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RE: lockdown at WCI

I am writing to let you know what I am hearing from prisoners about the lockdown at WCI which has been going on since late March. It is astounding that we are just hearing about it now and the reports are dire. I do not know what you know and feel it is important that I give you the prisoner's side of the story to the best of my ability. Suddenly my mailbox is flooded with desperate pleas- this lockdown has been almost three months- A whole prison of men warehoused 24/7- two in a room the size of a bathroom with the toilet in center! Hard to imagine.

Reasons given for the lockdown vary. I am told that the media is being told by WCI that there was an attempted takeover of RHU by prisoners refusing to return to their cells. This is totally fabricated, according to prisoners:

" WCI has us on lockdown lying saying that over 40 inmates surrounded RHU and refused to lock in; however the conduct reports do not and will not show this to be the facts because this is a lie. They keep saying we aren't coming off lockdown until they gain compliance- meaning Stand for count, quit fishing and passing- despite people having deadlines they are completely refusing to allow us Law Library at all. From the warden on down they are telling us that the DOC and DAI Administrative Code has been suspended stating they can do whatever they want."

Although the administration touts rule violations for the lockdown reason, to us it looks like group punishment for a condition that prisoners have no control over- overcrowding and understaffing. A little listening to prisoners idea would easily solve most of the problems for things like standing for count at 6am and noise- There is no justification for traumatizing the whole population. Add to this is your use of textbehind, which takes a month for delivery of letters from families and ffup. Only families and prisoners with means can communicate regularly- the rest are totally without support. There are no programs, no mental health treatment , no health . A broken system DOC wide is now completely collapsed at WCI. I am wondering if you have any idea of what is happening here- this is causing life long trauma. Here is the most succinct letter and following that I will paste a couple personal descriptions of conditions.

Peg,

Lockdown has been continuous at WCI since March 29, 2023. According to the Public Address Memo from Warden Hepp, normal operations will not even begin to be considered until :

- 1) Inmates begin to stand for formal Standing Counts with cell lights on.
- 2) That cell fronts not be covered in any way.
- 3) That inmates not "fish" items from cell to cell or otherwise pass items of any sort to each other. ,
- 4) That inmates not yell to each other or otherwise make any loud noise.

Psychological Services : None

Health Services : Dire Emergencies Only

Religious Services : None

Work : None. Only 12 kitchen workers each day.

Recreation : Limited Groups once per week. If you have been marked down as not following 1-4 above, your not going.

Showers : Once Per Week.

Meals : One "hot" meal per day.

As of right now, no end in sight, and no additional memo's released.

51723

This I transcribed from a RHU letter (he is always on lockdown)almost impossible to read it is so light:

..”and I would like to lend my appreciation to any and all who helped towards our care and treatment which is horrible here at WCI

Rats,Roaches, Birds bats, blood splattered throughout cell Halls. clothing torn, not enough food less and less, no rec, no legal Library, bedspread and sheets Old and torn, excessive force constant. Tactics to keep us from standing up even when our health and safety is concerned, short of staff is why they say we're on lockdown, no form of visitation, (sentence cannot read),Almost done, so I do feel like the DOC is getting over when it comes to money- definitely not spending it on what we're supposed to have. Food clothing, phones, commissary went up again, like the vendors that DOC uses are already invested in/ on from Doc authorities. Win/ win and they overlook other better sources of vendors because they're not able to bully them In order to bully us. thank you for listening .I want great in all your endeavors in life, wholeheartedly. sincerely

Another:(general population lockdown)

.” WCI has us on lockdown lying saying that over 40 inmates surrounded RHU and refused to lock in; however the conduct reports do not and will not show this to be the facts because this is a lie. they keep saying we aren't coming off lockdown until they gain compliance- meaning Stand for count, quit fishing and passing-

despite people having deadlines they are completely refusing to allow us Law Library at all. From the warden on down they are telling us that the DOC and DAI Administrative Code has been suspended stating they can do whatever they want. I have been trying to get seen by HSU due to my loss of feeling in my hand from being tased twice while cuffed and Shackled and RN Andrea b l e e k e r asked me if I wanted to be seen I said yes but I was never seen. I keep trying to address my constant fear that the WCI staff are going to cause me bodily harm to no avail. I do not feel safe here Ms Swan now how can I? Inmates are getting stabbed back to back and no Co is doing a damn thing to protect us. I am filing my lawsuits Pro Se and I can't even go to the law library to utilize the needed legal Network. Article 5 as well as article 7 of the universal Declaration of Human Rights are being violated. They are lying to the media about this lockdown!! We are on lockdown because the inmates don't stand for count because inmates keep passing and fishing because the inmates are acknowledging their constitutional rights!! they are stealing our personal property and disposing of it. The alternative to ink pens are black crayons and now all of a sudden all the Crayons have disappeared. **The food they're feeding us is outdated the water extremely contaminated to the point everyday we're sick but in order to survive we've got to keep drinking and**

eating. I have PRC coming up in August Miss Swan and I really need to get out of this death trap I fear for my safety.

WCI is the only prison on lockdown why is this Prison still running if it's allegedly so understaffed? There's a scam going on Within These Walls. I need to help before I end up dead in here”

The stabbing referred to- the one I know of is of Dennis Buford. The report is that he was stabbed 13 times by his cellmate- he had pleaded with WCI powers to protect him and they did nothing and basically stood around while the stabbing was going on. When he collapsed unconscious they carried him out of the cell, still shackled -he never got medical care and tells me that when he wrote me and I wrote the deputy warden and security director , he was transferred to WSPF. This is , I guess, the usual tactic to stop prisoners from litigating. I do not take credit for the transfer but am glad he is out of there and assure you that his transfer will not prevent me or him from securing a full blown investigation of this WCI lockdown obscenity.

I have names and document originals for you if you are interested in helping . I am trying to be vague because there is much retaliation. I do not know what tactics were used by WCI to keep the news of this lockdown so hidden up till now. We know of sporadic lockdowns but not this three month ordeal for a whole prison.

This administration came to power stating the truth that the prison population should be halved- that half the prisoners were unjustly and/or unwisely incarcerated. - what happened? Can you imagine the programs and healing work that would be possible if you had only those people incarcerated who needed to be kept separated from the population? People need meaningful work and you, in most of your system, are only warehousing.

Finally = one of my latest letters- a person normally stable , going stir crazy in lock down.

“Starting to lose my mind Peg. To the point where I really need to talk to one of these PSU staff. I'm trapped in this cell. I'm starting to feel very unstable. Cannot control my emotions or thoughts.”

Please help.

Peg

Yours sincerely,
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