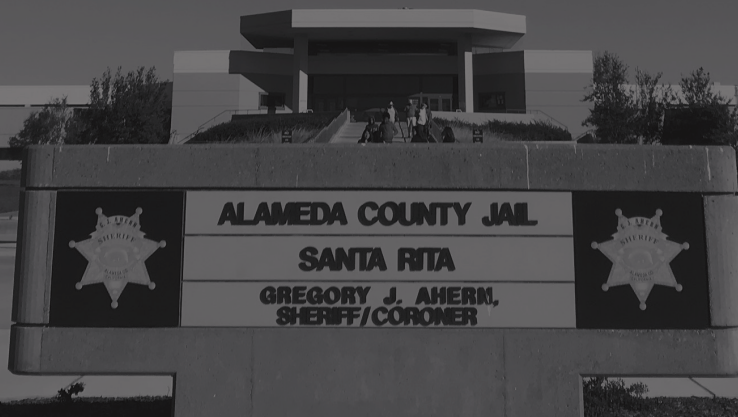


# SANTA RITA JAIL WEEKLY UPDATE

*FEBRUARY 1–7, 2021*



**STATISTICS AS OF FEBRUARY 7, 2021.**

**NOTE: GIVEN THE LOW TESTING RATE, ALL COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED UNDERESTIMATIONS**

**2198**

**JAIL POPULATION**

**534**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF  
POSITIVE COVID-19  
TESTS SINCE APRIL**

**14**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF NEW  
POSITIVE COVID-19  
TESTS IN PAST WEEK**

**23%**

**OF JAIL POPULATION  
TESTED IN PAST WEEK\***

**14**

**PEOPLE WITH  
COVID-19  
("DARK RED")**

**12**

**PEOPLE WITH  
COVID-19 SYMPTOMS  
("RED")**

**19**

**NUMBER OF HOUSING  
PODS QUARANTINED  
THIS WEEK\*\***

**3**

**NUMBER OF HOUSING  
PODS UNDERGOING SERIAL  
TESTING THIS WEEK**

## **NOTES ON STATISTICS**

\* Santa Rita Jail's testing rates are currently much higher than during previous outbreaks. During previous outbreaks, an average of 7-10% of the jail population was tested within any given week. The implementation of serial testing means that some individuals will be tested multiple times, so testing coverage is likely below this for the entire jail population.

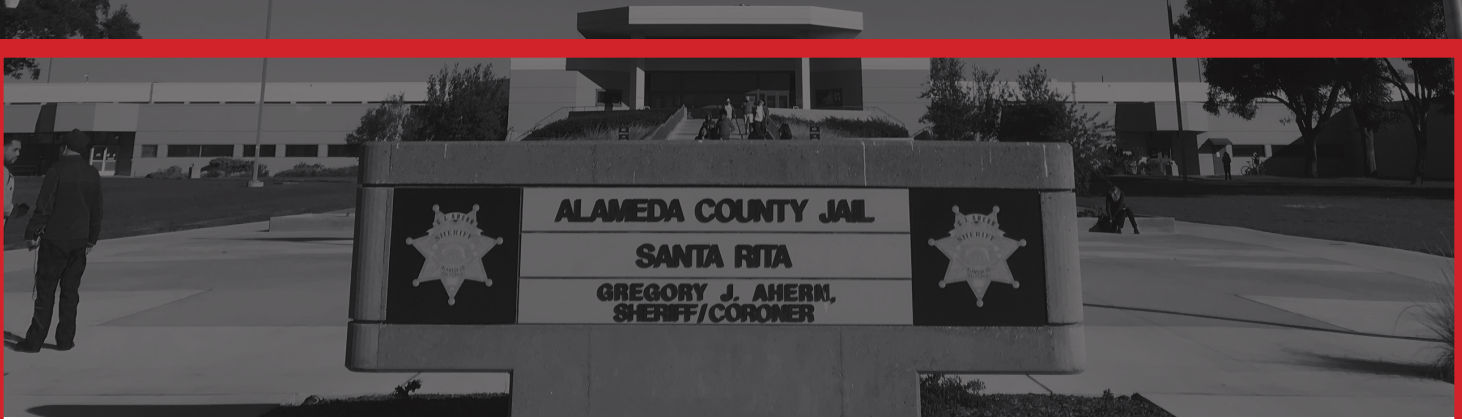
\*\* Housing Units in Santa Rita Jail have been quarantined repeatedly, some numerous times just in one month. This causes stress and anxiety, results in canceled court dates, and reduces people's contact with their legal and emotional support

systems. Every single dorm-style unit in Santa Rita Jail has been quarantined at least once in just the past month.

For more complete statistics and COVID-19 quarantines, please visit [bit.ly/SRJCOVID-19](https://bit.ly/SRJCOVID-19).

For information about the Santa Rita Jail Hotline, please contact [srjhotline@nlgf.org](mailto:srjhotline@nlgf.org).

For more information about the SRJ Solidarity Weekly Updates and testimony-gathering project, please contact [info@srjsolidarity.org](mailto:info@srjsolidarity.org).



## UPDATE ON COVID-19 INSIDE THE JAIL

**A** COVID-19 outbreak which began in December has continued to infect people in Santa Rita Jail. As of Sunday, February 7, cases were still in the double digits. The jail's quarantine and testing protocol has become the subject of scrutiny due to the jail's lack of safety measures for dormitory-style housing units where many people share the same airspace and sleep less than 2 feet apart.

- **On Thursday, January 28**, the entire dormitory-style Housing Unit 34 was placed under quarantine. In pods A through C, someone began to show symptoms. But in pods D through F, the quarantine was due to "close contact with a COVID-19 positive case." Despite the exposure, there is no indication that the jail offered universal testing to dorm residents during the first week of February, and pods D through F remain quarantined.
- **On Monday, February 1**, a woman in Housing Unit 24 reported that deputies took down a sign in her pod which

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***THE JAIL'S QUARANTINE AND TESTING PROTOCOL HAS BECOME THE SUBJECT OF SCRUTINY DUE TO THE JAIL'S LACK OF SAFETY MEASURES FOR DORMITORY-STYLE HOUSING UNITS WHERE MANY PEOPLE SHARE THE SAME AIRSPACE AND SLEEP LESS THAN 2 FEET APART.***

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***A CALLER IN HOUSING UNIT 6 CALLED LATER THAT DAY TO MAKE A SIMILAR REPORT: DEPUTIES CONSISTENTLY REMOVE THEIR MASKS OR DON'T WEAR THEM PROPERLY OVER BOTH THE NOSE AND MOUTH.***

indicated that the pod's residents are high-risk. She filed a grievance, and within an hour the sign was put back up. She feels that is part of a larger pattern of carelessness by Santa Rita Jail.

- **On Wednesday, February 3**, a caller reported that Deputies in Housing Unit 4 don't wear their masks when the Sergeant is not in the Housing Unit. A caller in Housing Unit 6 called later that day to make a similar report: deputies consistently remove their masks or don't wear them properly over both the nose and mouth.

## COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT AND RETALIATION: THE NORM IN SANTA RITA

**Retaliation and collective punishment are tactics used by institutions to chill collective resistance and turn people against each other. Santa Rita employs these tactics regularly in what prisoners see as an extraordinary double standard.**

After an incident involving 2 women in Housing Unit 24, the jail's response – in the middle of a pandemic – was to take away sanitizing wipes from everyone in the unit.



Raiding everyone's room, housing deputies upended people's belongings, confiscated possessions, and threw away food – all in an effort to confiscate wipes which only a week before were handed out in bulk to facilitate the cleaning of telephones, door handles, and other shared surfaces that may spread germs. Cleaning supplies which were already scarce have now dwindled to next to nothing. Multiple kitchen workers' clothes were confiscated, leaving them without any clothing to change into after doing dishes, mopping, and taking out garbage for the entire jail. Another woman reported that deputies threw away all of her letters, cards, and mailing addresses, leaving her with no way to contact her family. In the week following the raid, Deputy scrutiny has remained high and women have subsequently been written up for so-called offenses such as "possessing excessive plastic bottles."

On the other side of the jail, in Housing Unit 6, recreation time was eliminated and out-of-cell time drastically limited when several prisoners were seen without masks. Rather than address the problem directly, housing

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***RETALIATION AND COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT ARE TACTICS USED BY INSTITUTIONS TO CHILL COLLECTIVE RESISTANCE AND TURN PEOPLE AGAINST EACH OTHER. SANTA RITA EMPLOYS THESE TACTICS REGULARLY IN WHAT PRISONERS SEE AS AN EXTRAORDINARY DOUBLE STANDARD.***

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***AFTER AN INCIDENT INVOLVING 2 WOMEN IN HOUSING UNIT 24, THE JAIL'S RESPONSE – IN THE MIDDLE OF A PANDEMIC – WAS TO TAKE AWAY SANITIZING WIPES FROM EVERYONE IN THE UNIT.... CLEANING SUPPLIES WHICH WERE ALREADY SCARCE HAVE NOW DWINDLED TO NEXT TO NOTHING.***

deputies cut out-of-cell time for everyone. One person reports that this limited program – which allows prisoners only 2 hours out of their cells to shower, call their families, and stretch their legs – becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: **as people become more frustrated, bored, and upset, they get into conflicts and altercations which are used as a pretext to further limit their recreation time.**

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To view more testimonies from prisoners, please visit [www.srjsolidarity.org](http://www.srjsolidarity.org).

The Santa Rita Jail Hotline works directly with prisoners who have concerns about COVID-19, medical care, and jail conditions. The content of hotline calls suggests a very different reality than what is being presented to the public by the Alameda County Sheriff's Office. If you are interested to become a hotline worker, please fill out this form: [https://nlgsf.ourpowerbase.net/SRJ\\_Hotline\\_Volunteer\\_Form](https://nlgsf.ourpowerbase.net/SRJ_Hotline_Volunteer_Form)



## ***FEATURED TESTIMONY: ANONYMOUS***

### ***Housing Unit 7***

“Please help: Santa Rita Jail is at it again. Housing Unit 7 is in a lockdown...they say inmates weren’t wearing masks or social distancing; so they took all our chairs, so everyone has to sit close together on the fixed benches and tables. They are giving as little as 45 minutes of pod time a day and starting dinner late so they run out of time. Deputies are playing games with inmates, forcing us to ‘shake down’ our own cells, threatening being tossed in an isolation cell and tearing up our cell if we don’t throw away enough ‘contraband.’ What if you’re following the rules? What if you wear a mask and have no contraband? **We’re being punished as a group when those not wearing masks are**

**self-evident. They are trying to force us to self-regulate – which only leads to inmate violence – instead of doing their jobs and enforcing rules individually. Please help.**

They are ignoring requests for grievance forms, and the front-line deputies are blaming their Sergeants, saying ‘it’s above my head.’ There’s no reason those of us following the rules (a majority) should be slammed due to lazy cops not enforcing rules on the incorrigibles among us.”

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