

CLASS ACTION! NEWS



RICHIE AND PAM STARTING TO WONDER IF INSTEAD OF SITTING BACK AND LETTING THE BEST MINDS IN GOVERNMENT, SCIENCE, ECONOMICS, AND ENGINEERING BE THE ARCHITECTS OF MODERN CIVILIZATION, THEY SHOULD HAVE WORKED HARDER TO MAKE SURE IT WAS THE BEST HEARTS IN ART, POETRY, MUSIC, INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM, AND COMMUNITY-LED ACTIVISM THAT GAVE US ALL A LIFE WORTH LIVING.

ISSUE #40 WINTER 25/26

< Editor's Note >

It is Winter & Issue #40 of 'Class Action News'.

This zine is by & for the 'Prisoner Class' on Treaty Lands with Canada.

Every Issue provides 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.

Artwork: Black pen (tat-style) works the best.

Cover Artist (CDN) will receive a \$25 donation.

Writings: only short poems, news, stories, ...

Items selected are those that fit nicely & allow space for others (½ 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!

Editor: Toja

Publication: Class Action News

Publisher: PrisonFreePress.org

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Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

Email: info@ClassActionNews.org

Circulation: 270+

Recirculation: ????

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Cover: Mr. Fish



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Very special thanks out to: You !

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).

< Ancestral Territorial Acknowledgment >

We respectfully acknowledge that the land on which Prison Free Press operates is the Traditional Territory of the Wendat, the Anishnaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

≈ 'Dish With One Spoon' Treaty ≈

Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage.

Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.

- Augustine of Hippo

Ontario Superior Court Approves \$59-Million Settlement for Ontario Inmates & Immigration Detainees Subjected to Staffing-Related Lockdowns

The Ontario Superior Court of Justice recently approved a \$59-million settlement in two class actions, *Lapple v Ontario* and *Dadzie v Ontario and Canada*, on behalf of inmates and immigration detainees who experienced staffing-related lockdowns at certain Ontario correctional institutions between May 30, 2009 and November 27, 2017.

"We urge anyone who believes they may be eligible to visit the settlement website or contact the Administrator by phone to learn more and submit a Claim," said Jonathan Ptak, a partner at Koskie Minsky LLP, one of the law firms working on the class actions. "The Class Counsel team is also available to provide information and assistance to help Class Members complete their Claim Forms to access the compensation available. All Claims are confidential and will be handled with care and sensitivity."

Individuals who were affected by staffing-related lockdowns at Ontario correctional institutions may be eligible for compensation.

Who Is Eligible to Make a Claim?

You may be eligible for compensation if you were:

- an inmate at an Ontario correctional institution (excluding the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre, the Ontario Correctional Institute, and the St. Lawrence Valley Correctional and Treatment Centre) between August 15, 2014 and November 27, 2017, or
- an immigration detainee at an Ontario correctional institution between August 11, 2014 and November 27, 2017, and
- you experienced 16 or more staffing-related lockdowns during that time, calculated in accordance with the Compensation Protocol approved by the Court as part of the Settlement.

Inmates and immigration detainees who experienced 16 or more staffing-related lockdowns between May 30, 2009 and August 14, 2014 (for inmates), or May 30, 2009 and August 10, 2014 (for immigration detainees), may still qualify if they can show that they were legally incapable of starting a lawsuit

during that period, or, in limited circumstances, if they qualify under the Exceptional Circumstances Protocol.

How to Make a Claim

Claims will begin to be accepted on December 1, 2025 and must be submitted by December 1, 2026. To make a Claim, eligible individuals must complete a Claim Form (and, if applicable, a Statute-Barred Claim Form) and submit it to the Administrator online, by mail, or by email to Claims@OntJailStaffLockdowns.ca. You can submit your Claim online from the claims portal, Portal.OntJailStaffLockdowns.ca, and Claim Forms are available for download from the settlement website.

The amount of compensation will depend on the number of staffing-related lockdowns experienced and the nature of harm suffered, with payments ranging from \$2,000 to \$68,000 (subject to the number of approved Claims).

The Ontario Corrections Staffing-Related Lockdowns Class Actions are two lawsuits brought on behalf of individuals who were detained in certain Ontario correctional institutions and subjected to staffing-related lockdowns between May 30, 2009 and November 27, 2017. The lawsuits alleged that these staffing-related lockdowns resulted in extended periods of cell confinement and limited access to essential services and programs. The Settlement, approved by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, provides compensation to eligible Class Members and establishes a process to ensure Claims are reviewed fairly and confidentially.

For more details, including eligibility criteria and how to make a Claim, visit

OntJailStaffLockdowns.ca or contact the Administrator at 1-844-742-0825 (toll-free), Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST, excluding holidays, or at:

Info@OntJailStaffLockdowns.ca.

Kawartha 411 Staff
Dec 1, 2025

What does this system seem designed to do?
As I see it, it seems designed to send people right back to prison, which is what happens about 70% of the time.

- Michelle Alexander

Prisoners can appear before judge to challenge security classification

The Supreme Court of Canada says a federal prisoner can challenge a refusal to reclassify them to a lower-security facility through the time-honoured writ of *habeas corpus* - a hearing before a judge to determine if a detention is lawful.

In a 6-3 ruling Friday, the top court said continuing a more restrictive form of confinement, instead of placing an inmate in a lower security facility, results in a deprivation of their remaining freedom.

The court said broad and effective access to *habeas corpus* is critical for those who suffer unlawful and continued deprivation of their liberty and seek to challenge the legality of their confinement.

The decision came in the jointly heard cases of two men who argued they were unfairly denied access to *habeas corpus* when contesting classification decisions while being held at medium-security prisons.

Frank Dorsey, a Black Canadian, had been designated a dangerous offender and received an indeterminate sentence, while Ghassan Salah, a Jordanian citizen, was serving concurrent life sentences.

Under federal law, a minimum-security classification is given to inmates who are unlikely to escape and pose little risk to public safety, while requiring a low degree of supervision.

A medium-security classification is reserved for inmates who present a low-to-moderate probability of escape and a moderate risk to public safety, while needing a moderate degree of supervision.

These definitions inform both initial placement and any future reclassification, the Supreme Court noted.

In most cases, a final decision on classification is made by the prison warden. There are additional steps when the prisoner is a dangerous offender.

Inmates may grieve reclassification decisions, and grievance decisions can be judicially reviewed by the Federal Court.

In 2019, Dorsey and Salah each applied for a transfer to a minimum-security institution.

In both cases, an administrative decision-maker turned down their reclassification and they

continued to be held in medium-security facilities.

Both inmates filed applications for *habeas corpus*, seeking orders that they either be transferred to minimum-security institutions or that their detention in medium-security facilities be justified.

The Ontario Superior Court ruled that *habeas corpus* was not available to them, a decision upheld by the Ontario Court of Appeal.

Writing for a majority of the court, Justice Mary Moreau said *habeas corpus* review, which can be traced to 17th-century England, is an essential safeguard against unlawful detention and a cornerstone for the protection of prisoners' rights.

"Despite its antiquity, *habeas corpus* remains the strongest tool for prisoners in ensuring that a deprivation of their residual liberty is not unlawful," she said.

Habeas corpus must be available and accessible to those individuals whose liberty has been most restricted living within penitentiary walls, Moreau wrote.

"These individuals, already facing significant deprivations of their liberty, should have access to the expedient and effective relief long offered by *habeas corpus* where the deprivation of liberty becomes unlawful," she said.

"In my view, the decision to continue a particular, more restrictive form of confinement instead of placing an inmate in a lower security facility results in a deprivation of liberty."

The effect of being continually held in a higher security facility is substantially the same as an inmate being involuntarily transferred to a higher security facility, she added. "Both inmates face greater restrictions on their daily lives and both are deprived of their liberty relative to the facility in which they potentially ought to be placed."

Security classification and placement affects an inmate's access to correctional programs, rehabilitative opportunities, private family visits, work opportunities and temporary absences, as well as the eventual timing of their release, Moreau said.

For inmates serving life or indeterminate sentences, such as Dorsey and Salah, transfer to a minimum-security facility is often the prerequisite to a conditional release, she added. As several interveners pointed out, marginalized Black and Indigenous inmates are more likely to

be overclassified, meaning they are more likely to be assessed at a higher security level than their non-marginalized peers, Moreau wrote. In turn, impeding access to *habeas corpus* will disproportionately affect these marginalized groups' ability to move to lower security levels and, ultimately, to rehabilitate and reintegrate, she said.

The British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, an intervener in the case, called the decision "a significant victory for prisoners' rights."

At the time the Supreme Court appeal was heard, both men were reclassified and transferred to minimum-security facilities following review at the statutorily required date. As a result, the court made no further order concerning their cases.

The three dissenting judges said while *habeas corpus* must remain available and accessible when its use is warranted, its scope is not unlimited.

"*Habeas corpus* is not, and should not become, an unrestricted remedy used to challenge every feature in the correctional system otherwise left to the administrative state," Malcolm Rowe and Suzanne Côté wrote on behalf of the minority.

Jim Bronskill
The Canadian Press
Nov 21, 2025

Federal prison service is 'ill-equipped' for long-term mental health care

The federal prison ombudsman says weak policies, insufficient training and a lack of specialized treatment are hindering the Correctional Service of Canada's efforts to deliver mental health care.

In his latest annual report, correctional investigator Ivan Zinger says it's "abundantly clear" the prison service is fundamentally ill-equipped to provide long-term mental health care to people experiencing acute psychiatric distress, suicidal thoughts or chronic self-injury. In cases involving such serious mental illnesses, transfers to external, secure, community-based psychiatric hospitals are necessary, Zinger says in the report.

The Correctional Service of Canada routinely transfers individuals requiring complex physical

care - such as chemotherapy or heart surgery - to external hospitals, Zinger notes.

"It would be unthinkable to attempt such procedures in-house," he writes. "Yet, when it comes to mental health, CSC continues to operate under the misguided belief that it can provide specialized psychiatric care internally."

Zinger, who says he plans to retire at the end of January, is set to discuss the report today at an Ottawa news conference.

The report draws on the findings from six national investigations that Zinger's office conducted on mental health care for federally sentenced individuals.

The office carried out 425 interviews with people in custody and on community release, made site visits and met with institutional and community staff, community-based stakeholders, Indigenous organizations and provincial correctional authorities.

Zinger's office found weak, vague, outdated or non-existent national policies have led to ineffective, confusing and inconsistent direction and implementation of mental health services.

Insufficient training for staff on how to work effectively and humanely with individuals with mental health issues has contributed to poor quality of care in corrections, the report says.

An absence of effective screening and assessment of mental health issues has created "a domino effect" of poor identification and access to services, excluding many who need enhanced care, the report adds.

Zinger also found a lack of specialized options for programming, treatment or opportunities to acquire skills that would support the successful release of offenders.

One of the investigations focused on the prison service's five Regional Treatment Centres.

Treatment centres present "a unique dynamic" in that they are hybrid facilities - psychiatric hospitals guided in part by provincial health legislation, operating within a federal penitentiary setting subject to federal legislation, the report says.

All of the treatment centres, except for the Regional Psychiatric Centre in the Prairie region, are located within larger penitentiary sites.

Zinger found the centres can be best described as intermediate and geriatric care facilities, with limited emergency mental health capacity for acute cases.

"They should therefore be reprofiled and recognized as such," he writes.

Individuals with acute and long-term psychiatric needs should be transferred, under section 29 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, to specialized, external facilities capable of delivering the appropriate care, the report says.

Continuing to house these individuals in treatment centres operated by the Correctional Service is ineffective, inappropriate and a clear violation of human rights, it adds.

Zinger calls the federal announcement of a \$1.3-billion replacement facility for the Atlantic region "a profound misallocation of resources."

Rather than investing in another in-house facility, the government should have directed the prison service to partner with provincial health systems to expand access to secure psychiatric beds in the community, the report says.

In a response included in Zinger's report, the Correctional Service rejects the recommendations.

The prison service says it has a health system and delivery model "to provide services that are matched to level of need."

The Correctional Service says its health services, including the Regional Treatment Centres, are accredited by Accreditation Canada, the same organization that accredits hospitals and other service providers in communities across the country.

The prison service notes it also has a partnership with the Institut Philippe-Pinel de Montréal for provision of in-patient psychiatric care to men and women offenders, subject to meeting Pinel's admission criteria.

The prison service says it will continue to engage with provincial psychiatric hospitals to supplement existing capacity.

"This engagement is done in acknowledgment of the limited capacity of provincial health care facilities to provide care to federal inmates, particularly in relation to their ability to admit federal inmates with complex mental health and security needs," the response says.

The prison service says it is also conducting a comprehensive review of its Regional Treatment Centres to provide a standardized baseline of service provision.

The review will focus on ensuring that services align with needs and reflect an appropriate mix of psychiatric hospital care, intermediate mental

health care and short-term medical care, the Correctional Service says.

The planned new facility in Dorchester, N.B., will be "a modern, bilingual, purpose-built health care facility" that will support the prison service in advancing its patient-centred health care model, the service adds.

Jim Bronskill
The Canadian Press
Nov 12, 2025

Sue CSC

To begin with a reference to our archives, back in 2010, an inmate in a medium-security institution in BC, asked permission to buy a thesaurus. He was taking a course ... in the day when that was not such a challenge ... and wanted a copy in his cell. The thesaurus cost \$9. Request denied.

There was a thesaurus in the prison library, and he could go through the process of having it delivered to his cell for a specific period. Not exactly a suitable alternative, and what was the big deal about using his own money to buy a reference book? He went through the entire grievance/complaint exercise.

Denied. Denied. Denied.

This over a book!

Ken sued.

He was represented by another inmate who was a paralegal and a well-practiced litigator against the federal prison industry. They won. The judge did not hold back in disparaging the arguments of the two government lawyers. The paralegal pointed out too that the inmate was awarded \$200 for costs, and CSC incurred about \$3,000 in expenses to process the inmate's grievances. We submitted an Access to Information & Privacy request to Ottawa's Ministry of Justice. How much did Canada spend to defend CSC in this action? The response was speedy. Taxpayers spent \$9,028.45. Details of the costs were redacted for 'privacy concerns.'

TurnOveraRockToday.com
Oct 31, 2025

The walls are the publishers of the poor.
- Eduardo Galeano

There is no such thing as humane solitary confinement. That's why Canada needs Tona's Law

Joey Toutsaint is an Indigenous man currently serving an indeterminate sentence in a maximum-security prison. He's spent more than seven years in different forms of solitary confinement, and isolation has had a profoundly damaging effect on him. His body's covered with scars from his many incidents of self-harm, which have included trying to chew through his arm to open an artery.

When Mr. Toutsaint would self-harm, he'd be placed in an observation cell, which is another form of isolation – solitary confinement but under a different name. His mental health deteriorated, and as a result he spent more, not less, time in isolation. Eventually, he often refused to leave isolation because he'd grown so accustomed to it.

Mr. Toutsaint's story is sadly not unique in Canada's prison system. Far too many prisoners continue to be subjected to isolation conditions that constitute torture under the United Nations' "Mandela Rules" and infringe on prisoners' Charter rights, even after Bill C-83 was passed into law in 2019. Bill C-83 promised to eliminate the use of excessive isolation in prisons, and it introduced structured intervention units (SIUs), seemingly more humane forms of solitary confinement.

But multiple government studies have demonstrated that SIUs are ineffective. As an influential 2021 report on SIUs concluded, "We think that the time has come for Canada to acknowledge that it still has solitary confinement and torture by another name." SIUs have become a Potemkin village, masking human-rights abuses that disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples, Black Canadians, and mental-health sufferers.

This is why Canada needs S-205 (An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act), which is known as Tona's Law and is currently under consideration in the Senate. Tona's Law - named after Tona Mills, an Indigenous woman who spent a decade in solitary confinement - seeks to make four crucial amendments to the SIU regime. First, it requires prison officials to seek court approval to keep someone in isolation beyond 48 hours, after which time irreversible psychological harm can

occur. Oversight practices currently exist, but Correctional Service Canada (CSC) often simply ignores them. Judicial oversight, by comparison, would have teeth.

Second, Tona's Law broadens the definition of SIUs so any form of isolation, like Mr. Toutsaint's time in an observation cell, would fall under the jurisdiction of SIU regulations. Rules that applied to SIUs would therefore also apply to the different forms of isolationary practices that proliferated after SIUs were implemented, like dry cells, voluntary limited association ranges, and temporary detention ranges, which aren't subject to the same monitoring and safeguards as SIUs and could be open to abuses.

Third, Tona's Law would prohibit the isolation of people like Mr. Toutsaint who have "disabling mental health issues." The aforementioned 2021 report found that 28 per cent of prisoners who entered SIUs had a "mental health need." Moreover, the government's SIU advisory panel found that people with "deteriorating mental health" were subject to considerably longer stays in isolation. In other words, the worse someone's mental health, the more likely they would be in an SIU cell - and quite possibly for a long duration - which can cause mental-health crises, including self-harm or even suicide attempts, as experienced by Mr. Toutsaint.

Finally, by more effectively using Sections 81 and 84 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, which provide pathways for Indigenous prisoners like Mr. Toutsaint to instead serve time in Indigenous communities or facilities, Tona's Law would reduce the Indigenous population in Canada's prisons and ensure fewer are held in SIUs - a system disproportionately affecting the mental health of people already suffering the effects of intergenerational trauma.

Repeated studies of SIUs have demonstrated that an amendment like Tona's Law is needed to protect Canada's imprisoned population - almost all of whom will, it should be noted, eventually be released. Is it not better and safer for Canadian society to release people from prison rehabilitated rather than profoundly traumatized by the state?

Simon Rolston
Globe and Mail
Nov 27, 2025

Solitary confinement continues in federal prisons despite commitment to end it

More than five years after Ottawa passed legislation designed to abolish solitary confinement in penitentiaries, the practice persists throughout the federal prison system, according to an expert oversight panel.

In its 12th and final report released on Monday, the 10-member panel concluded that the government needs to modify laws around prisoner isolation yet again to fully eliminate solitary confinement and other unlawful prison practices.

“The law and the administration of the law outlawing solitary confinement-like conditions in Canadian penitentiaries are each, independently, in need of change,” states the report from the Structured Intervention Units Implementation Advisory Panel.

The panel was created in 2019 to oversee prison reforms introduced in the wake of two successful lawsuits that challenged the legality of administrative segregation, a long-time Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) practice under which prisoners could be held in cells the size of hotel bathrooms for upward of 22 hours a day without meaningful human contact.

The federal Liberals officially scrapped administrative segregation in 2019 and replaced it with a new prisoner-isolation method called structured intervention.

Under the new regime, prisoners who can’t be housed in the general prison population for security or safety reasons can be placed in isolation (called structured intervention units, or SIUs), but they must be offered at least four hours a day outside their cells, including two hours of meaningful interaction with other people.

SIUs were designed to circumvent international guidelines around solitary confinement. The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners defines solitary confinement as imprisonment for 22 or more hours a day without meaningful human interaction. If those conditions stretch beyond 15 days, the UN considers it “prolonged” solitary confinement, a practice that amounts to “torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

In practice, however, federal penitentiaries

continue to use solitary confinement, the panel found.

“The picture painted by the data consistently shows that the practice of solitary confinement continues, and vulnerable groups appear to be especially at risk of experiencing its negative effects,” states the final report.

From its first report, issued in 2020, the panel has stated that prisoner placements in SIUs routinely last more than 22 hours a day and stretch beyond 15 days. The 12 publications the panel has issued over the last five years use CSC data to show that SIUs are “operating in a manner that is inconsistent with the intent of the law or the law itself,” according to the final report.

The latest report, for instance, shows that approximately 20% of SIU placements last more than two months. Around half of people in SIUs don’t receive two hours of human contact a day for a majority of their placement.

“Very few SIU prisoners get the benefit of four hours out of their cell every day, and even fewer get the benefit of two hours every day of meaningful human engagement,” said panel chair Howard Sapers in an interview.

The panel’s most recent work also found that Indigenous and Black prisoners are overrepresented in SIUs - along with prisoners who have mental-health challenges.

Mr. Sapers said that the panel’s work raises doubts as to whether CSC is complying with court decisions that came out of the two lawsuits.

“These units were created because two courts of appeal in Canada found that the way CSC was utilizing isolated conditions of confinement was unconstitutional,” said Mr. Sapers. “They broke the law. And I can tell you from what we found on the panel, there are some serious concerns remaining about whether or not those issues identified by those courts have been properly addressed.”

The units are now in place inside 15 of CSC’s 42 institutions.

In a statement, Public Safety Minister David McGuinty thanked Mr. Sapers and the rest of the panel, saying their reports “have proven to be valuable sources of information and insight.”

“Their work and findings will continue to support the Public Safety portfolio’s ongoing efforts to strengthen policy, processes and the overall operations of the SIU model,” he added, saying

the SIUs have now entered the “operational” phase.

The panel’s mandate officially ended on Dec. 31. Without their work, advocates for prisoners’ rights will lose one of the few windows they had into SIU operations.

“The panel’s work was meticulous,” said Catherine Latimer, executive director of the John Howard Society. “They backed everything up with statistics and they clearly showed that SIUs don’t conform with the law and don’t achieve their initial policy objectives.”

The legislation creating SIUs committed the government to reviewing the new regime within four years of it coming into effect. That review has yet to take place and Ms. Latimer says nobody within the government can tell her when it might happen.

“I think they need to go back to the drawing board,” she said.

Patrick White
Globe and Mail
Jan 28, 2025

B.C. prisoners with complex mental illness aren’t getting necessary treatment

B.C. prisoners with complex mental illnesses aren’t getting the psychiatric treatment they need, and are being kept in jail longer than required, because the province has only one 190-bed hospital for these high-risk patients, according to a scathing new report.

The British Columbia Review Board, which is in charge of assessing the condition of these patients, released its annual report for the 2024 fiscal year Wednesday. The opening message of chair Brenda Edwards outlined how chronic underfunding has brought the forensic health care system to a breaking point.

“In my view, these shortages put the safety of the public and the rights of individuals at risk,” she wrote in the report, which was shared with provincial Attorney-General Niki Sharma last week.

After a person in B.C. is found not criminally responsible or unfit for trial, decisions about their care, including whether they can be released from care, are made by a three-person panel of the B.C. Review Board.

Over the past year, Ms. Edwards wrote, B.C.’s already-inadequate supply of forensic psychiatric hospital beds has dwindled further, along with a “dearth of adequately staffed and supported residences available to accommodate those patients who no longer require hospital care but require close oversight and supportive services.” Plus, she noted, since the Baldy Hughes centre in Prince George closed, there are no facilities for forensic patients who want to go on leave from the high-security hospital to engage in residential addictions treatment.

A lack of supervised housing, Ms. Edwards wrote, is making it much more difficult for the authorities to release these people back into the community through incremental steps, “which is often the only safe and viable option.”

This spring, the board noted that Ontario has 11 forensic hospitals to serve its population of 15.9 million, while B.C.’s 5.6 million people have access to only one facility.

A spokesperson for Ms. Sharma did not respond to *The Globe and Mail*’s request for comment Wednesday.

The B.C. NDP narrowly formed government again last fall, with Leader David Eby campaigning to build more secure facilities to forcibly treat the many people trying to survive while battling complex mental illness, long-standing addictions and an extremely unaffordable housing market.

Earlier this year, the province touted the creation of 28 new beds to treat people against their will.

Still, the board noted this week, the forensic psychiatric hospital, located in the Vancouver suburb of Coquitlam near the Red Fish Healing Centre for Mental Health and Addiction, had to turn away patients throughout the past fiscal year because all of its beds were full.

“As I am sure you will appreciate, it is a matter of simple mathematics that when more forensic patients are admitted into the system than are being discharged, a tension begins to build,” Ms. Edwards wrote to the Attorney-General.

“If that pressure is not alleviated by a significant injection of resources, the board will be unduly hampered in its ability to meet its mandate (primarily protecting the public), and the administration of justice risks being brought into disrepute.”

The board is also hamstrung, its chair noted, by being prohibited by the Canadian Criminal Code

from holding virtual hearings if the accused don't agree, and most don't

That means the board incurs significant expense bringing its members from across the province to Metro Vancouver or the community of the patient to do in-person hearings, Ms. Edwards wrote.

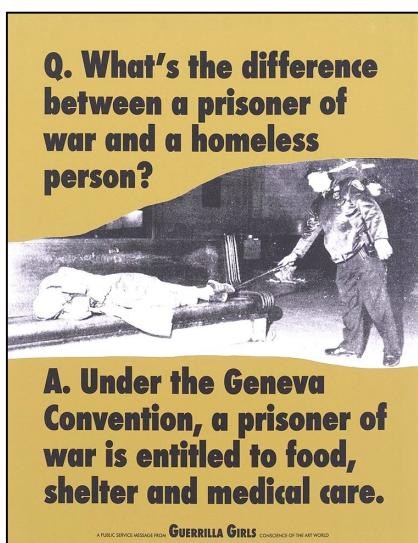
Plus, she added, the board is not served by the provincial sheriff service so it must continue to hire private security to ensure everyone is safe when the accused is mentally unstable, addicted and charged with violent offences.

Ms. Edwards, in her report, formally requested that the Attorney-General lobby her federal, provincial and territorial counterparts to amend the Criminal Code to allow the board to do video hearings when it wants.

During the 2024 fiscal year, the board had 35 people accused of 92 total charges deferred to it by the courts, with the majority being white men between the ages of 20 and 59, the report noted.

In total, the board was responsible for 265 people during the fiscal year, some of whom have been detained for decades despite each of the accused being mandated a review of their condition by the tribunal each year.

Mike Hager
Globe and Mail
Oct 9, 2025



Prison Life

It's waiting on letters
when you're doing time.
And your family won't write,
or send you a dime.

It's waiting on visits
that never take place,
from friends or loved ones,
who forgot your face.

It's hearing them lie.
And saying that we're trying,
making you promises.

But you know they are lying.
It's making plans with someone
who you thought you knew.
But their plans suddenly change,
and it didn't include you.

It's hearing them say how much they care.
But in your time of need
they are never there.

It's hearing them promise
and it goes straight to your head.
But when push comes to shove,
they leave you for dead.

It's feelings and Love,
Honor and Pride.

Pain and Emotions and hurting inside.

It's expressing yourself
to your loved ones and friends,
But they can't feel your pain
because you're in the pen.

It's calling and hearing
'A' Block's on the phone.
But you maintain
because life goes on.

It's really messed up when you're doing time
But that's 'Prison Life'.
Out of sight, out of mind.

- THE END

Power is always insolent and despotic.

- Noah Webster

You can stand tall without standing on someone.
You can be a victor without having victims.

- Harriet Woods

If you do not tell the truth about yourself,
you cannot tell it about other people.

- Virginia Woolf

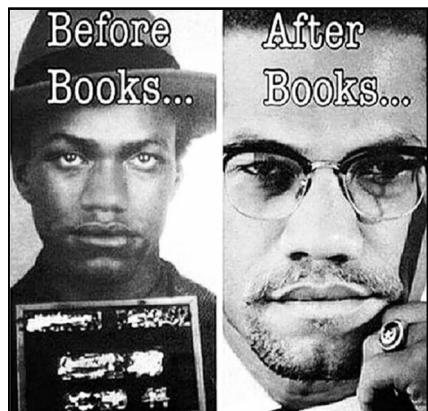
Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI)

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

Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?

- Michel Foucault

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

Yet all we could do was sit there, thinking back over the past and trying once again to beat that old prisoner's game of determining at just what point we made our big mistake.

- Donn Pearce

'Cool Hand Luke'

It is necessary to say no to the identification of reality with fate, to this fatalistic idea, which is being disseminated universally now like poison gas, which identifies what is with what will be. One must claim the right and the duty of imagining the future, instead of accepting it.

- Eduardo Galeano

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 (PWAI) 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 ❖

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
9-11am & 2-4pm
❖ 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
9-11am & 2-4pm
❖ 519-642-9289 ❖

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.

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 indiquez anglais ou en français.

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!

234-110 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).



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 ❖

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.

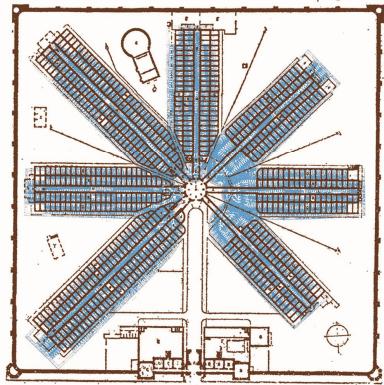
Our Family Visitation Program is free for anyone 18 years old and younger. If you are interested in participating in our program, please call or email K.I.P. to register today.

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

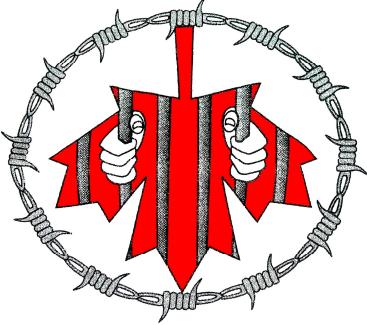
PRISONS



ON DRY LAND



**SOLITARY
CONFINEMENT
IS
TORTURE**



❖ Issue #40 - Winter 2025-26 ❖

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Next Issue: #41 - Spring 2026

Deadline: Mar 1, 2025
Mail-out: Apr 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 !

