suggestions or any criticism.
- Always respectful and informative.
- As a County Judge, I can tell you that working with the jail staff has been a professional and informative experience. You guys are open, transparent, and supportive of our county jail and we appreciate that.
- Sometimes hard to work with. Big counties treated different than small counties.
- I have worked with jail standards for 25 years and have always had excellent working relationships.
- Many of these questions will need to be addressed by Sheriff Richardson.
- Very little response from the sheriff's department when requested and some complaints from some jail staff are not resolved in a timely manner also not helping the jail with sterilization supplies.
- Commission has been helpful.
- It has been pretty straight forward.
- Keep up your good work.
- Very positive and collaborative working relationship.
- Excellent
- All of my communications with TDJS have been pleasant, informative and results oriented.

Sheriffs

- The Texas Commission on Jail Standards is an excellent regulatory agency. Executive Director Brandon Wood and all of his staff do a great job.
- Never a problem
- We are always appreciative of the Commission's assistance and input to keep us compliant and avoid issues in the future.
- I am pleased with all the staff I have had to communicate with and request assistance.
- Do to you being overwhelmed and maybe understaffed, TCJS is currently unable to offer staffing analysis in a timely manner. The wait list is long.
- The Commission on Jail Standards is one of the more efficiently ran state agencies that I work with on a regular basis. They are definitely customer-service oriented which is something that is lacking with others.
- I have almost always found the members of the Commission to be available and very responsive to questions and/or issues. I appreciate their interest and dedication to assist with questions, issues and problems.
- The majority of the contact with the Commission is made by my Jail Administrator. However,

during my contact I have had no complaints.

- No issues, they usually respond quickly and friendly
- Our county appreciates the working relationship with the Commission to the degree that we are able to contact the Commission and get assistance when needed.
- Every time I have contacted the Commission for any issue or support, they have responded professionally and courteously. I appreciate the open communication lines for support and problem solving.
- We do not operate a jail and contract this service out to surrounding counties. Do not have a lot of contact with jail commission.
- Will and Shannon have been most helpful to us in many ways. We appreciate it very much.
- Have ALWAYS been receptive and responsive to questions
- I believe that the Commission provides outstanding customer service.
- Jail Inspector and commission's staff is very helpful and knowledgeable on the services they provide.
- Proud of our inspector, always helpful.
- No Complaints, very efficient and effective.
- TCJS has been a lifeline helping us all get through the COVID-19 challenge.
- I have always found the Commission to be very helpful and very accommodating when it comes to assisting me or my staff.
- They were very helpful and knowledgeable.
- Everyone at the Jail Commission is very helpful and friendly. I do appreciate that the Jail Commission is in existence to help counties maintain jail facilities and to ensure that the minimum standards are abided by those counties that have a jail facility. Keep up the great work Brandon, Shannon and the rest of the staff.
- I can only compliment the services provided by the TCJS. Throughout my 21 & 1/2 years of service as Sheriff of Grimes County. I have always found the TCJS a grand team partner in my ability to operate my jail properly and to meet and exceed all standards.
- I am convinced that the commission is here to help and will do so however they can.
- More training for jailers is needed
- The Jail Commission has always assisted our Office anytime we have called them. They are very professional and knowledgeable and willing to assist answering questions. It is a great feeling knowing they are there to help out whenever you need them.
- TCJS has been helpful with questions.
- all is well
- I have no issues with the Commission.
- Customer Service Performance has always been exemplary.
- Great group to work with, all around.
- Staff is very helpful. I do feel at times that the Commission is becoming more of a big brother and losing the partner attitude.
- All of my encounters with the Texas Jail Commission have been helpful and targeted on the best practices of jail operations.
- Everything seems to be ok
- Always have quick response to our needs
- Monthly Reports need attention.

Jail Administrator

- Great
- No complaints!
- When I needed it, it was excellent.
- Very helpful and understanding on any Jail problems or paperwork. Keep up the good work.
- I have never had any problems with our inspector Shane. He is no longer with department. Looking forward to meeting our new inspector.
- The receptionist is always extremely professional and very pleasant. Everyone always responds to emails or phone calls in a timely manner and is helpful with the information that they provide. I always enjoy visiting with everybody at TCJS. They all have been where we are and provide direction based upon regulations as well as experience.
- They did me good on everything I need.
- Galveston County has a long history that consist of a great working relationship with past and current TCJS staff members and look for to building on top of what we've established. thank you for all your help and guidance.
- Capt. K. Walker: I have been in Law Enforcement many years and the opinions and fact findings with my inspector has always made decision making easy.
- The last inspection was of some concern because it appeared that some of the items brought up were very subjective, somewhat unfair and not based on clear TCJS rules or guidelines.
- This must be followed with a huge "atta boy" on how the staff and inspector handled and assisted with the recent covid-19 change in our booking area and procedures. Director Wood, Inspector Phariss and the staff were great in their rapid assistance in making this happen in record time with very helpful input.
- I have not had any problems when contacting Jail Standards.
- I feel overall a good job is done.
- Any time I've called for assistance I was promptly replied too with professional service. I have always been treated professionally no matter the situation. I enjoy working with TCJS.
- I have never had any problems getting answers to questions and have enjoyed the experience of my jail inspections. TCJS and our inspector's through the years have always been helpful.
- Give prior notice of jail inspection
- My inspector is very helpful and informative.
- Appear to always be available by phone or email.
- The Commission has always been very responsive with TCSO.
- More training
- They are prompt with their responses.
- Any question we have ever had has been answered immediately.
- The only thing we have encountered is the inspectors don't always read things the same way as far inspections and staffing levels.
- Changes to website difficult to navigate.
- I have always been given good advice and information from everyone with the Jail Commission.
- The Commission Meeting agenda and minutes are not updated routinely. I can't always make the meetings would like to have the ability to read the agendas and minutes.
- The Commission on Jail Standards staff have been very responsive, helpful and professional. The TA memos provided are also very informative.

- At some point, TCJS needs to add more staff to help jails with compliance issues and minimize liability. Training is hard to get at times, and I feel jails should be inspected more than once a year to help reduce our liability and uncover problems we miss on a day to day basis. Often times, it is hard to keep up with the constant changes coming out. The last inspection, our inspector outlined in person some of the current changes which made it easier to understand what was being asked of us.
- I have always had good experiences with the Commission.
- Outstanding group of professionals, always willing to assist and provide insight as needed.
- We have always found the Commission to be very helpful and understanding with any issues we might have.
- No issues. Friendly and provide straight forward information upon request.
- Provide training calendars
- Every time we call looking for answers to our questions, they always direct us in the right direction.
- Every experience I have had was very helpful!
- I have been satisfied with the services provided me by the commission.
- Will Phariss has been extremely helpful to me and my facility.
- The Technical Assistance memos are a great tool to keep jails informed with the changes in laws, procedures and mandates.
- I always received assistance from everyone at the commission with a rapid response.
- The entire team is a great resource.
- Point of note*: We recently underwent construction. The construction inspectors were helpful during the ENTIRE process.
- Any encounter via phone or email has helped in any concerns or problem solving.
- Customer service with TCJS has always been helpful.
- Commission is helpful any assistance that we need
- No problems or complaints
- None. No complaints on our behalf.
- Employees of the Jail Commission are always courteous and knowledgeable. I have no hesitation with contacting the Jail Commission.
- The staff is very helpful with providing information and assistance needed.
- Anytime I have called the Commission on Jail Standards they have always went out of their way to help me out.
- Every time I have contacted the Commission, I have received fast, friendly service.
- All employees at the Commission have been polite, professional and helpful when we contact them.
- Always courteous and helpful in every way. No complaints.
- Very helpful and informative.
- I have had no problems so far. I've only been the administrator for 22 days now, but was a lieutenant for 2 years. I had constant contact with the previous jail administrator and saw he speak to the commission on many occasions and have received e-mails from her.
- on my opinion they're doing a great job
- The Commission is easy to contact and communicate with. Everyone is responsive, knowledgeable, and helpful.
- Website not user friendly

- I've worked with TCJS for over 20 years. They've always been helpful and understanding. I appreciate all they do to keep my county jail in compliance.
- JS has always made themselves available for guidance and support of any issues.
- Guidance has been provided in a timely manner on issues I have addressed with the Commission.
- Jason is very reasonable, helpful and respectful. If he doesn't know the answer to something, he will call and find out and call you back and let you know almost immediately.
- Jail commission staff have been great for me and my agency
- Always friendly and eager to help
- It's great to work with you all. Jason is our inspector and he is always there for us.
- Deputy Director Herklotz, is the definition of a wealth of knowledge and customer service. He is always helpful and responsive to our counties needs for direction and guidance. He leads his team from the front, and it has always shown in the past and current people he sends out in the field to work with our Sheriff Departments across the state.
- When TCJS staff responds back to complainants, they will send me a copy. That is oftentimes several weeks before I see the results of that investigation. This needs to happen more quickly in the event a correction needs to be made on the jail side.
- Always extremely helpful and professional!
- Had to speak with new inspector/ very helpful
- Our questions and concerns have always been answered on a timely manner. Agency very satisfied.
- Jennifer Shumake our inspector is very helpful as is William Pharris
- They always follow through with their assistance and give us valuable in-sight to whatever the need is.
- My first year as jail administrator and TCJS was very helpful in my many questions.
- They are always very helpful, informative, and available.
- My TCJS inspector and TCJS office personnel have been very helpful in helping myself and staff with any and all questions or concerns.
- No improvement needed at this time
- No improvement needed
- My interactions with TCJS staff have been pleasant.
- I am very satisfied

Jailer

I appreciate the training, I wish it was local more often.

Other

- The staff, to include executive leadership, are always available to provide requested assistance and guidance when requested.
- TCJS staff is always very knowledgeable and courteous in our interactions.