

Equal Justice Initiative

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://eji.org/news/private-prison-company-gave-prosecutors-confidential-inmate-phone-calls/>

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06.11.18

Filings in a new lawsuit against private prison company CoreCivic and its technology provider Securus Technologies reveal that more than 1300 private conversations between incarcerated people and their lawyers were recorded at the private pre-trial detention facility in Leavenworth, Kansas.

[Mother Jones](#) reports that the United States Attorneys Office in Kansas authorized the recordings. The federal district court in Kansas appointed a special independent master to investigate the recording of privileged conversations at Leavenworth after footage of an attorney-client meeting there came to light in 2016. The federal court ordered all detention facilities in Kansas and Missouri, including private facilities run by CoreCivic, to stop recording privileged conversations.

The special masters investigation was limited to calls connected with a single drug smuggling case and discovered just 200 recorded calls. The disclosure of 1100 additional calls made between 2011 and 2013 comes a month after the United States Attorneys Office announced it would stop withholding information from the federal investigation.

Prosecutors admitted listening to the recordings in the smuggling case, but *Mother Jones* reports that it is not yet clear whether they listened to any of the other 1100 recordings. Charges and convictions against people incarcerated at Leavenworth could be overturned if a judge finds that prosecutors violated attorney-client privilege by listening to the recordings.

Securus Technologies, the private company that recorded the calls, previously faced legal action for illegally taping privileged communications. According to *Mother Jones*, a hack in 2015 revealed the company had recorded at least 57,000 privileged calls between 2011 and 2014, and in 2016, [The Intercept](#) reported that Securus had settled with indigent defense organizations and individual defense attorneys who alleged in a lawsuit that the company had recorded privileged communications with their clients.

A Private Prison Company Gave 1,300 Recordings of Confidential Inmate Phone Calls to Prosecutors

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