

ADDENDUM to 9.21 Press Release - TIMELINE AND SPECIFICS

Please contact asteinberg@plsma.org for more information

- In **September 2021**, BIJAN, PLS MA, Alianza para Movilizar Nuestra Resistencia (AMOR), and Never Again Action Boston, in collaboration with families and directly impacted individuals, sent a [letter](#) to ICE Field Director Todd Lyons and Sheriff Joseph McDonald, as well as to the Department of Homeland Security Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL).

Therein, detained people reported being “threatened with being placed in solitary confinement, transferred out of state or deported” if they filed formal complaints. Others observed religious discrimination and correctional officers’ (CO) use of “racial epithets and other xenophobic and discriminatory terms.” On one occasion, COs “reportedly dragged an older man out of his cell, despite being told by other detained individuals that the man was having trouble communicating in English... handcuffed him, sat him in a disciplinary restraint chair, covered his mouth, tied his arms and legs, put a covering over his face and proceeded to kick him.”

- In **November 2021**, CRCL conducted a “spot check,” acknowledging “a quick succession of serious allegations... related to discrimination, excessive use of force, language access, and the provision of medical and mental health care.” Finding a full investigation warranted, CRCL sent a [memorandum](#) to Plymouth in **January 2022**. The complaints they reported receiving included the following:

“[Redacted]... described an alleged incident... wherein he claimed that a 65-year-old detained individual ‘complained he did not want to share a cell’ and, in response, ‘guards held the man down in his wheelchair, pepper sprayed him, and then took him to solitary confinement.’ [Redacted] also stated that, on the same date, he spoke up about what happened and was also pepper sprayed.”

“[Redacted] made several allegations concerning the conditions of detention at PCCF, including: 1) the facility is unsanitary and unsafe; 2) detainees are served spoiled food; 3) detainees are locked in their cells for 16 hours a day; 4) detainees are not provided with recreation; 5) detainees are not accommodated with requested religious meals; 6) the law library is inadequate; 7) detainees are not provided medical attention; and 8) he had received inadequate medical care for pain and bed sores.”

“[Redacted] alleged that [Redacted] had been injured by an officer the previous week and sustained a broken nose, split tongue and was pepper sprayed... CRCL received three separate emails from individuals describing [Redacted]’s alleged injuries and requesting his release.”

- In **February 2022**, CRCL conducted a “virtual investigation” of PCCF, and in **March 2022** flagged additional “serious allegations of retaliation that CRCL received from a combined 39 ICE detainees at PCCF.” These included “verbal mistreatment by officers

and medical staff,” “housing unit searches during which officers threw detainees’ belongings on the ground and/or threw belongings away,” “uncooked food,” and “officers urinating in the closet where the detainees’ cleaning supplies are kept, and in the showers used by the detainees.”

- In **September 2022**, CRCL identified in a [memorandum](#) to ICE’s Executive Associate Director of Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) no less than seventy-one priority recommendations for Plymouth based on findings over the preceding year. Although many of these remain fully or partially redacted, subject matter experts express clear concerns regarding PCCF’s non-compliance with Performance Based National Detention Standards (NDS 2019):

“PCCF’s grievance log... is handwritten, and some entries are not legible... CRCL identified grievances where the detainee’s complaint was only partially addressed. This is especially concerning when the issue that was not addressed in the complaint involved staff misconduct.”

“Post use of force assessments were not always contained in detainee medical records.”

“ICE does not consistently respond to [Limited English Proficient] detainee requests in a language understood by the detainee... PCCF requires LEP detainees to sign some critical facility and medical forms without any notation that translation or interpretation services have been provided.”

“Detainees are not sent to specialty care providers as ordered by the PCCF provider. CRCL discovered that these referrals were for significant medical conditions such as head trauma, nasal fracture, referrals to a neurologist, hand surgeon, orthopedic surgeon, ophthalmologist, and ear nose and throat (ENT) doctor.”

“Clinical documentation for detainees on suicide watch is inadequate... [D]ocumentation of clinical rationale for [mental health] diagnoses and prescribed medication was not located.”

Most recently, in **March 2023**, BIJAN, PLS MA, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, MIRA Coalition, New Haven Legal Assistance Association, and Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinical Program, along with allied organizations, filed a [civil rights complaint](#) with the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office. Therein, advocates, community organizations, formerly detained people, and family members expressed serious concerns about attorney access, mail and phone access, confidentiality, improper strip searches, and language access, among other reported federal and state violations.