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*[Content warning: this press release mentions SA, r*pe]*

**Survivors of Sexual Violence by Prison Officials at FCI Dublin
File Class Action Lawsuit**

Since an AP investigation exposed what staff called “the rape club,” eight former FCI Dublin employees have faced criminal charges & survivors have condemned the abuse as systemic

Oakland, Calif. – This morning, eight survivors of staff sexual abuse and retaliation at Federal Correctional Institution Dublin—a federal women’s prison in Dublin, California—and the California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP) filed a class action [lawsuit](#) against the Bureau of Prisons, FCI Dublin officials, and several individual officers. The case was filed in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. The plaintiffs are represented by Rights Behind Bars (RBB), Rosen Bien Galvan & Grunfeld LLP (RBGG), and the California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (CCIJ).

This case is a putative class action on behalf of all people incarcerated at FCI Dublin, where inadequate systems for preventing, detecting, investigating, and responding to staff sexual abuse put everyone at the facility at risk. The plaintiffs in this case have endured horrific abuse and exploitation at the hands of prison employees, including but not limited to: rape and sexual assault; manipulation and sexual coercion; rampant degrading sexual comments; voyeurism and taking and sharing explicit photos; drugging, groping, and other forms of abuse during medical exams; and targeted abuse towards immigrant women leveraging the threat of deportation.

“We are someone's mom, we are someone's daughter. We are here to be rehabilitated, but when we are abused, we cannot be,” said **G.M., a named plaintiff** in the suit. “We are asking for change, and for these officers and this system to be held accountable.”

“Things need to change in this prison, and the BOP has shown that they aren’t going to make changes on their own,” said **A.V., a CCWP member currently incarcerated at FCI Dublin**, “Prison staff act like because we are in prison, we don’t have rights. But we do have rights, and sexual abuse and harassment and retaliation were not part of our sentences.”

"We cannot prosecute our way to a solution to the crisis at FCI Dublin," said **Amaris Montes, attorney at Rights Behind Bars**, "this isn't a case of a few bad apples, we need systemic change that ensures survivors are released and receive care and that promotes safety for all those remaining inside."

The Bureau of Prisons has long been aware of the problems at FCI Dublin. In 1995, three women incarcerated at FCI Dublin were sexually assaulted after guards let incarcerated men into their cells. These women filed a civil rights lawsuit (*Lucas v. White*, Case No. 96-2905TEH (ND Cal)), against the prison, and won a large settlement in 1998. Since then, numerous investigations and reports have found that abuse and harassment are serious and ongoing problems in the prison. FCI Dublin is not the only prison where these atrocities persist. According to an [AP investigation](#), “the same year some of the women at Dublin complained, there were 422 complaints of staff-on-inmate sexual abuse across the system of 122 prisons and 153,000 inmates.”

Emily Shapiro, a member of California Coalition for Women Prisoners, emphasized: “The abuse at Dublin and the lack of oversight that’s enabled this abuse to persist and repeat itself for decades is baked into the carceral and immigration systems. So many of those impacted by staff abuse at Dublin are immigrants and officers have used the threat of deportation to try and silence them. Survivors and witnesses need to be released, protected, and returned to their families and communities.”

Over the past several years, people incarcerated at FCI Dublin started [speaking out](#) about ongoing sexual, physical, and psychological abuse by prison staff. The facility became the center of a massive criminal investigation, Congressional inquiries, and national press attention. Eight former staff members at FCI Dublin—including the former Warden Ray Garcia and the former Chaplain—have been charged with sexually abusing people in their custody, with more charges likely forthcoming. Despite increased public awareness and investigations, FCI Dublin has failed to remedy the systemic problems that created a culture of sexual violence and shielded the worst perpetrators from accountability.

“The entire system of preventing and responding to sexual abuse is broken,” added **Kara Janssen, Senior Counsel at RBGG**, “BOP must take immediate action to address rampant misconduct in its ranks, broken reporting systems, and ongoing retaliation or the abuse will continue.”

“Over and over, prison officials abuse the people in their custody. Over and over, brave survivors gather the strength to speak out. Year after year, from jails to prisons to immigration detentions, the violence is repeated,” said **Susan Beaty, Senior Attorney with CCIJ**. “As long as prisons exist, the people confined to their walls will face sexual abuse. Enough is enough.”

Alongside the complaint, the plaintiffs will also file a Motion for Preliminary Injunction, to immediately remedy many of the systemic problems at FCI Dublin. The motion is supported by over forty declarations from people currently and formerly incarcerated at FCI Dublin, describing heinous and ongoing abuse and harassment. Plaintiffs are asking the court to order the BOP to:

- end retaliation against people who report staff misconduct, including punitive placement in solitary confinement, transfers to other facilities, and cell and strip searches;
- immediately remove staff who have substantiated claims of abuse against them;
- ensure access to high-quality, community-based medical and mental healthcare for all people at FCI Dublin;

- ensure access to counsel, including confidential legal calls and visits;
- support survivors' requests for release and visas for noncitizen victims of crime; and
- allow an audit, regular inspections and reports, and ongoing monitoring by a third-party organization.

You can read the full complaint [here](#).

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Formed in 2021, the [Dublin Prison Solidarity Coalition](#) is a partnership of people currently and formerly at FCI Dublin and their supporters. Coalition members include the [ACLU of Northern California](#), the [California Coalition for Women Prisoners](#), the [California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice](#), [Dolores Street Community Services](#), and [Rights Behind Bars](#).