

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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by [Aviva Stahl](#) | February 15, 2015

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.

Last year, the Ohio Department of Youth Services [decreased its use of segregation](#) by two-thirds, according to a report released by the states Correctional Institution Inspection Committee. The changes were instituted following an agreement with the US Department of Justice.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Montana released a [report](#) entitled Locked in the Past: Montanas Jails in Crisis, which focuses in part on the widespread use of segregation. According to the authors, one disturbing trend [in the states facilities] is the lack of any limits on the amount of time individuals can be isolated. (Covered by [The Bozeman Daily Chronicle](#)).

The last incarcerated member of the Angola 3, Albert Woodfox, has been [again indicted](#) by a grand jury for the 1972 death of a prison guard. Woodfox has been convicted for the same murder twice before, but both convictions have been thrown out on appeal.

According to [report](#) recently released by the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the South Carolina Department of Corrections has been issuing disciplinary violations to prisoners who access Facebook, even when done so indirectly, for example through a family member. Records accessed through FOIA requests revealed that one individual was sentenced to 37 years in solitary as a result of repeated Facebook usage. (Covered by [Slate](#)).

New Jersey [held a hearing](#) on the use of solitary confinement in the states prisons and the need for change. A bill recently introduced into the New Jersey State Legislature aims to reduce the amount of time that incarcerated individuals can be held in isolation while requiring corrections officials to develop feasible alternatives.

The mother of an individual who hung himself in a Rikers Island solitary confinement cell in 2013 has [filed a wrongful-death lawsuit](#) against the city. Quannell Offley had threatened to kill himself repeatedly but received no mental health treatment in the days leading up to his death; one guard allegedly dared him to commit suicide.

The [World-Herald Bureau](#) published an in-depth investigation into the placement of individuals with mental illness in solitary confinement in Nebraska prisons. The piece focuses on the experiences of Chris Seaton, who was diagnosed with mental illness as a young child, and now at age 29 spends 23 hours per day in isolation.

According to whistleblower emails acquired by a Fox31 investigative reporter, Colorado DOC officials have been giving state and federal lawmakers misleading information about the DOC's success in reducing the number of individual with mental illness being placed in administrative segregation. The [article](#) specifies that the whistleblower call[ed] the reduction number overstated.

Aviva Stahl is a Brooklyn-based reporter who writes about science/health at the intersection of mass incarceration, national security, and trans rights. She's 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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