

Black & Pink

PDX

TO: Oregon State House Health Committee, Sub-committee on COVID 19
FR: Black and Pink, Kaïa Austin, Organizer
DA: February 3, 2021
RE: Informational Hearing:
Experience of Oregon Adults in State Custody during the COVID-19
Pandemic

Chair Dexter, Vice Chair Hayden and Members of the Committee:

Black and Pink PDX is an organization formed in 2019 that provides direct services and advocacy for LGBTQ and HIV+ people in prison through efforts involving previously and currently incarcerated people. We work in many ways to support our incarcerated members through a Pen Pal program, responding to mail from incarcerated people reaching out about challenges or mistreatment while in prison, study groups, and coalition building.

Black and Pink would like to provide you with the perspective of a current Adult in Custody, Quinton Franklin, regarding his treatment while incarcerated at Coffee Creek. He has asked for his story and experience to be shared in his own words.

Some of the topline takeaways from Quinton's story are that ODOC is ill prepared to address a contagious disease pandemic and equally ill prepared to address a natural disaster. A shocking number of people in prison contracted COVID, and far too many have died. As a State, we must do better. In addition, there are clearly ongoing physical plant problems with airborne contaminants, water quality, and other basic sanitation issues in aging buildings.

There are a number of bills this session seeking to reform the criminal justice system and some of them would result in reducing the overall incarcerated population in the state of Oregon. Those reforms in conjunction with funding and investments in supplies and infrastructure would vastly increase the safety and improve the treatment of people in prison.

As you know, on February 2, a judge issued a TRO directing the State of Oregon to administer COVID19 vaccines to people in prison. We are heartened to see the State plans to comply with the order immediately. However, ODOC needs to be vigilant in enforcing safe COVID practices (mask wearing, cross contamination of units, etc.) until the vaccines can take effect. And, better address health and safety issues in general.

Thank you for convening an informational hearing on this critical topic and allowing us to submit testimony.

Quinton Franklin Account while in ODOC Custody

Here is Quinton's letter, which we have transcribed:

"On or about 9-10-2020 I was transported from C.C.C.F. to O.S.P. due to fire evacuation. I was housed at the old OSU building with about 70 others recovering from COVID-19 virus. The shower area an ventilation system was contaminated with visible black mold that aggravated my asthma. There was an unreasonably high concentration of airborne asbestos particles floating threw the air an in the window seals which created a substantial risk of serious harm to my body. The water was a rust color, I did not drink water for 4 day. Staff at O.S.P. did nothing when notified. I notified C.C.C.F. medical staff who was overseeing me while I was recovering from COVID-19 about my breathing issues (wheezing) an I was told by C.C.C.F. medical staff that an email was sent to C.C.C.F. Director of medical Teresa Hannon about my wheezing and the living conditions of inmates recovering from COVID-19 virus. I was never seen by medical an remained at O.S.P. for a total of 8 days. I was housed at the old OSU building with about 70 others recovering from COVID-19. We all were on different medical status like I was on quartine status and had completed 10-20 days in isolated from 8-25-20 to 9-9-20 other inmates from two rivers where on isolation status an still showing signs and symptom of the COVID-19 virus that came after me. The old OSU building at O.S.P. has 3 floors. Myself and other recovering inmates was all mixed together an called up together an placed on the 2nd floor. O.S.C.I. was also evacuated during the state of emergency an mabrity of the 1,500 was placed in O.S.P. multi purpose gym an card room and some placed on the 3rd floor of the old OSU building C.C.C.F. correctional officers staff an medical was present to oversee me until 9-15-2020. C.C.C.F. superintendent Paula Myers an Capt. Rose of operation transferred me to be housed at OSP to protect my health an safety which is within the jurisdiction of the Oregon inspector general an not a grievable matter because its a security threat. When I was placed in the old O.S.P. D.S.U. building as a medical patent C.C.C.F. superintendent Paula Myers and Captin Rose of operations an director of medical Teresa Hannon and O.S.P. superintendent Brandon Kelly and Mr. Wagner of operations all became grossly negligent and reckless because they put my health and safety back at risk C.C.C.F. superintendent Paula Myers and Captin Rose an director of medical Teresa Hannon should have known the old OSU building contains hazardous materials that violate the EPA standards such as the building contains asbestos, black mold, led plumbing causing the building to be condemned an not liveable to house recovering COVID-19 patents. C.C.C.F. medical director Teresa Hannon failed to have instructed an allowed D.O.C. staff to alter medical chart review during the emergency fire evacuation so inmates that was on isolation status and quartine status was all put on recovery status for the purpose of allowing O.S.P. an C.C.C.F. staff to place us all together an cell us up together. Those

Black & Pink PDX

that was on isolation should have been kept separat from me and inmates on quartine status regardless if we all had the COVID-19 virus antibodies which I could not be allegedly reinfected with COVID-19 it does not excuse the misconduct an actions of the herein named parties gross negligence and recklessness because C.C.C.F. medical director Teresa Hannon still knew the medical charts had been altered. Medical chart review for the purpose of putting inmates that was on isolation status around me an placing me in a hazardous building that was not adquately equipped an livable for recovering COVID-19 medical patent/inmates. This violates the EPA standards an the CDC guidlines for prevention measures for being infected with COVID-19 virus for correctional facilitys. I was placed in a filthy cell with another inmate an I was not provided cleaning supplies nor clean clothing an was denied access to my phone priviledges to contact my family also denied access to BHS all for 8 days. O.S.P. superindent Brandon Kelly an operation of security Mr. Wagner knowingly willingly an intentionally allowed C.C.C.F. superintendent Paula Myers an Captin Rose place my health an safety in danger because they knew the old OSU building was not adquate or suitable to house me as a medical patent because of the existing hazardous materials mentioned. On or about 9-15-20 correctional officers was relieved from watching over me an I became into the custody and care of O.S.P. superintendent Brandon Kelly an operations of security Mr. Wagner for 2 days before I was transported back to the custody an care of EOCI 9-18-20."