

# Warden, guard injured in Alabama prison riot posted on Facebook

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**A prison in Alabama was placed on lockdown Saturday when a riot involving about 100 inmates erupted, according to the state Corrections Department. The warden and a guard were stabbed in the melee at the William C. Holman Correctional Facility.**

The trouble started after two inmates began fighting in a dormitory at the facility in Atmore, about 50 miles north of Mobile, [Reuters](#) reports. The riot broke out late Friday, the department said in a statement. The guard was stabbed while trying to detain one of the inmates.

Warden Carter Davenport was stabbed when he and several other officials entered the dorm. Davenport and the guard did not sustain life-threatening injuries.

At least one fire was set by inmates at the facility, which houses Alabama's death row, [Vice News](#) reports. Prisoners also used contraband cell phones, documenting the melee for the social media.

The facility has 1,031 beds, with many inmates serving life without parole. There are 168 cells set aside for death row inmates. Executions are carried out on site in the state's only death chamber.

Three emergency response teams arrived to quell the riot, which was confined to a housing unit in the prison, local reports said. Prison officials declined to comment about the status of the situation when Vice News contacted them on Saturday afternoon.

Video footage posted online showed inmates walking through the prison, with one inmate saying "It's going down in this b\*\*\*h." The footage also showed one inmate tending a small fire while waving what looks like a makeshift sword.

Many of Alabama's prisons, including Holman, are critically overcrowded. And Holman is known among inmates as "The Slaughterhouse," the "House of Pain," and the "Slaughter Pen of the South,"



The William C.  
Holman Correctional  
Facility, Atmore, AL  
Alabama Dept of  
Corrections

because so many stabbings occur there, including the fatal stabbing of inmate Lawrence Utley, 76, in April 2015.

Correctional facilities in the state are designed to house up to 13,318 inmates, but recent data shows there were 24,770 prisoners were held there as of January 2015.

A federal lawsuit was filed against the Alabama Department of Corrections in 2014 by the **Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)** and the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program. The lawsuit alleged there was a consistent failure to address medical and mental health needs of inmates, and there was discrimination against disabled prisoners.

An especially critical report by the **SPLC** delineated ways in which inmates were being mistreated in Alabama's prisons, Vice News reports. It found that untreated hepatitis C was rampant, and only four out of the 2,144 prisoners with hepatitis C were receiving treatment. One prisoner at Holman died from complications of the disease after not receiving treatment. Other inmates who weren't treated suffered jaundice when their livers began to fail as the disease progressed.

Alabama prisons were also seriously ill-equipped to treat mental health problems and only had a small fraction of the recommended number of psychologists on staff.

With such overcrowding amid poor conditions, perhaps the inmates' anger boiled over.

A riot similar to Saturday's erupted at Holman in 2011 when a situation between a guard and an inmate over a contraband cellphone escalated. Inmates gained control of an entire dorm, refusing to comply with a team of corrections officers wearing riot gear.

Alabama Department of Corrections spokesman Bob Horton didn't disclose what weapon was used to stab the warden and the prison guard, but Davenport's injuries were treated at the prison, while the guard was treated at a medical facility elsewhere, the department said, **CNN** reports.

Emergency response team officers eventually detained inmates and ended the riot.

The riot is the second violent incident within a week inside the state's prison system, **Fox News** reports.

Monday a corrections officer was stabbed at the St. Clair Correctional facility in Springville. Once again the officer was trying to break up a fight between two inmates. And last November, another officer was stabbed at St. Clair.

In 2015, six inmates were killed in inmate-on-inmate assaults in 2015, according to earlier information from the department.

The state's jam-packed prison system has reached a breaking point, said Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley, addressing the incidents.

"A volatile mix of overcrowding and under-staffing have created an environment that is dangerous to both inmates as well as the corrections officers who serve our state," Bentley said in a statement.

The state, he said, must take the necessary steps to ease the situation and solve the problem. Overcrowding is a situation that must be addressed to solve the situation.

"We must reduce overcrowding and provide facilities that are safer and more secure for both inmates and corrections officers."

The problem is going to continue to get worse until the issue of overcrowding is dealt with, said Sen. Cam Ward said, per The Associated Press, Fox News reports.

Such overcrowding in a small, confined place is dangerous for officers and inmates alike, he noted.

"Anybody who has been inside the facilities knows what a dangerous situation those officers work in every day," he said.

Information from the Department of Corrections monthly statistical report for December, show that prison facilities in the state were at 182.3 percent of capacity.

Earlier this year, Bentley proposed legislation to spend \$800 million on prison construction, CNN reports.

The proposed legislation includes construction four new prisons. Each of the men's prisons would house, 3,500 prisoners, and a 1,200-bed women's facility would be built. Obsolete facilities would be torn down.

It's reported that 14 prisons would close and the state would rake in savings from reductions in operating and employee expenses.

As yet, the legislation has not been voted on.