

# Just Detention International

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://justdetention.org/what-we-do/helping-prisoner-rape-survivors/>

## Policy Issue Resources

All survivors of sexual abuse no matter where the abuse happens deserve support and compassion.

Just like rape survivors on the outside, those on the inside often struggle with feelings of fear, shame, anger, and isolation. Yet while survivors in the community are likely to be able to contact loved ones or 24-hour hotlines, or to seek in-person counseling, prisoners are often completely cut off from such support. One of JDI's top priorities is to make sure that prisoner rape survivors can get the help they need to heal.

Every day, JDI gets letters from prisoners who have been sexually assaulted. We respond to each survivor who contacts us, letting them know that they are not alone, that the abuse was not their fault, and that healing is possible. To help them cope and rebuild their lives, JDI has developed a Survivor Packet, which includes [Hope for Healing](#), our self-help guide; contact information for local rape crisis centers and legal aid organizations; and a letter of hope from another prisoner rape survivor.

JDI also trains rape crisis counselors to help survivors inside prisons and jails a setting where many counselors have limited experience. We helped make sure that national standards for prisons and jails addressing sexual abuse, released in 2012, require detention facilities to work with community-based organizations to offer crisis counseling and follow-up care to survivors. We believe that survivors in detention should be able to get the same help and care that is available to those on the outside.

If you or someone you know has been sexually abused behind bars and would like support or information, including JDI's Survivor Packet, please contact Leelyn Aquino, Operations Director, at [laquino@justdetention.org](mailto:laquino@justdetention.org) or by phone at 213-384-1400 x110.

People in detention may contact JDI via confidential, legal mail at the following address:

Cynthia Totten, Esq.  
CA Attorney Reg. #199266  
3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340  
Los Angeles, CA 90010

JDI's Resource Guide lists service providers in all 50 states that can help incarcerated survivors

The sexual assaults left me feeling devastated. But I also became committed to ensuring that no one ever has to go through what I did. To find the strength to fight back, I needed the support of a movement behind me a movement made up of people on the outside who care about human rights. Thank you so much for believing in me!