

LIFE IN PRISON

In 2008 I was convicted of 1st degree murder and sentenced to life without the possibility of parole. I am a 41 year old, African American, father, family oriented man and a Published author.

In my first few years I was so focused on my legal work that I really didn't have time to look around at the discrimination or racial issues I now see. Though, I have saw and heard things to a small degree, these days some of the officers put on a front but really are racist in nature. Just the other day a black officer was walked out because she did not want to look down upon inmates just because they were arrested or not wearing a uniform. Instead she tried to understand and build a bridge that wasn't crossing any lines. However, those whom have been here had other ideas and decided she was fraternizing. She was walked off the premises and fired. As it stands, there is not many African Americans at this facility. I can recall another situation that occurred just days ago. As I mentioned I'm a chemical worker so it is my job along with another individual to keep track of all the supplies, brooms, mops, buckets, toilet & deck brushes, spray bottles and so forth. After one of the officers did his first check and before it was time for his shift to end, one of the handles had splintered while a worker was using it. In order to get a new one we have to turn it in and let the proper authority know what's wrong. The officer who I will

not disclosed is an African American Trainee. He's still on probation so any infraction may lead to him being reprimanded or even terminated. The equipment was turned over to the Sergeant working the shift. But, the trainee was doing his round to make sure nothing was occurring in any of the cells. Therefore, he did not see when this sergeant took the mop handle out into the sergeants office. The Sgt. (who will be referred to from here after as (Sgt.)) told another inmate not to tell the trainee or the other chemical worker.

First and foremost I am a man of integrity, I have seen a lot of things occur so there was no way I was about to partake or stand by and let either the officer, or my co-worker get set up on my watch. I let the other inmate know to do a inventory to bring it to her the sgt.'s attention, and told the African American, trainee officer that the Sgt. had took the mop handle. While I was telling him this, the Sgt. walked up behind me and I told the Sgt. that I told him you took the mop handle when he asked me if I had seen it. If you could have saw the Sgt.'s facial expression... she had cold, evil eyes, if looks could kill I may have dropped dead. The Sgt. told this officer they didn't know what I was talking about but I had done my part. I can't recall if it was the same or next day when this officer was called out into the Sgt. office with another ranking figure. About what I do not know. The thing is, if you want to teach someone, you do not set them up to fail or lose their job. Most of the African Americans that come here do not stay long for one

reason or another. There's always a power struggle. Some of these officers treat the men like human beings, others try to hide their dislike though it comes out. There's a lot more that we're, I'm not privy to. Some of these officers confide in us because if they speak with other staff they'll go back and repeat what was said. Even if it were to get clarity on how a certain Sgt. or staff member may work, their angles, how they may run things because different Sgt.'s run their area a certain way. The second shift runs totally different to a degree from the third shift which causes some of the problems. In order for things to run smooth the officers have to have some form of communication and relationship to make things run smooth. If not things would be chaotic. Some inmates help these new officers out more than their coworkers. What I mean by that, running a place like this is suppose to be a joint effort. The correctional officers deal with us on the housing units on the daily basis so they should have some input when it comes to things that effect them and us. Now this is a very important issue dealing with Covid-19 and trying to prevent the spread.

COVID-19

From the beginning of this pandemic nothing has made any sense to the way we have been locked down, fed in our cells, which it started out on the housing unit. But that's not the wild factor. The wild factor is this, they have put restraints on us every which way. If there is not cases on our housing units why keep us

locked down for 23 hrs & 15 minutes? Only 8 men out at a time. If we have these on sight test that they "Suppose" to give these parole violators, which they continue to accept because no other prison wanted to deal with it since they were coming from the county, or straight from the street, why can't they give our family these very same test?

If an inmate has to go out to the hospital, he's quarantined for 14 days. The officer goes back to whatever block or post he was on, either the next shift or day. Why aren't they quarantined. After all they did go to the same hospital, came into contact with the same people and doctors but now they are allowed back into a populated area where the inmates could be infected. If they want to stop or prevent any spread they need to take these same precautions that they put on us. If they are short handed I understand to a degree. If an officer goes on a hospital run there is no reason why he should work a housing unit until his covid test comes back negative. After all, the inmate is quarantined for (14) days. Another great concern is the RHU (the hole).

Solitary Confinement

Back in July or August, maybe before then, Coal Township begin accepting Parole Violators, this is something they had never done before in such large numbers. Now this Coal Township is one of, if not the only state prison where violators are processed at. I believe no other prison wanted to deal with such a big load when

Covid is really the biggest problem in the world has had in years. The problem lies in the fact that the air here is circulated, so if I'm in the (RHU) and a parole violator is in the vent (in the cell next door or down stairs) there's a great chance many will be infected or some may have been already because of this. If it gets worse, in beginning these violators were being put on the same housing unit in population (although they were quarantined for (14) days, with others that had been away for years. Again, the air is circulated so it doesn't matter if their quarantined. Here's an example, I can clean my cell from top to bottom early in the morning, by the time night falls, even with the small passage in between the floor and door clogged up, my cell will still be dusty because of the circulated system. I know there is nothing we can do to change the air system but these people need to stop thinking with dollar signs and greed while they put not only the inmates at risk but the officers. Most of the higher ups do not even walk around on the regular like they use to. I mean you see some of the head figures every once in a while. This to me shows the lack of belief in the measures they have taken to protect all. If they follow the steps properly and stop putting these boundaries and follow the necessary steps themselves the spread of this deadly disease in the confines of these walls would be to a minimum or not at all. The officers and staff are allowed to go home, go where ever they feel and when they come back the only thing they get is a temperature scan. What happened to these officers having to stay on the premises? Or getting a covid test before they return? Is

in fact a electronic thermometer enough? If it's good for them to only get a temperature check, why isn't it good enough for our families who we haven't seen in almost a year, besides a zoom video visit? Our families should be able to have their temperature checked, visitors should be limited and social distanced, or they should be able to show a recent negative Covid test.

Another major issues is: The CALL BUTTON inside the cells. There has been times I have hit the button and no one has come to see what was wrong during their round and basically walked right by without checking. If I hit the button, the computer panel lights up and my cell blinks and turns red but these officers see it and do not come to check. Anyone one of us could have a serious medical problem, heart attack, seizure or anything. How would they know if they do not follow the rules? The only thing they will know is that there's another dead body on their hands and the first thing they try to say is, they probably overdosed on k2. I've seen several people die here because of the lack of care, training or plain ol' just don't care. We have to do better, at the end of the day we are still human beings who deserve to be treated as such. Medical is a joke, where they want to handle most issues by giving you Motrin for everything. Or saying they do not see anything wrong, even if the problem you have has been on going for years. For a long I've had this pain on my left side just above my waist, it's not a consistent issue, it comes and goes. Everytime I go to medical they continue to

tell me I'm not passing my bowels properly or there's a build up. Once every two weeks I use laxative to help clean me out. However this problem hasn't went away. Not long ago, I saw medical because my right leg was numb, there was a pulsating feeling that went from my ankle to my upper thigh. They x-rayed my foot and gave me some medication and never recalled to x-ray my leg where the problem was. And if you let them sometimes they will keep charging you for a pre-existing issue. I'm no expert or doctor but if there was a serious problem where you were prescribed medication or there was some form of illness or pain, there should always be a follow up. Some people have the option to get these things really looked at thoroughly by a doctor on the street, however us lifers has to do with so many un-professional staff when it comes to these doctors. I pray that nothing life threatening never occurs because I 'd hate to see the end results. This is just the first of a few topics that I plan to forward. I simply wanted to introduce myself and give a few of my thoughts. Thank your for your time and consideration.