

SWORN STATEMENT NO.43

FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY JAIL

We do not have cell phone footage of abuses inside prisons and jails. I am reading the following sworn testimony from a person held in the Prince George's County Jail to lift this veil of secrecy and hold our justice system accountable.

I was a detainee at the Prince George's County Jail from April 26, 2020 until May 22, 2020.

When I first got to the jail, I felt good. But after about two weeks in, I had a headache, a sore throat, and a cough. It came out of the blue.

A couple of days before I was released, I was tested for COVID-19. I had to sign a piece of paper to get tested. About a day or so after I got home, I got a phone call from a woman telling me that I had tested positive.

For the whole time I was at the jail, they were not checking symptoms. During temperature checks, they just take your temperature and don't ask any questions. There was only one time when anyone asked me if I was okay. To get your temperature taken, you have to put your head through the slot in the cell door. I came up to the slot holding my head.

The nurse yelled at me and said "we're not playing." I told the nurse I'd had a headache for days and it was messing with my eyes. She didn't ask me any questions about my headache or about anything else. I told her that the nurses aren't doing anything about the coronavirus except temperature checks. The nurse threatened to send me to isolation.

After that, no one asked me anything about how I was feeling again. If you ask the nurses too many questions, they will curse you out. I've heard nurses say "fuck you" to inmates. I've heard them call inmates "bitches."

The Cos don't seem to care either. When we tell them something is wrong, they think it's a joke. And not just about the coronavirus. It's any medical problem. The COs curse us out too. They call us "n--s." They would let you die in here.

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After the nurse didn't do anything to help me with my symptoms, I told my lawyer about my headache. My lawyer pressed the issue and they finally took me to medical. When I got to medical, the nurse asked me what was going on. By then, I was feeling better, and I told her that. She did not ask me any questions. I was not isolated or tested for COVID. She just sent me back to my cell in H-8.

When I was released, they made us wait in a little hallway and then in another little room. There were five or so of us in there. There's not a lot of space. We were maybe three feet apart. Not everyone was wearing a mask. I was in the hallway with the people getting released for about an hour and in a separate room for about an hour. They weren't being careful or thinking about anyone's safety.

I live with my parents, sister, and daughter. Before I got the call telling me I tested positive, I was kissing and hugging my daughter. Since finding out, I have been trying to keep my distance from my parents and my daughter. COVID-19 is causing me to have to distance from my family and that has been affecting me.