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Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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by [Aviva Stahl](#) | August 3, 2014

[Solitary confinement news roundup](#)



The following roundup features noteworthy news, reports and opinions on solitary confinement from the past week that have not been covered in other Solitary Watch posts.

Californias Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) [introduced new policies](#) that limit the use of force against prisoners with mental illness, including establishing strict restrictions on cell extractions from solitary confinement. Mental health practitioners will now conduct evaluations and attempt to de-escalate the situation before force is used. The policy also mandates CDCR to transfer inmates with mental illness out of solitary confinement more quickly.

[The New York Times](#) published an in-depth article about a Tennessee man who died after being forcibly extracted from his solitary confinement cell at Riverbend Maximum Security Institution. The article also includes images from the extraction.

Several outlets published articles on Kenny Zulu Whitmore, who has spent the last 28 years in solitary confinement but may soon be released into general population. The warden at Louisianas Angola Prison, where Whitmore is housed, has said hed rather have [Whitmore] out but has also expressed concern about Whitmores longstanding affiliation with the Black Panther Party. (See [The Advocate](#), [Time](#))

[Vice](#) published an article about the terrorist that wasnt, Talha Ahsan, who is due to return to his family in the UK after being given time served on material support charges. Ahsan spent about two years in solitary confinement at Northern Correctional Institute in Connecticut.

[The Hill](#) published a blog about Florence ADX by Angela Wright, a researcher at Amnesty International who visited the prison in 2001.

The Jails Action Coalition [held another protest](#) outside of the Bronx DAs office, calling for the prosecution of correctional officers responsible for the death of an individual on Rikers Island last year. Bradley Ballard was found unresponsive in his cell after spending seven days in solitary confinement; he had been denied access to medical care and life-saving medication. His death has since been ruled a homicide.

A number of local papers published stories and Op-eds in response to last weeks revelations, published in the State Journal, about the use of solitary confinement in Wisconsin prisons. (See [State Journal](#), [Post Crescent](#), [Urban Milwaukee](#), [Journal Sentinel](#)).

An undocumented individual held at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma [has allegedly been placed in solitary confinement](#) after going on hunger strike. This is the second time this year that detainees have refused food, in protest of both the conditions at Northwest and the broader failure of the Obama administration to reform the immigration system.

Brooklyn Defender Services published an article on the [Huffington Post](#) entitled, Policymakers Must Include Incarcerated People in Jail Reform Process.

The trial has begun in the case of Lester Alford, [who is suing the state](#) of New Jersey after allegedly enduring conditions that amounted to cruel and unusual punishment and a violation of his constitutional rights. Alford spent several years in solitary confinement, where he claims he was not allowed to clean his cell and was forced to sleep on a wet mattress.

[Creative Time Reports](#) published an article by Laurie Jo Reynolds and Stephen Eisenman, describing in detail the successful campaign to close Tamms supermax prison in Illinois.

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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