

# New generation of jails

[Family](#)



New generation jails “ seek to manage human behavior positively, consistently and fairly.” (Sullivan, 2007, “ Major changes”)Goals include maximizing the interaction between the staff and prisoners, subjecting the latter to more direct and continuous supervision, and enhancing safety for both parties, by making the jail more manageable and organized. The design is based on a philosophy that accused or convicted offenders must be treated in a humane manner while being incarcerated. (Allen et. al, 2007, p. 101)

New generation jails are constructed using a podular design, where housing areas are divided into smaller and more manageable pods or units. A typical unit contains single occupancy cells to avoid triggering aggressiveness among inmates that may occur when they share a cell. Each unit has a secure control booth where the staff can directly and constantly observe and supervise inmate activity. (Nelson, 1998, “ New Generation Jails”) The houses are designed to imitate a “ normalized environment,” where inmates can enjoy visiting, programming, recreation, and related activities.

Carpeting, wood, upholstered furnishings, paint color, and considerable natural light are incorporated into the housing unit to encourage better moods and interaction. Educational facilities, telephones, exercise machines and other recreational equipment are also available. Unlike the traditional prison cell which contained only a bunk, faucet and toilet, cells now have a desk and seat, running water, intercoms, and large windows. (Law Library, 2007, “ Jail structure and design characteristics”)

So far, assessment of new generation jails have shown that they help alleviate problems of tension and violence, noise inside the prison, idleness,

vandalism, discipline and jail costs. Staff morale, inmate control, and communication/relaying of information have also greatly improved.

(Corrections Center of Northwest Ohio, 2007, “ The New Generation Direct Supervision Jail.”) New generation jails have been successful in alleviating and minimizing future problems, thanks to the combination of a dedicated and satisfied supervision staff and new facility designs.

## References

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