

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/news/failing-grades-aramark-report-card>

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With school starting back up, there is one set of report cards already coming out. The state of Ohio should think twice before signing off on the grades that Aramark Correctional Services is bringing home.

A [recent report](#) found that Aramark failed to meet contract compliance scores at seven of the twenty-six state prison facilities where it is currently providing food service. Aramark has already racked up \$272,300 in fines for contract violations from the state of Ohio since last fall. Now the problems in this current report are telling the same story.

Maggots, mice, dirty serving areas, and insufficient supplies have become common features at these facilities. Inmates have [dumped their lunches in protest](#) and are [relying more on prison commissaries](#) to piece meals together.

Food shortages have created tense situations in an already strained prison atmosphere, made worse by insufficient staffing by Aramark. This puts additional strain on the prison staff. When state workers must step in where the company falls short, this extra time and effort are subsidizing Aramark's contract.

While [the state continues to point toward](#) aggressive and unprecedented monitoring of Aramark, there is little evidence that changes are on the horizon. This company is in the business of turning profits, which trickle down to corners cut and services squeezed to the breaking point. Other states have already cut ties with Aramark over these same failures.

Failing grades at a quarter of Ohio prisons illustrate a pattern in the state's privatization experiment. Promising more monitoring and oversight, the state is effectively propping up this contract for private profits with public dollars. And while Ohio prisons remain dangerously overcrowded, Aramark's practices take this situation from bad to worse.

It's time that the state gets smart to the pattern, before it learns a lesson the hard way.

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