

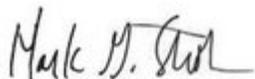
## **New report outlines the need for advocacy for inmates with mental illness in segregation.**

Between 80,000 and 100,000 inmates are currently segregated in prison cells nationwide for 22-24 hours per day, for days, months, years, and in some cases decades at a time. Segregation disproportionately affects inmates with mental illness and research shows that individuals may acquire symptoms of mental illness, or experience exacerbated symptoms of mental illness, as a result of the conditions in segregation. Today, the Amplifying Voices of Inmates with Disabilities (AVID) Prison Project, in partnership with the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) and the federally mandated protection and advocacy (P&A) agencies in over 20 states across the country, released [Locked Up and Locked Down: Segregation of Inmates with Mental Illness](#). The report outlines the advocacy efforts undertaken on behalf of inmates with mental illness in segregation by the P&A network, and calls for greater national prison reform measures.

"Segregation is harmful for all inmates, but it's particularly harmful for inmates with mental illness who have unique therapeutic needs that are generally unavailable in prisons," says Anna Guy, AVID attorney and author of the report. "In drafting this report, we found that inmates with mental illness from all over the country are routinely placed in the most restrictive forms of segregated housing where they receive even less mental health care and are treated even more harshly than other inmates in segregation for serious rules violations, resulting in increased punishment solely on the basis of their disability."

The report contains examples of both litigation and non-litigation advocacy cases from 21 P&As, and illustrates the sensory deprivation, psychiatric decompensation, and behaviors relating to self-harm and suicide experienced by inmates with mental illness in segregation across the country. According to the report, segregation means that inmates with mental illness are repeatedly excluded from mental health treatment, programming, and services that support rehabilitation and re-entry. Report findings include limited access to mental health treatment, punishment for disability-related behaviors with increased segregation and restraint, the worsening of inmates' psychiatric symptoms, and death related to the conditions in segregation.

Thank you for reviewing and sharing this report,



Mark Stroh

Executive Director  
Disability Rights Washington

The AVID Prison Project is a collaboration between Arizona Center for Disability, Disability Law Colorado, The Advocacy Center of Louisiana, Disability Rights New York, Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities of South Carolina, Disability Rights Texas, Disability Rights Washington, and the National Disability Rights Network.

