

Mrs. Julie Jones, Regional Director, General Counsel

This is being written and sent to the above mentioned in hopes that changes can begin and common sense will prevail.

We "inmates" are constantly told that lack of money is the reason for so many of our programs being removed, and/or "security risk" to explain the denial of things considered recreational.

In over 25 years of incarceration, I've never seen the level of violence as high and widespread as it is now. The armed assaults, inmate deaths, inmate on staff, staff on inmate, is unprecedented. How is this happening?

I'll explain.

The policy, rule, and procedure branch of DOC is not on these compounds except for brief walk through in which the institution prepares by painting buildings, cutting grass, and making sure that no inmates "talk" to Tallahassee.

#1 mistake: There's no legit screening process for the separation of rival gangs. Florida DOC knowingly puts Bloods and Crips on the same compound and the housing sergeant puts them on the same side of dorms. When you attempt to explain to housing why this wrong, they get an attitude. The cost of life flights, trips to the hospitals, outside charges that are a direct result of rival gang violence are huge expenditures for a system that always is worried about saving money. Of even more importance to this issue, the security of staff and inmates who become collateral damage when rival gang members fight and stab and others have to respond.

Remedy: Segregate rival gangs.

The removal of weights: the best stress reliever inmates have were removed. The argument being that they can be used as weapons and inmates were getting big.

A lock in a sock, rocks off the ground, cans of soda out of the canteen, and lockers are all potential weapons. Are those going to be removed? The level of violence and murders has increased since the removal of weights as evidenced by DOC own records. Again, they're the best stress relievers we had. Do the math.

Remedy: Bring back weights.

No showers in population until after 4pm, statewide.

Your dorm is told to get ready for recreation at 9am. One hundred grown men go to rec in August, spend 2 hours in over 90-degree temperature, running, playing basketball. At 11am, rec is over and 100 grown men go back to the dorm. No one is allowed to shower. You are expected to go to lunch with a group of people wearing sweaty clothes, come back, and be trapped in the dorm for 4 more hours with 100 filthy dudes in 90-degree weather. Not even addressing the unsanitary aspects of this, short tempers and heat rashes. This rule makes no sense. DOC should allow and encourage showering after recreation.

Remedy: Statewide rule change.

TVs remaining off until 4pm.

TV is a babysitter. If inmates are in the dayroom watching TV, they're not in the cell fighting, making knives, etc. Second, there are inmates who work at night in medical and chow hall. The only time they can watch TV is during the day. If the inmates are in the dorm with nothing else to do or because of weather, the TV is something that will keep them occupied.

Remedy: Address this issue appropriately.

The next issue is politically incorrect. Regardless, it needs to be addressed.

Over 100,000 inmates in the system. Many are sexual predators with STDs. DOC removed all sex books, magazines, pictures, and going so far as to remove lingerie and bikini catalogs, claiming security issues and increase in recidivism.

DOC basically removed all avenues of feminine imagery except female staff!

Since said removal of material, the explosion of lewd and lascivious and establishing relationship DRs reached such ridiculous amounts that laws were created to prosecute inmates and send them to "Jimmy Rice," to no avail. The L&L DRs have increased every year. So has assaults on female staff.

Simultaneously, there's a dramatic increase in homosexuality and prison rapes to the extent that PREA was instituted. But again, what about the costs associated with all other issues mentioned? Treatment of STDs increased because of homosexuality, which increased with removal of said material. There's no denying the obvious. The real security risk began with the removal of material. Do the math. Inmates exposing themselves to female staff and similar situations have DOC trying everything from outside charges to boxers with no fly. DOC putting females in male prisons is asking for trouble to begin with, but then to take the magazines and books is ridiculous.

Remedy: All material mentioned.

There's no color pens, pencils, art supplies, no hobby crafts, woodshop, leather shop, etc.—even if inmates can pay for it. If an idle mind is the devil's playground, how much more the inmate's mind? Common theme here.

Take weights

Take adult reading material

Take all art, craft, and hobby supplies

Put inmates in the dorm all day, no TV, no showers until 4pm, and put them in the same dorm with rival gang members. Then act surprised when murders and assaults are on the rise. DOC finally decided to remove razors. How many "slicings" did it take before Tallahassee figured that one out?

These are just some of the issues that should be addressed. It would save money, increase security, and boost morale.

DOC should want inmates drawing, painting, learning, and doing positive things instead of destructive things. In order for that to happen DOC needs to practice preventative protocols rather than reactive discipline, taking and taking. Keeping inmates trapped in a dorm all day with nothing to do and the violence is increasing, gang violence is increasing, assaults on staff are increasing. The taking thing was tried and resulted in Attica.

A huge part of DOC is "lifers." We wake up every day and see dudes getting high on K2, drinking wine, and having sex with each other. 2-3 stabbing deaths a year, and nothing but more of the same. Staff members are at their wits end because they are told to enforce rules that make no sense and cause friction between staff and inmates. Would you want to have to go into a dorm full of rival gang members in 90-degree temps and explain to them they have to remain in hot, sweaty cloths all day with no TV and no showers until 4pm?

The body cools itself as sweat evaporates. DOC has this ridiculous rule of "Class B" in which T-shirts must be worn, even on CM. You're causing inmates to be hot, sweaty, and miserable which leads to poor attitudes and disciplinary problems. Why would Tallahassee create such a rule? If inmates are on CM or in a cell, who cares if their T-shirt is on? Prime example of what I'm referring to. It causes problems between staff and inmates. DOC should know better.

Inmates on CM are not allowed to purchase personal clothing. No shoes, socks, etc. All their whites come from DOC. If money is a factor in decisions, doesn't common sense dictate that it would save money if inmates purchased their own clothing? Second, they would be less likely to use their personal clothing to flood toilets, make fishing lines, etc. Almost 5,000 inmates on CM, the bulk of whom would purchase their own clothing. This would save tens of thousands annually.

On a similar note, why would DOC not take advantage of the opportunity to operate the canteen and package themselves instead of allowing Trinity, Access, and Union Supply to make millions in profits? Common sense should dictate that such profits would help DOC's cause and yet they outsource everything?

Do the math.

I don't smoke. Most inmates do. And continue to do so regardless of tobacco not being sold. Overnight, the DOC created a billion-dollar black market that officers use to generate more money than their paychecks.

In every institution in the state, inmates can and do purchase packs of cigarettes for \$50-\$100 a pack from staff, who then realize that if cigarettes are that easy, why not cell phones for \$500-\$700. At some institutions, like Martin or Dade, they find 15-20 cell phones, 200 pack of cigarettes a week and don't even process the paperwork because they don't want central office to find out. There are inmates who get caught with 2-3 phones in a 6-month period and do only 20-30 days DC because the institution would have almost no inmates on the pound if they put people on CM for phones. Again, the "take" mentality created a problem. I can't calculate the officers asked to resign for introduction, rather than be arrested or fired. And by doing so, keep central office in the blind regarding the corruption statewide that truly began with the removal of tobacco. The so-called financial savings of health related costs due to smoking is a pipe dream, because everybody still smokes!

Do the math.

In closing, I'll say this. The violence is increasing statewide. The amounts of Buck 50s which are facial lacerations are now the norm. Female staff are being assaulted more often. K2, molly, Roxy, Xanax are flooding every compound. Institutions are putting inmates back on the pound after they do 60 days on DC for armed assaults because CM is full and they don't want central office to be aware of how out of control their compounds are. I've enclosed a first-hand account that you can verify. It is laid out step by step, showing you what true deliberate indifference is and unfortunately, what has become standard operating procedure at places such as ACI.

If nothing else, I hope that what you read gives you a perspective that your underlings will not. When surrounded by "yes men," you're not in touch with the masses you rule over. And when the masses revolt and chaos reigns, there are no answers from the yes men. I am the voice of many. There can be positive change. There can be reductions in violence, vice, and costs, but it must start from Tallahassee. If general counsel and rule makers were in a cell in 95-degree temps, they would remove their shirts to cool down. Inmates are no different.

Inmates are in prison because we broke laws and rules. Most are lifelong drug addicts. The concept that they will change or be rehabilitated is not realistic. Prison has become a human warehouse. Why cause more problems, create a dangerous environment, and expose staff and inmates to possible injury when it can be avoided?

Mark my words, I live here. I listen. I see. Unless there is change, bad things, riots and deaths will increase dramatically. Hopefully, this will help you to be proactive and positive change will happen.

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