

ACLU of Wisconsin: After prison population increase, the ACLU of Wisconsin calls on leadership to reduce incarcerated population during pandemic

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The ACLU of Wisconsin today released a statement calling on Governor Evers and Secretary Carr to take whatever measures necessary to decrease the prison population as the COVID-19 pandemic flares up in rural communities where many prisons are housed.

Sean Wilson, Smart Justice Campaign Manager of the ACLU of Wisconsin released the following statement:

“The risk to Wisconsin’s incarcerated population from COVID-19 is not over. In fact, it is only increasing. The governor and the Wisconsin Department of Corrections must take much stronger steps than those taken so far to save lives both in and outside of prison walls. Prison systems throughout the country have seen numerous outbreaks of serious disease and death within their walls. Wisconsin could be next if it does not respond with more urgency that it has shown so far.”

“After four months of reducing the prison population by less than 8%, the population in Wisconsin’s prisons has actually grown for the past three weeks as the

system accepts new prisoners. Those new prisoners are entering a system which remains overcrowded, a place where social distancing is impossible and coronavirus can spread like wildfire in an outbreak.”

“The ACLU of Wisconsin continues to call on Governor Evers to immediately use the powers available to him under the Wisconsin Constitution to commute the sentences of individuals who are within six months of being released. System-wide testing for COVID-19 must continue and with greater frequency. Personal protective equipment and sanitizing supplies must be made available to everyone within the prisons. Wearing masks, temperature checks, and symptom monitoring should also be mandatory for all prison staff.”

This statement can be found online here:

<https://www.aclu-wi.org/en/news/after-prison-population--increase-aclu-wisconsin-calls-leadership-reduce-incarcerated-population>