

# Center For Constitutional Rights

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

**<https://ccrjustice.org/home/blog/2020/05/18/news-men-ca-continue-be-held-alone-cells-23-hours-day-0>**

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

The CCR blog

### **Men in CA continue to be held alone in cells 23 hours a day**

On Wednesday, attorneys argued before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, urging the court to uphold a ruling that California prisons have violated a landmark settlement agreement intended to end indefinite solitary confinement. The district court held that the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) violated the 2015 settlement by maintaining prisoners in levels of isolation that are equal to or even more severe than the isolation they experienced in the Special Housing Units (SHU). Samuel Miller, a cooperating attorney with the Center for Constitutional Rights, told the court that this is effectively solitary by another name.

Luis Esquivel, one of the [Ashker v. Governor of California](#) class representatives, wrote in a declaration provided to the court, my average daily out-of-cell time at [Pelican Bay SHU] was greater than my average daily out of cell time at Calipatria. I have limited social interaction and intellectual stimulation. I rarely go outside. It is difficult to find productive uses for my time. I have difficulty maintaining relationships with my family, especially since my ability to use the telephone is so infrequent and irregular. I suffer from insomnia. I am anxious because I do not know what will happen next.

Read more [on our website](#).

### **Our priorities for federal COVID-19 response legislation**

Last Monday, we sent a letter to Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer urging the House to include bold, rights-based policies in the latest House-led COVID-19 legislative response.

It is incumbent upon the government to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights to life, health, a decent wage, and safe working conditions. This was true before the pandemic; it is true and even more critical now. With no end in sight to the pandemic, this urgent situation demands innovative policies to effect long-overdue and necessary structural change, the letter reads.

In the letter, we outlined six priorities and principles that must be centered in any legislative responses to the coronavirus pandemic:

Read the letter in its entirety [on our website](#).

### **TODAY: Join us in court by phone as we urge the district court to block public charge rules amid the pandemic**

At 10:00 a.m. EDT, lawyers from the Center for Constitutional Rights, The Legal Aid Society, National Immigration Law Center, and Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP will join the New York State Attorney Generals office arguing (via phone) before a federal district court judge regarding three related lawsuits challenging several Trump administration public charge rules and a preliminary injunction to stop enforcement during the COVID-19 pandemic. The rules penalize immigrants who access certain public benefits or are deemed at risk of someday needing public benefits. These rules primarily affect low-income immigrants of color and are particularly harmful during the current public health crisis, as they cause families to forgo much-needed healthcare, food, and housing assistance.

To listen via phone, dial in to (888) 363-4749 and use the access code 4523890.

[View the discussion thread.](#)

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