

5-30-21

To whom,

One thing, prison is a terrible place to be Covid or not. However, this Covid pandemic has made life in prison far more difficult than you can imagine. Of course different prisons are ran differently which in itself is a hardship. Much depends on the facility, each with different rules and resources available for inmate use. Recently I transferred from Newark (NSP) to Bridgeton (SUSP) because I wished to be closer to home for visit. Once here I quickly found all communication from here was difficult. Mostly because administrative procedures do not allow inmates time enough to use the few phones and kiosks available. No US Mail boxes exist as in other facilities, the kiosk is slow and unoperable a lot as well as less time for what they call shower, rec, phone or kiosk. Visits have begun on a limited, restricted basis but after calling 3-5 times my sister was unable to get an appointment. Programs, Schools + jobs here are also affected by Covid. Many programs and school were put on hold, jobs not needed. As of the soft opening on May 1 programs + schools (some) have restarted at 1/3 capacity. I applied for jobs and was offered one in ECU but needed medical clearance, which I could not get because the persons that

did TB testing are not working, the Covid pandemic took facility jobs evidently. Compounding my troubles at the Bridgeton complex is that they leave ALL the lights, cells, etc., ON all the time. Not only is it hard to sleep but a tremendous waste of tax payer dollars. The "directv" TV package they have here, as compared to Trenton (97 channels) Newark (77 channels) is also bad. Especially when confined to a cell 22 hours a day. Although DOC food is near the same I find it far worse in Bridgeton. Preparation and distribution are the blame. I will be better able to see how Covid has influenced life here when things return to normal, if ever. One thing is sure, in prison one does NOT LIVE one merely exists. Plus, and of note, when "ONE" is imprisoned, his family, friends and community are also punished.

Truly,  
William Lipe