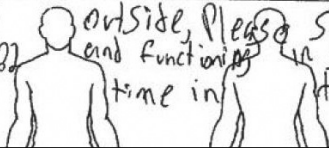
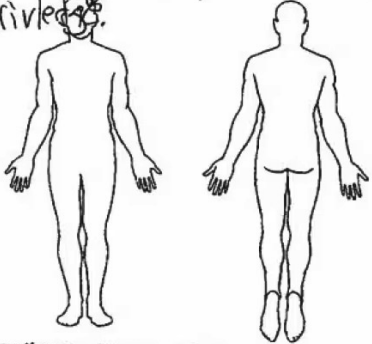


Class Action! News

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| Health Services Request | | PHN 250-922-4920 | Offender# 2020584 |
| Centre ERL | Date Completed (yyyy-Mon-dd) 2020/11/14 | Unit M3 | Patient Signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
| Is the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Physical <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health/Addiction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medication <input type="checkbox"/> Dental <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | | |
| Please tell us about the problem I'm having a lot of trouble refraining from using drugs in here, and I'm scared I'm gonna lose my life when I get outside, back around even more pressure to use. I've overdosed 16 times and I really want to leave this life behind. I was | | | |
| When did the problem start? on Suboxone on the outside, please start me on it again, I used to be on it and functioning in society, refraining from drugs for the first time in too long. | | | |
| Mark problem area below  | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--------------|---|
| Health Services Request | | PHN _____ | Offender# 202058 |
| Centre ERC | Date Completed (yyyy-Mon-dd) 2021/01/01 | Unit 1C | Patient Signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
| Is the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Physical <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mental Health/Addiction <input type="checkbox"/> Medication <input type="checkbox"/> Dental <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | | |
| Please tell us about the problem I'm sorry to bug, I know I'm on the waiting list, but I've been here 4 months and soon I'll be back on the streets, surrounded by drugs & hopeless addicts. | | | |
| When did the problem start? 5 years ago, please let me start my suboxone treatment. | | | |
| Mark problem area below I won't abuse this privilege. | | | |
|  | | | |
| Health practitioners will use the information you have provided to determine appropriate care and to prioritize the care. | | | |
| For Office Use Only | | | |

Issue #39 ~ Fall 2025

< Editor's Note >

It is Fall & Issue #39 of 'Class Action News'. This zine is by & for the 'Prisoner Class' on Treaty Lands with Canada.



In every Issue we provide a safe space for creative expression, informative news & support resources. These zines feature art, poetry, stories, news, observations, concerns, & anything of sincere value to share.

Health & Harm Reduction info will always be provided, of course - Yes, Do Be Safe!

Quality & Quantity:

Items printed are those that are common for diverse readers, so no religious items please.

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Writings: only short poems, news, stories, ... Items selected are those that fit nicely & allow space for others (1/2 page = 325 words max).

For author protection, letters & story credits will all be 'Anonymous' unless requested.

'Class Action News' is published 4 times a year & is free for prisoners in Canada. If you are on the outside or an organization, please do consider a donation. It really, really does help to get this inside!

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Cover: Timothy 'TJ' McConnell



< Donors for this Issue >

Very special thanks out to: She !

Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms

- The right of life, liberty and security of person (Section 7).
- The right not to be arbitrarily detained (Section 9).
- The right not to be subjected to cruel and unusual punishment (Section 12).
- The right to be equal before and under the law (Section 15).

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≈ 'Dish With One Spoon' Treaty ≈

A month-long stay:
in a hospital can cost more than \$13,500;
in a prison, more than \$4,000;
in a shelter, more than \$2,000;
in supportive housing, just \$600.

Inadequate care at Edmonton jail has inmates 'falling through the cracks,' inquiry finds

Canada's largest jail is again facing calls to improve mental health care for inmates following an investigation into the death of a 23-year-old man who died by suicide inside his cell. A fatality inquiry into the death of Timothy "TJ" McConnell found that mental health and addictions services at the Edmonton Remand Centre are inadequate to meet the complex demands of its prisoner population, allowing some inmates to "fall through the cracks."

McConnell, who died on Jan. 11, 2021, had repeatedly asked for medical intervention to help him with pain, addiction issues and mental illness.

His requests for treatment went unmet in the weeks before he took his own life, according to the inquiry report written by Justice Oluwbenga Shoyele.

Shoyele is calling for changes at the remand centre, including the establishment of a specialized clinic that would function like a psychiatric unit at a hospital and offer services around the clock.

The report also included recommendations that came directly from the testimony of McConnell's mother, Lana Greene. She called for increased mental health staffing, the hiring of a full-time psychiatrist, and stringent protocols to monitor inmates confined to segregation.

Greene said there will be no justice for her son but feels vindicated that her calls for reform were heard.

"This isn't just about my son. This isn't about just one person."

String of inmate deaths

The Edmonton jail, operated by the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General, has repeatedly faced criticism for how it cares for the mental health needs of men in its custody.

Shoyele's report is the latest to paint a dire picture of the facility's psychiatric and addictions programs. A string of deaths inside the remand centre - where people can be housed for years awaiting trial - have been the subject of other provincial inquiries.

Last December, two inmates died within two days, bringing the total number of fatalities recorded at the jail in 2024 to six.

The jail serves a population of more than 1,500 inmates, many of whom have severe mental health issues and require more medical and addictions care than is currently available. Its three clinics are "packed to the brim" and susceptible to overcrowding, Shoyele wrote in his report.

A key challenge is recruiting forensic psychiatrists trained to work in correctional facilities, wrote Shoyele, a judge at the Alberta Court of Justice.

"The current system is overwhelmed because it faces limitations in terms of staffing and resources, leading to long wait times and inadequate care, with the potential for some inmates who are not as acutely unwell to fall through the cracks."

Services are spotty with clinics operating with limited hours and constrained staffing. The result is ballooning caseloads and a medical system pushed past its capacity, Shoyele found.

A hospital-grade clinic, with a full-time forensic psychiatrist available 24/7, is necessary to serve the population, Shoyele said. Such a clinic would expedite care, improve screening and result in the addition of new medical staff, including nurses, social workers and addictions counsellors.

Shoyele cited the investigation into the death of John Wayne Anderson, who died by suicide in March 2020 less than a month after he unsuccessfully sought help for depression from medical staff at the jail. That inquiry found the size of the mental health team - 16 people, spread out over various shifts - to be "completely inadequate" and that similar deaths were likely unless improvements were made.

Another fatality inquiry, this one into the death of inmate Jonathan Anderson, concluded last September that the jail isn't equipped to deal with the volume of inmates who might be depressed or suicidal.

Greene launched a lawsuit against Alberta Health Services and the province in 2022, alleging negligence in her son's medical care led to his suicide. She said she remains haunted knowing that her son, who had long struggled with mental health issues and substance abuse issues, begged for care that never came.

She hopes the ongoing case will pressure the facility's operators to adopt the recommendations.

'Struggling to live'

Medical documents paint a haunting picture of McConnell's final days.

In the weeks that followed his arrest in Edmonton in September 2020 on theft and shopbreaking charges, he was shuffled between the jail's general population and full segregation.

He submitted multiple request forms to Alberta Health Services staff, complaining of anxiety, depression, physical pain and difficulty sleeping. The tenor and the frequency of his requests became increasingly desperate between the time of his arrest and his death four months later.

On Nov. 14, 2020, he submitted three forms asking to see a psychiatrist and to be provided Suboxone, a medication used to treat symptoms of opioid withdrawal, and the anti-psychotic drug Seroquel.

"I'm having a lot of trouble refraining from using drugs in here, and I'm scared I'm gonna lose my life when I get outside," he wrote.

On Jan. 1, while he was in full segregation, he submitted two more requests.

"I'm sorry to bug," McConnell wrote that day. "I know I'm on the waiting list but I've been here four months and soon I'll be back on the streets.... Please let me start my Suboxone treatment. I won't abuse this privilege."

In another form submitted on Jan. 1, McConnell wrote that he was "having trouble living day to day" without medication.

McConnell met with a nurse at his cell but never saw a psychiatrist, missing the single appointment he had been provided.

He was never prescribed any other medication and remained in segregation, on the waiting list for care, until his death.

Greene said the system at the remand centre leaves vulnerable people trapped in the cycle of addiction and mental illness during what could be a critical window for rehabilitation and healing.

"They're losing their life or they're coming out of there worse because we've missed that opportunity," she said.

"They've fallen through the cracks and come out severely traumatized from what they've gone through in there. Or they don't come out, like my son. And it's devastating."

No change needed, prison officials say
Officials who operate the facility and its mental health clinics testified that care within the prison

is adequate and that McConnell's death did not warrant any changes.

During the inquiry proceedings, which concluded in an Edmonton courtroom last year, lawyers said there was no evidence that policies within the prison contributed to McConnell's death.

Health officials, meanwhile, testified that protocols followed in McConnell's case were in line with current policies.

The inquiry heard that improvements had been made to medical services since McConnell's death, including improved suicide screening for inmates. A lawyer representing Recovery Alberta said the remand centre's Opioid Agonist Therapy program - a treatment for opioid addiction - was better managed to handle the one-to two-month wait faced by inmates at the time.

Recovery Alberta, which has taken over correctional health services within the jail from Alberta Health Services, is reviewing the report's recommendations and will improve measures where possible, an AHS spokesperson said in a statement.

Since 2020, Edmonton Remand Centre staffing was adjusted to allow "enhanced patient education, additional support for patients following release and the ability to connect patients to additional treatment," such as opioid dependency treatment and other recovery-based services, the spokesperson said.

The agency said it has since expanded same-day access to opioid agonist therapy medications including Suboxone in corrections through its Virtual Opioid Dependency Program.

In January 2024, Recovery Alberta updated its suicide screening and assessment policy, forms and tools, as well as standardized training for correctional health services staff, they said.

'They're just warehousing people'

Amy Matychuk, an Alberta-based lawyer specializing in prison law, said the problems with access to and continuity of medical care at the remand centre are chronic and long-standing. Clients awaiting trial there have struggled to access both basic and acute medical care, she said.

"It's this really unfortunate pressure cooker of an environment where no one there seems to feel they have a duty to support and provide services," she told CBC. "There's an attitude that they're just warehousing people, that people are just sort of animals to be warehoused."

She said services within remand centres across Canada have been worsening for decades as tough-on-crime policies undercut funding and eroded any public sympathy for incarcerated people.

There are public safety ramifications if the facility doesn't change how it addresses the needs of its vulnerable population, she said.

"People don't stay in prison forever," she said.

"A culture change is required so that staff at these institutions don't view themselves as just managing a warehouse full of violent people and actually view themselves as [being] part of the rehabilitative process."

For her part, McConnell's mother said it would be "inhumane" for the centre to neglect calls to improve inmate access to mental health care.

If improvements are not made, Greene fears another family will face tragedy.

"My hope is now is that there's follow up, that the recommendations get followed through," Greene said. "So many families are crying out saying these deaths could be prevented."

Wallis Snowdon

CBC News

May 02, 2025

Why are so many federal inmates dying shortly before their release date?

Kendal Lee Campeau spent most of his life in and out of prison. The last time he went in, he never came out.

He was serving a seven-year sentence for assault, escaping lawful custody and possession of illicit substances, among other charges. In 2021, less than two years from his statutory release date, the 31-year-old died of a methadone overdose.

Campeau died at Pacific Institution's Regional Treatment Centre (RTC) in B.C., a specialized prison for inmates with mental health issues. Prior to this, he had been transferred from Saskatchewan Penitentiary's RTC to Kent Institution in Agassiz, B.C.

"Kendal was a very wild child, he got into a lot of trouble with the law," Campeau's sister, Ashley Fontaine, recently told CBC News, while sitting on her plant-filled deck in Garson, Man.

"All he ever said about his experience in jail is that you never want to go there."

Campeau had a little more than a year and a half left on his determinate sentence before he would be eligible for release. It's part of a larger trend of inmates dying with little time left to serve.

A "determinate sentence" means an offender has a fixed date of release, at which point, barring extenuating circumstances, they will be released on parole for the final third of their time.

An indeterminate - or indefinite - sentence is awarded when the court finds the offender to be a "dangerous offender." This means the inmate will still be eligible for full parole after seven years, but if it isn't granted, their time in prison will continue indefinitely.

A package released to CBC in April by the Correctional Service of Canada through a freedom of information request showed the leading cause of death for inmates serving determinate sentences between January 2019 and February 2025 was suicide. Overdoses came a close second.

The data said 45% of inmates who died by suicide on their timed sentence had already served more than three-quarters of it; 39% had served more than half.

Anxiety over release

Of the total number of non-natural deaths - which includes not only suicides and overdoses but homicides and accidents - 72% were inmates serving determinate sentences.

Suicide made up 47% of non-natural deaths for those serving indeterminate sentences.

In other words, inmates with a fixed release date were dying more frequently than those who were inside indefinitely - and close to when they were due to get out.

Four days after CBC received the package of data from the Correctional Service of Canada, CSC sent CBC an email saying it had been sent in error and asked, "If you could please kindly delete the version you received on April 4, it would be most appreciated." Attached to that email was a second version of the package.

While the original contained no redactions, the new one was almost entirely redacted. CBC has decided to share the original findings anyway.

Toronto defence lawyer Alison Craig says release dates can act as a catalyst for already extenuating circumstances.

"Your release date comes, the door opens, they say, 'Goodbye, good luck,' and you're out there

to fend for yourself with no help, no support, no nothing," she told CBC News.

The original CSC data showed that 60% of inmates who committed suicide during their timed sentences had been released and subsequently re-incarcerated in less than three months.

"Many of the people that are sort of on a course of just cycling in and out of custody are people who don't have homes, they're unhouseed. They don't have families. They struggle with addiction or mental health issues," Craig said.

"They want to be productive members of society. Nobody wants to spend their life going in and out of jail. But they also need help ... and they don't ever have it."

'You're just breaking down'

Former inmate Richard Miller says the mental anguish of being incarcerated is often where the pot boils over.

"Emotionally, it's very ... disturbing. Your rights and your dignity is kind of stripped from you. A lot of times, people's mental health, you know, plays a big part in it," he said. "You're just breaking down that you're not worth anything." Miller was incarcerated on and off at multiple federal facilities in Ontario for aggravated assault and subsequent parole violations between 2012 and 2017. He thinks he was moved around because he was speaking out about treatment from officers.

He said a lot of time people bottle up the things they're experiencing because they feel there won't be repercussions for those who have wronged them on the inside. This creates a mindset of demoralization.

"A lot of times guys are in there for a long time. They just give up. 'What am I going out to? I don't have any family.' [They] might have been here 26 years. You know, their family and their loved ones are all gone," Miller said.

In some instances, the anguish comes from feeling a lack of safety, which was the case with Kendal Lee Campeau.

According to his sister, Campeau had long struggled with mental health and managing his well-being, which was only exacerbated by his experience in prison.

Fontaine remembers when Campeau first told her he was being abused in prison. She was on her way to Banff, Alta., for work in September 2019.

"I took a call on my headphones while I was driving, and I was trying not to cry because of the things he was sharing with me over the phone," she said.

When she later had a moment to process it, she was overwhelmed.

"I just curled up into the fetal position. Those kinds of things that you just don't hear. I knew his mental health was deteriorating."

According to Campeau, two correctional officers came to his cell asking him to mop his room. He initially refused, at which point he said the officers urinated in the bucket and proceeded to kick it over. From there, a physical altercation ensued, which Campeau had initiated in retaliation.

Campeau told his sister the officers then rushed him, restrained him and raped him using the mop handle. He tried to take his own life shortly thereafter.

In a statement to CBC, Correctional Service Canada said "CSC manages a complex and diverse inmate population which has a direct impact on the safety and security of institutions... Our staff are trained to handle tough situations safely and professionally, with the goal of avoiding harm to anyone."

'I do not trust a person in a uniform'

Documents obtained by CBC News show Campeau had at one point gone so far as to file his own freedom of information request trying to obtain proof to corroborate an assault he claimed to have experienced.

He also filed multiple grievances, writing things like "I am scared and living in fear for my own personal safety, I have self harmed as a result," and "I wet the bed and pace more than usual. I do not trust a person in a uniform" and "I have attempted to discuss my concerns with the [security intelligence officer] department and several correctional managers."

When Campeau died on Nov. 14, 2021, of an overdose, it was his second one of the day.

In their statement, CSC said, "Inmates are screened for suicide risk when they arrive and throughout their time in custody. Staff who work closely with inmates are trained to respond quickly to self-harming behaviour or to signs of suicide ideation."

After a death in custody, an investigation is mandatory. The investigation report on Campeau's death cites 25 compliance issues. Among them is the fact that upon his arrival at

Kent Institution, a proper risk assessment for suicide and security was not completed, despite the fact that Campeau had a history of suicidal ideation and "self-injurious behaviour."

Evidence in his cell upon his death was also "not preserved and therefore not tested." The report said the two correctional officers conducting the search "discovered a burned piece of tinfoil with what appeared to be remnants of illicit substances on it. Unfortunately, the suspected contraband was inadvertently disposed of in the toilet."

Fontaine isn't sure her brother's overdose was an accident.

"I go back and forth with it... I believe something happened to him, but I don't know if it happened at the hands of the guards or inmates or both."

She says her brother told her at one point that the officers gave him a razor blade and told him to kill himself. Records indicate he was found in the shower with large cuts on his arms and leg around this time.

"Kendal spent a lot of time locked up. He mentioned to me during phone calls that he just wanted all of it to end."

Lack of support

Craig said that one problem is that there aren't enough effective programs to help inmates transition to parole release.

"They focus on ... your risk factors and how to avoid stressors and that sort of thing to avoid coming back," she said. "But they don't help you plan the practicality of release: where you're going to live, who you're going to live with, how you're going to earn a living, those sorts of things."

Today, Fontaine wishes she could have just one more phone call with her brother.

"Sometimes I just wish he could call me," she said. "The only thing I have left is his voicemail... When I'm struggling sometimes I'll listen to that voicemail, and it's not always positive, but there's some humour in there that makes me laugh.

"It makes me sad that I don't get to continue making memories with him, that my boys don't get to have that relationship with their uncle."

Lauren Battagello
CBC News
Jul 21, 2025

Class-action trial in Manitoba to challenge use of segregation jail cells on children

Manitoba's practice of putting incarcerated children in segregation jail cells - including some who are as young as 12 and 13 years old - will be challenged this fall when a landmark class-action lawsuit goes to trial.

The case, which has been about seven years in the making, will be the first major piece of litigation dealing with youth inmate segregation to go to trial in Canada. It follows several recent lawsuits against governments in the country that have successfully challenged aspects of how solitary confinement is used in adult prisons.

But despite these cases - and multiple public watchdog reports within Manitoba that have raised concerns about the use of youth segregation in the province - the province has persisted with the practice, the lawsuit alleges.

In Manitoba, the segregation of children in youth detention centres is permitted in certain circumstances, but it is to be used as a last resort and not as a punishment.

However, the class action alleges that the provincial government is not following its own policies and that youth are being regularly sent to what it describes as "solitary confinement" for weeks and even months at a time - which the lawsuit argues is a violation of their Charter rights.

The statement of claim, which has not been tested in court, describes Manitoba's segregation cells for children as small rooms - sometimes tinier than a parking space - that regularly lack windows.

"Inmates often sleep on mats on the floor. The cells are often covered in filth, blood, and excrement," the claim alleges, calling the practice of segregation rooms "a dungeon inside a prison" that "imposes conditions of torture" on inmates.

A spokesperson for the province declined to comment as the matter is before the courts. But in Manitoba's statement of defence, the government has argued that its practices around segregation do not "amount to Solitary Confinement." (Solitary confinement is generally defined as segregation in a room or area without meaningful human contact in which the duration lasts at least 22 hours a day.)

In the government's statement of defence, it noted that youth who are placed in segregation

cells are under observation. This observation by a supervisor provides the youth inmate with “daily meaningful contact,” the defence reads.

The lawsuit alleges that this is not sufficient.

Lawyer James Sayce, the class action’s lead counsel, said that the impact of such confinement on an adult’s health has been well documented.

“Those impacts are amplified for children,” said Mr. Sayce, a partner with Koskie Minsky LLP.

In 2019, the Manitoba Ombudsman released a report on the practice of youth segregation. It noted that Canada is a signatory to numerous international agreements that prohibit the use of segregation for youth, including the Mandela Rules and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

That same year, the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth released its own report concluding that “solitary confinement, for longer than 24 hours per day, must be prohibited for youth in Manitoba custody facilities.”

But provincial data produced through the class action, which were obtained by The Globe and Mail, show that even after these reports, the use of segregation cells with children has continued. The dataset, which spans from 2006 to 2022, documents more than 34,000 incidents. The identities of the inmates are not included in the data, but each inmate is given a unique offender number, which has been partly redacted. An analysis of those numbers, birthdays, gender and Indigenous status suggests that these incidents appear to involve around 6,000 different youth between the ages of 12 and 17.

The duration of each incident ranges from about one minute to 307 consecutive days, and the average stay in segregation was about 13 days. But in reality, these figures could be even higher. The data suggest that some continuous placements were recorded over multiple entries, meaning the consecutive stays are likely longer. This could significantly affect the averages.

The data also suggest that after the Ombudsman’s warning, more than 600 children were sent to segregation units in Manitoba - about 50 of whom were 12 or 13 years old at the time.

The Globe shared its findings with the Manitoba government, but the province declined to comment.

Devon Daniels was 14 years old the first time he was put in a segregation cell. In one incident,

he remembers spending more than two weeks in a room that was essentially a small, white, windowless box with a concrete bed. There were obvious signs of mould on the walls, he said, and it was apparent that staff had been trying to paint over it. The room smelled of decay and urine, the now 27-year-old said.

“The boredom eats at you. You just sit there. You have to try to figure out how to escape somewhere in your mind, or your present just eats you up,” he said.

Mr. Daniels, who is a class member in the Manitoba litigation, says that by his count, he was put in segregation cells about 15 times as a youth.

The experience was deeply traumatizing, he said, and left him contemplating suicide.

One of his earliest memories as a child was being locked in a basement, he said. Mr. Daniels grew up in Winnipeg. He is mixed race - Black and Indigenous - and was raised by his grandmother, who was a residential-schools survivor. There was trauma, abuse and poverty in his childhood, he said.

One of the first times he was arrested was for stealing a chocolate bar. Mr. Daniels - who left prison in 2020 and says he has since turned his life around - says the memories of being in segregation still haunt him.

“A piece of me is still in that place,” he said.

Craig Haney, a psychology professor with the University of California, Santa Cruz, is among three academics to provide expert reports as part of the lawsuit. Prof. Haney - who was one of the principal researchers in the famous Stanford Prison Experiment, in which regular students were assigned a role of either a prisoner or a guard in a simulated jail environment - toured some of the segregation sites in Manitoba.

“In terms of harshness and the risk of harm to which they subjected prisoners, they rivaled anything I have observed in some of the worst solitary confinement units in the United States,” he wrote.

“The conditions of confinement I encountered were stark and depriving - ranging from very bad to outright egregious - and the segregation practices the prisoners described being exposed to were truly severe and isolating,” he said.

“I know of no legitimate penological purpose that can possibly justify their continued use in their present form.”

The trial is scheduled for Nov. 17 in Winnipeg.

Robyn Doolittle, Chen Wang
Globe and Mail
Sep 2, 2025

Prisoners' Justice Day: 50 years on, inhumane jail conditions persist

Prisoners' Justice Day (PJD) demands an end to frequent and preventable deaths in custody, while standing up for basic human rights of people in prison. It was initiated by prisoners to honour Edward 'Eddie' Nalon, who was left to die alone in the segregation unit of Millhaven Institution, a maximum-security penitentiary in Bath, Ont. on Aug. 10, 1974.

First observed on Aug. 10, 1975, PJD began as a day of non-violent resistance to government repression. One year later, imprisoned people at Millhaven called for one-day hunger strikes to protest the use of solitary confinement and to support prisoners' rights, in memory of those who died behind bars.

In the late 1970s, prisoners at Millhaven released a list of demands aimed at reducing the harm the state and its officials routinely allow and carry out against people in prison. They demanded:

The right to meaningful work with fair wages; the right to useful education and training; the right to proper medical attention; the right to freedom of speech and religion; the right to free and adequate legal services; the right to independent review of all prison decision making and conditions; the right to vote; the right to form a union; the right to adequate work and fire safety standards; the right to open visits and correspondence; and the right to natural justice and due process.

Some changes have been made since. Notably, the right to vote was granted to prisoners in 2002 following a decision by the Supreme Court of Canada. Unfortunately, nearly all of the demands and the injustices they are meant to address are still relevant today.

The current state of Ontario's prisons, whether federal or provincial, adult or youth, demonstrate a continued need for action. Systemic issues like crowding, inadequate medical care, frequent lockdowns, solitary confinement (by other names), and widespread

neglect continue to undermine the safety and human dignity of imprisoned people in Ontario.

Shocking abuses still in place

Shocking human rights abuses also continue. For example, in the spring, a disturbing video was released showing a coordinated punishment of approximately 200 prisoners at the Maplehurst Correctional Complex, in December 2023. In response to an assault on a guard by a single prisoner, nearly 200 others were collectively punished by being strip-searched, pepper-sprayed, beaten and denied their rights. They reported being deprived of clothing, bedding, toilet paper, medical care and other necessities for days.

The Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre (OCDC) has also become synonymous with deplorable and dehumanizing conditions. In 2016, three prisoners committed suicide at OCDC. Prisoners are frequently double- and triple-bunked as the systemic issue of crowding is left to fester due to a constantly growing number of prisoners in pre-trial detention. According to an independent review of "corrections," pretrial detention has increased 137% over the past 30 years in Ontario, to the point where approximately 80% of provincial prisoners are awaiting trial or bail determination.

A recent report has also detailed the astounding and concerning number of "serious occurrence reports" in our city coming from the William E. Hay Centre, a provincially funded youth prison in Ottawa. Hundreds of these reports document abuse, mistreatment and physical restraint. These findings suggest a broader systemic pattern of mistreatment of young people and poor conditions at the facility, undermining both their safety and that of the communities they will eventually be released into.

Across Ontario, prisoners continue to be denied adequate access to proper hygiene supplies, nutritious food, fresh air, timely medical care and more. They are held in harsh and inhumane conditions, some while still legally presumed innocent. This Prisoners' Justice Day is a time to reflect on both the successes and ongoing struggles for advancing human rights behind bars over the past 50 years, and to renew our commitment to meaningful change.

*Olivia Gemma, Mackenzie Plumb, Liz Venczel
Ottawa Citizen - Aug 08, 2025*

Prisoners allege pandemic rules 'wreaked havoc' on minds in class-action lawsuit

Federal prison inmates who allege they were subjected to inhumane treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic have cleared a crucial legal hurdle to move forward with a class-action lawsuit filed five years ago against the Canadian government.

The British Columbia Supreme Court last week certified the class of inmates who claim they were "subject to inhumane rights restrictions" during the pandemic, including being confined to cells for 20 hours or more each day without meaningful contact with other people.

Plaintiff Dean Roberts, a multiple murderer incarcerated at B.C.'s Mission Institution, said in an affidavit the pandemic brought "chaos" as pandemic measures sent prisoners into despair, including one who sewed his lips together.

Roberts' affidavit said the early days of the outbreak caused prison authorities to establish procedures that "wreaked havoc" on his mind, as inmates' routines were upended by shifting pandemic procedures.

"Routine is consistent and practically sacrosanct in a prison environment," Roberts' affidavit said. "Every day the predictable and understood is relied upon. But in the chaos of COVID every day was unknown."

Roberts said the isolation of solitary confinement and the uncertainty around when it might end contributed to "wild emotional swings, unexplainable rage, despair and soul-crushing confusion."

He said he brought "grave concerns" to prison officials as chair of the prison's inmate wellness committee, protesting the practice of allowing people out of their cells for just 20 minutes a day.

He said many fellow inmates began self-harming, with some slamming their heads into walls, others cutting themselves and one man sewing his mouth shut.

"The loneliness and despair was evident on nearly every inmate's face," his affidavit said.

The Attorney General of Canada opposed certifying the lawsuit as a class action for several reasons, arguing the Correctional Service of Canada's response to the pandemic was medically necessary.

The ruling said arguments over the "unprecedented and unexpected nature of the

pandemic" are issues to be decided by a trial, rejecting the federal government's claim that inmates should pursue individual lawsuits instead of banding together as a class.

"Class proceedings are often the only realistic means by which a group of plaintiffs, such as federal prison inmates, can pursue claims related to conditions of confinement," Justice Michael Tammén's ruling said. "Those serving sentences in the federal prison system frequently face inordinate hurdles in accessing the courts and pursuing claims against those responsible for administering the federal prison system."

The judge agreed with the plaintiff's framing of the case as an examination of the Correctional Service of Canada's "policies, practices and systems" that may have led to systemic breaches of inmates' rights.

"There is much merit to the plaintiff's position that (the Correctional Service of Canada) is a 'top-down' organization, and that the failings, if such there were, at a national level inevitably bled into the management of inmates at the regional and institutional level," Tammén ruled.

The inmates' lawyer, Patrick Dudding, said he welcomed the decision and he and his associates are now tasked with "getting the word out" to current and former inmates to join the class, which he said could potentially involve thousands of people.

"It's our intention to have it tried as soon as it's possible, but that depends on a lot of moving parts," Dudding said Wednesday.

The Correctional Service of Canada said in a statement Wednesday that it was reviewing the court's ruling and "it would be inappropriate to comment on specifics."

"During the pandemic, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) was committed to reducing the risks of COVID-19 in all its operations and keeping offenders, employees and the public safe," the statement said.

Darryl Greer

The Canadian Press

Jun 4, 2025

Courage can afford to be kind.

- She

Cowards carry guns.

- She

Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI)

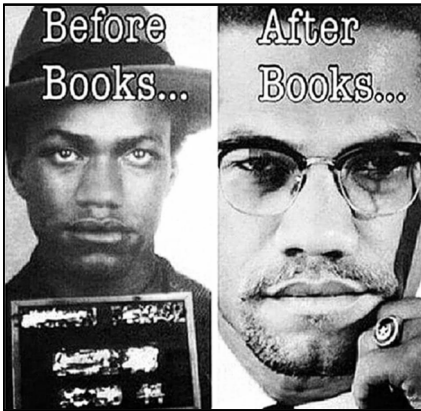
Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI) is a registered charity that organizes volunteer-led book clubs within federal penitentiaries across Canada. Currently, BCFI is facilitating 30 book clubs from Nova Scotia to British Columbia.

BCFI runs French and English language book clubs for men and women incarcerated in minimum, medium, and maximum security facilities. Book clubs are usually made up of 10-18 members who meet once a month to discuss books, both fiction and non-fiction of literary merit.

Every month, hundreds of inmates participate in book clubs across the country and each year thousands of brand new books are purchased, read, and discussed.

Book Clubs for Inmates

720 Bathurst St, Toronto, ON, M5S 2R4



I have often reflected upon the new vistas that reading has opened to me.

I knew right there in prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life.

As I see it today, the ability to read awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive.

- Malcolm X

You don't get to choose how you're going to die, or when. You can only decide how you're going to live now.

- Joan Baez

Trans+ People in Canadian Prisons Project

In 2017, "gender identity or expression" was added to the Canadian Human Rights Act as prohibited grounds for discrimination.

There are two ways for people to get involved in this research:

- (1) talk to us in a 1-hour private, confidential interview about their thoughts and experiences,
- (2) answer similar questions in writing using the mail.

We are hoping to connect with:

- (1) Current Trans+ prisoners in Canadian federal prisons, AND
- (2) Current cisgender (non-Trans+) prisoners who have ever lived in a Canadian federal correctional institution with Trans+ prisoners.

If you chose to participate, no guards or administrators will be present or observing in any way. Each institution will have a CSC Staff person who can help arrange participation and has promised to keep your involvement confidential. We will use a pseudonym (fake name) when quoting people or mentioning the stories that are shared with us.

This project is being conducted by the University of Victoria with funding from the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC).

If people have questions, or would like to volunteer to be interviewed, or participate by mail, they can contact us at 1-800-516-3083 (on the common access list) or at:

Trans+ Prison Project

Chair in Transgender Studies, UVic

PO Box 3050 STN CSC

Victoria BC V8W 3P5

One had better die fighting against injustice than die like a dog or a rat in a trap.

- Ida B. Wells

Just because everything's different doesn't mean anything's changed.

- Irene Porter

The nature of the criminal justice system has changed. It is no longer primarily concerned with the prevention and punishment of crime, but rather with the management and control of the dispossessed.

- Michelle Alexander

Prison Health is Public Health:

The Right to Hepatitis C Prevention, Diagnosis, and Care in Canada's Correctional Settings

About Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C (HCV) is a preventable and curable liver infection. It is the leading cause of liver disease and transplantation, and one of the most burdensome infectious diseases in Canada. HCV spreads through contact with infected blood, but symptoms may be delayed for years, so many people who are infected are unaware. The only way to confirm a chronic HCV infection is through a blood test.

Hep C Elimination is Within Canada's Reach
Progress in treating HCV is one of the great medical breakthroughs of our time, making elimination possible. Direct Acting Antivirals (DAAs) are a new generation of medications for treating HCV infection. These new therapies are highly effective, curing HCV infection in more than 95% of people treated with daily pills in as little as 8-12 weeks, with minimal side effects.

Canada's Promise

In May 2016, the first-ever Global Viral Hepatitis Strategy was endorsed by the 194 Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO), with the goal of eliminating viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. As a Member State, Canada signed onto this strategy and endorsed the targets contained within it. The WHO strategy includes specific targets, and all countries were tasked with developing a National Action Plan to meet these targets. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) responded by publishing the Pan-Canadian framework for action to reduce the health impact of Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections (STBBIs) in 2018 and the Government of Canada five-year action plan on STBBIs in 2019.

Why Focus on Correctional Settings?

People who are incarcerated (PWA) are 40 times more likely to be exposed to HCV than Canada's general population. In addition, people who are released from incarceration often face barriers to accessing health care in the community. The delivery of HCV care to people in correctional settings in Canada is essential to HCV elimination.

Current State:**Federal - YES !!!**

Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) could be well-positioned to achieve HCV elimination in people incarcerated within federal Canadian correctional institutions by 2030, with best practices such as universal HCV screening, universal access to treatment, and some harm reduction services available.

Provincial/Territorial - NO !!!

The same standard of health care is not available to people in correctional centres as in the community in any province, and significant disparities in HCV care exist across provincial correctional centres. HCV elimination is unlikely to occur in the Canadian provincial/ territorial prison system by 2030.

www.actionhepatitiscanada.ca/prisonhealth

Doing 2yrs less? So, when you get out:

- When released, get right on Social Assistance.
- Federal health care programs like NIHB & IFH may cover costs.
- Go to a Health Clinic and get your blood test done so you can get into a Treatment Program at no cost to you.

All Federal prisoners with hep C are now eligible for treatment.

BC & ON Prov prisoners with hep C are now eligible for treatment.

HEP C = 18-30% in prison
 HIV = 1-5% in prison

Do Not Share or Re-Use:
 needles, ink, ink holders, rigs, ...
 ... well, anything in contact
 with blood !!!

BLEACH DOES NOT KILL HEP C

Toll-Free Support Line for SK Prisoners

For prisoners in Provincial jails & Federal prisons in Saskatchewan.

Funds will be used to help inmates purchase call packages to keep them connected to their family, help out with canteen for necessary things & for transportation home.

Maintained by prisoner advocacy groups Beyond Prison Walls Canada and Inmates for Humane Conditions.

☎ 1-866-949-0074 ☎

Phone Line for Disabled Prisoners who Experience Ableism and Racism in Ont.

www.djno.ca

OUT of PRISON: 905-973-4332

TRAPP Phone Numbers (Toll Free):

Hamilton - 905-631-4084

Kenora - 807-548-4312

Kingston - 613-881-0050

London - 519-690-0836

Milton - 416-775-7983

Niagara - 905-227-5066

Ottawa - 613-768-9951

PRISON RADIO

- Guelph - CFRU 93.3 FM

Prison Radio - Thurs 10-11 am

Call-in 519-837-2378

- Halifax - CKDU 88.1 FM

Black Power Hour - Wed 9 pm

- Kingston - CFRC 101.9 FM

CPR: Prison Radio - Wed 7-8 pm

- Montreal - CKUT 90.3 FM

PRS - 2nd Thurs 5-6 pm & 4th Fri 11-noon

- Vancouver - CFRO 100.5 FM

Stark Raven - 1st Mon 7-8 pm

CPR: This program features content produced by CFRC volunteers and by other campus and community radio broadcasters, including CKUT Montreal's Prison Radio & Vancouver Co-op Radio's Stark Raven programs.

CPR features 'Calls From Home', sharing letters, emails, voice messages and music requests by and for prisoners and their loved ones.

Prisoners and their loved ones are invited to contribute music requests, messages and suggestions for the program.

2025 dates: Feb 19, Mar 19, Apr 16, May 14, Jun 11, Jul 9, Aug 6, Sep 3, Oct 1, Oct 29, Nov 26, Dec 24.

Write: CPR c/o CFRC, Lwr Carruthers Hall, Queen's University, Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6

Email: CFRCprisonradio@riseup.net

Call: 613-917-1390 to record a message or music request to be broadcast on-air.

Free Jail Hotline for MCC, OCI, TEDC, TSDC & VCW

The Toronto Prisoners' Rights Project (TPRP) provides prisoners with free links to advocacy, referrals, information, and support through the Jail Hotline. This hotline is run by volunteers. It will take calls on:

Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat
9-11 am & 2-4 pm

☎ 416-775-9239 ☎

Why a Jail Hotline?

Prisons and jails carry out human rights abuses every day because they do not think anyone is watching. We are here in solidarity and struggle with prisoners.

Who Should Call This Hotline?

Please share the hotline with your loved ones inside. We cannot accept calls from other prisons or jails or from people in the community.

If you need to contact us outside of the line, you can message us on social media or an email to:

TorontoPrisonersRightsProject@gmail.com

Free Jail Hotline for EMDC

Monday to Saturday
9-11 am & 2-4 pm

☎ 519-642-9289 ☎

**Penpal Program for Gay, Queer,
Trans Prisoners**

The Prisoner Correspondence Project runs a penpal program for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and queer prisoners in Canada, pairing them up with gay and queer and trans people outside of prison for friendship and support. We also coordinate a resource library of information and resources related to health, sexuality, and prisons - get in touch with us for a list of resources we have, or for details.

If you want to be paired up with a penpal, please send a short description of yourself & interests to:

Prisoner Correspondence Project
c/o QPIRG Concordia
1455 de Maisonneuve W.
Montreal, QC, H3G 1M8

Please indicate French or in English. Veuillez svp nous indiquer anglais ou en français.



**Nov 20 is Transgender Day
of Remembrance**

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR), is an international event commemorating people killed due to anti-trans violence. In the last year, 369 trans or non-binary people have been killed globally.

And it's a Canadian problem too: 74% of trans youth in Canada have been harassed at school, and 37% have experienced physical violence.

☞ Respect ☞

**Incarcerated in Canada?
Need Information?**

Write On! is an all-volunteer group whose goal is to support prisoners in Canada by researching the information you need, such as:

General legal info, prison rules & policies, resources, programs, services, etc.

Write to us at:

Write ON!
234-1110 Cumberland St,
Toronto, ON, M5R 3V5

Prison Visiting Rideshare Project

The Prison Rideshare is an ongoing project of Bar None to connect people with rides to visit their friends and loved ones who are in prison in Manitoba.

If you or someone you know is interested in getting a ride to visit one of southern Manitoba's prisons, if you are interested in volunteering, or for more info contact: barnone.wpg@gmail.com

Rides can also be arranged by phone or text message: 204-599-8869 (It's ideal to request a ride at least 5-7 days in advance).

PRISONERS JUSTICE DAY

☞ In Remembrance ☞

- August 10 -

There are more than 200 Unnatural
Prisoner Deaths in Canada.

- Each and Every Year -

We maintain a PJD 'In Remembrance' page on our website for Prisoners who have died in Federal and Provincial Prisons, Remands, Lock-ups and Parole in Canada.

If you wish to have someone remembered there, send us a note or email and we will honour your request.

PJD@PrisonFreePress.org

A Child of an Incarcerated Parent

The Reality

- Every year over 150,000 adults are remanded into custody which results in approximately 180,000 innocent children who suffer from the traumatic effect of parental incarceration in Canada
- Over 5000 children are impacted by parental imprisonment in the GTA
- The number of children affected by parental incarceration only increases with the passing of the Crime Bill C-10

The Need

- Despite the growing prevalence of these innocent victims the resources available are minimal
- The cost and lack of accessibility to correctional facilities restrict child-parent visits. Consequently, some children can never visit their incarcerated parents

The Impact

- Children of incarcerated parents grieve the loss of their parent
- These children are four times more likely to be in conflict with the law
- Social stigma of incarceration causes some families to avoid discussing the absence of a parent

Research suggests that parental incarceration has a detrimental impact on children. These innocent children suffer the traumatic experience of being separated from their parent. Following parental imprisonment, children are faced with a myriad of challenges including:

- feelings of shame, grief, guilt, abandonment, anger
- lowered self-esteem
- economic instability
- social stigma and isolation
- disconnection from parent
- insecurity in familial and peer relationships
- school absenteeism, poor school performance
- difficulty in coping with future stress/ trauma
- compromised trust in others including law enforcement

www.kipcanada.org ~ 416-505-5333



K.I.P. Canada - Family Visitation

Kids with Incarcerated Parents (K.I.P.) was founded in 2011 to support the needs of the over 15,000 children in the Greater Toronto Area that have a parent in the criminal justice system.

K.I.P.'s Family Visitation Program provides weekend transportation from Toronto to correctional facilities in Southern Ontario for children and families to visit imprisoned loved ones.

During our trips, K.I.P. provides free snacks and refreshments, offers a variety of games and activities, and plays movies.

Our bus is a place where youth and families have a chance to talk about their experiences of having a loved one inside and receive support from mentors and other riders.

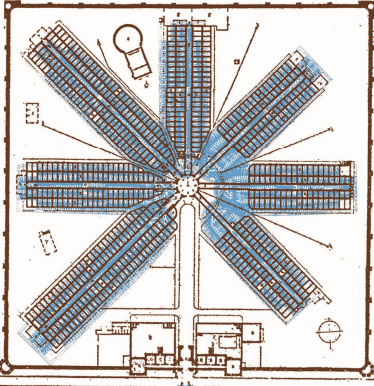
Our Family Visitation Program is free for anyone 18 years old and younger. If you are interested in participating in our program, please call or email K.I.P. to register today.

For more information or to book a seat on the bus please contact Jessica or Derek Reid by email at:

info.kipcanada@gmail.com

or by phone at: 416-505-5333

PRISONS



SLAVE SHIPS



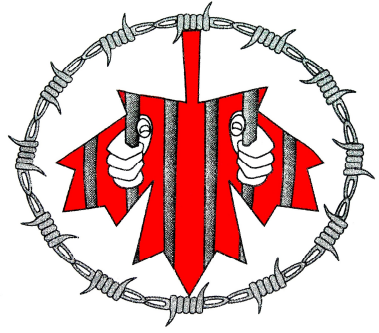
ON DRY LAND



**SOLITARY
CONFINEMENT**

IS

TORTURE



Issue #39 - Fall 2025

Class Action News
PO Box 39, Stn P
Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

download, print, contact:
www.ClassActionNews.org

> Jan > Apr > Jul > Oct >

Next Issue: #40 - Winter 2025/26

Deadline: Dec 1, 2025
Mail-out: Jan 1, 2026

If you don't like the news ...

... make some of your own !!!

Whatcha got in there that needs gettin' out?

... Hmm ... ?

Art, Poems, Stories, News, Whatever !



POB39P M5S2S6