

Name: John O'Connor
Title: Formerly Incarcerated
Organization or Agency:
Topic: Meeting Date Not Listed
NA

Testimony:

Good afternoon my name is John O'Connor I am a formally Incarcerated individual who served a 12 year sentence. 11 of those years were served in 3 different Correctional institutions. My term of incarceration was from Sept 22 2015-July 2025. I then transitioned into a community work release. I started at Hartford County and for being a county Jail (pre sentence) believe it or not conditions were not the worst. Very surprising for the type of setting and high volume of those entering and exiting. Once I was sentenced in 2015 I was transferred to Macdougall Correctional in Suffield CT. I spent 7 years there in 3 different housing units. Let me clearly state by no means am I bitter or being vindictive in any way. I take full responsibility for my actions that lead to that period of Incarceration. I will say that the housing conditions are well beyond any reasonable standard especially the shower and bathroom area that the entire housing unit has to use. The condition of the shower are especially the ceilings. They are covered with black mold. That's the entire ceiling. I was assigned as a unit Tierman) responsible for cleaning that area. I would constantly report the condition of the ceilings and for years this was ignored. I was also responsible for the cleaning of individual shower stalls(individual shower stall) stainless steel that had such a build up of who knows what. No matter how hard it was scrubbed it would not remove that material. The floor drains were constantly clogged and water would not drain. Not only did this cause a terrible odor but we were forced to stand in water that would cover our feet. This would lead to many having a medical issue. Even with constant reporting to unit staff and those in higher up position including the facility ward on and Correctional Commissioner these concerns fell on deaf ears. From what I associated with from other housing units conditions are the same. I was then chosen to be housed at Walker CI as a permanent party worker. I spent 3 years at Walker in (P Pod) this unit is strictly for those who are permanent party workers assigned to different areas within the facility. One of my jobs was a bio hazard janitor. I along with one other individual were responsible for all blood spills any type of bio hazard clean up. I was never provided any training. Yes I was given PPE. This led to another responsibility of weekly power washing of all the showers in each of the housing units as well as cells when individuals who were housed in a cell would cover themselves with feces or other body fluids. The showers in C1 and especially C2 were covered with thick black mold that eventually spread into the housing unit main ceiling area and on some walls. The power washing was just putting a bandaid over the cause. The ventilation system is so dirty and clogged with hair , skin , soap and toilet paper. Maintenance rarely cleans out the vents. Once again several work orders were issued and totally ignored. As I mentioned this is a serious matter in all the housing units. As well as rusted shower doors. I am fully aware that Correctional Institutions are not 5 star resorts they are designed for a purpose. This does not mean one should be housed with these conditions. At the end of the day regardless of what one maybe accused of a incarcerated individual is still a human being that should be treated with dignity.