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Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Our Weekly Roundup of News and Views on Solitary Confinement

by [Aviva Stahl](#) | May 7, 2017

A North Carolina man convicted of gang-related murders, and sentenced to eight life sentences, is enduring a heightened form of isolation after being placed on Special Administrative Measures, or SAMs, restrictions on his conditions of incarceration that are usually reserved for accused terrorists. Jamell Cureton is one of only 48 people in Bureau of Prisons custody to be held under SAMs, [according to the Charlotte Observer](#). Because of his unusual status, his access to jailers and fellow prisoners has all but been eliminated. His opportunities to talk to his family have been cut far below that of a normal inmate. Even dealings with his attorneys, normally protected under law, are monitored.

Prison reformers gathered in Albany to press for the passage of legislation that would greatly restrict the use of solitary confinement in New York state prisons. The bill, the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act, would limit to 15 consecutive days the amount of time a person can be placed in solitary and 20 days within a 60 day period, [reported the Times Union](#). It also would provide for out of cell time and limit the criteria under which someone can be confined.

A lawsuit filed has been filed against the St. Joseph County Juvenile Justice Center in South Bend, Indiana, alleging that an 11-year-old with special needs was held in solitary confinement multiple times between December 2016 and April 2017. The suit focuses on the privilege levels of children, saying the boy was held under the most stringent restrictions for up to a week at a time, [according to a local outlet](#).

A Brooklyn man is suing seven New York City correctional officers, alleging that for two days he was starved in solitary confinement in a cell on Rikers Island, and that the guards i want to order xanax online broke his arm when they removed him from isolation. I feared for my life, the man, Marc Lazarre, said in a story reported by [the New York Daily News](#). I was starving. I was dehydrated. I was weak and dizzy.

Alleged Mexican drug lord El Chapo will remain in solitary confinement in the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan, ruled the federal judge in his case. [Reuters](#) reports that Guzman is restricted to his cell for 23 hours a day, with the lights on at all times, and has not been allowed to speak to his wife or other family members. He has one hour of exercise in a small cage with no fresh air or sunlight, according to a March letter to prosecutors from Amnesty International.

Two immigrant detention center in Georgia have been placing asylum seekers and other undocumented migrants in solitary confinement as punishment for going on hunger strike, according to a [report](#) published by Project South and the Penn State Law Center for Immigrants Rights Clinic. The report asserts that the use of segregation as a form of punishment for engaging in a peaceful protest violates basic human rights. By the same token, force-feeding or the threat to force-feed is also a violation of basic human rights and international law. [Shadowproof](#) and other outlets covered the release of the report.

Utah has of one the highest rates of suicide among its state prisoners, a deadly distinction that is pushing state Corrections officials to reevaluate the use of solitary confinement, reports [the Salt Lake Tribune](#). In 2014, the latest year for which such statistics are available, Utah had a prison suicide rate of 44 per 100,000 about three per year. Rhode Islands is 45 per 100,000, according to the bureau.

Aviva Stahl is a Brooklyn-based reporter who writes about science/health at the intersection of mass incarceration, national security, and trans rights. Shes written for the New York Times, Wired, BuzzFeed News, Solitary Watch, and other outlets. Find her [@stahlidarity](#) and at [stahlidarity.com](#).

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 26, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

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so cut a door between adjacent cells making them two man cells, all other conditions remain the same. everyone's happy. a man with 8 drug related murder convictions is a poor poster boy for your cause, you should have thought that through

No, his offense has nothing to do with that. He is already in prison and isn't going anywhere. Do not drag morality into a practical issue.

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