



U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division

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Mississippi Department of Corrections Investigative Findings and Next Steps

On February 28, 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division and the U.S. Attorney’s Offices for the Northern and Southern Districts of Mississippi announced their findings from a four-year investigation, concluding that conditions at the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, the South Mississippi Correctional Institution, and the Wilkinson County Correctional Facility violate the constitutional rights of the people incarcerated there.

In summary, the Department of Justice identified the following violations:

- **MDOC fails to protect persons incarcerated at these three facilities from widespread physical violence. This is because MDOC fails to adequately supervise people in housing units, stop the flow of contraband, and properly investigate incidents of serious harm. These issues are worsened by poor living conditions and low staffing levels that have allowed gangs to claim control inside the prisons.**
- **MDOC uses restrictive housing (aka “solitary confinement”) in a way that exposes incarcerated people to a substantial risk of serious physical and psychological harm at Wilkinson and Central Mississippi.**

These findings follow the Department’s April 2022 report finding that conditions at the Mississippi State Penitentiary (Parchman) violate the constitutional rights of persons incarcerated there by subjecting them to violence, failing to provide adequate care for serious mental health needs or adequate suicide prevention measures, and using prolonged restrictive housing in a manner that poses a risk of serious harm.

Now that the investigations into Parchman, Central Mississippi, South Mississippi, and Wilkinson are complete, our goal is to work with Mississippi to resolve the identified constitutional violations and implement change.

If you have any questions, ideas for reform, or comments, please feel free to contact the DOJ team:

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or

Mississippi Prisons Team

U.S. Department of Justice – Civil Rights Division

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