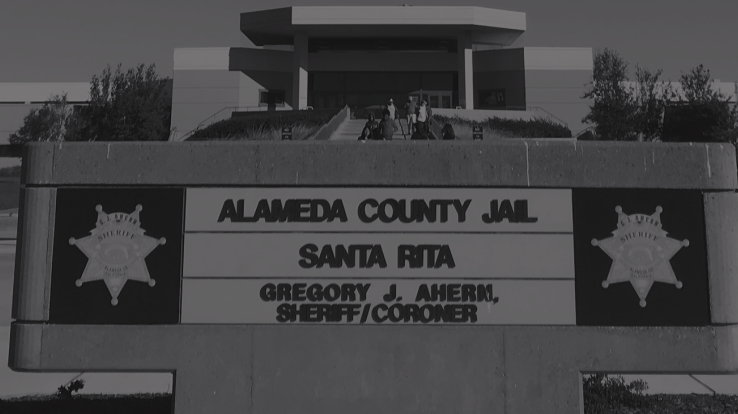


SANTA RITA JAIL WEEKLY UPDATE

MARCH 8–MARCH 14, 2021



STATISTICS AS OF MARCH 14, 2021.

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

2224

JAIL POPULATION

558

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

3

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

10%

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

6

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

15

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

14

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

3

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

NOTES ON STATISTICS

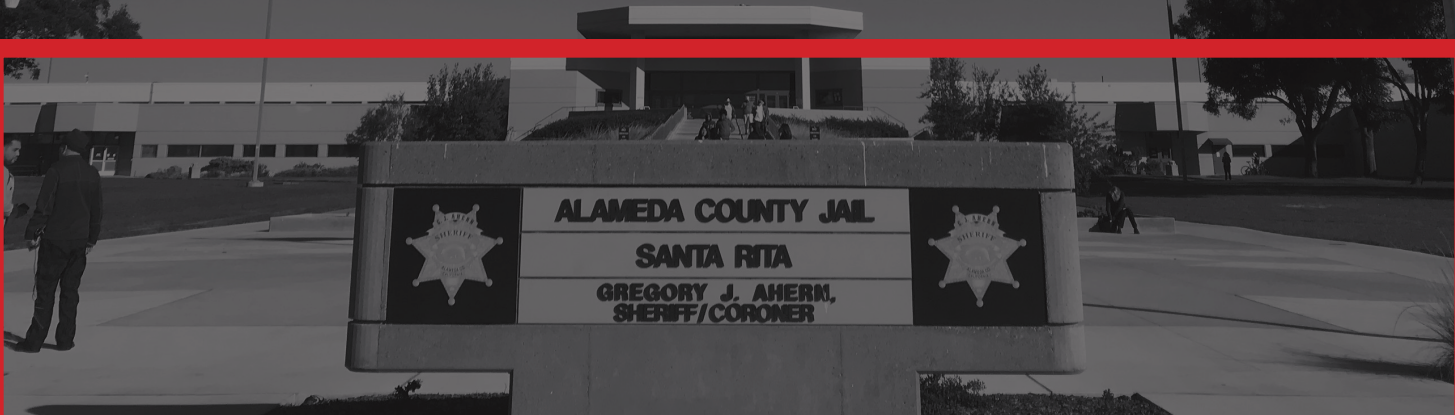
* Santa Rita Jail's testing rates are currently much higher during previous outbreaks due to the implementation of serial testing. During previous outbreaks, an average of 7-10% of the jail population was tested within any given week. Serial testing means that some individuals will be tested multiple times, with instances occurring every seven days after mass testing. As a result, actual testing coverage is likely below this % of 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. For more complete statistics and COVID-19 quarantines, please visit bit.ly/SRJCOVID-19.

For information about the Santa Rita Jail Hotline, please contact srjhotline@nlsf.org.

For more information about the SRJ Solidarity Weekly Updates and testimony-gathering project, please contact info@srjsolidarity.org.



HOUSING UNIT 24 EAST EXPOSED TO COVID-19

On Wednesday, March 10, women kitchen workers reported that their supervising deputy received a call from a nurse with bad news – an incarcerated kitchen worker had just tested positive for COVID-19. The next day, March 11, incarcerated workers and residents of Housing Unit 24 East (A, B, and C pods) underwent mandatory COVID-19 testing and were moved to Housing Unit 35 so that 24 East could be cleaned. People reported that as they were moving to 35, Deputies searched their rooms and threw away personal possessions and commissary items paid for by the individuals and their families.

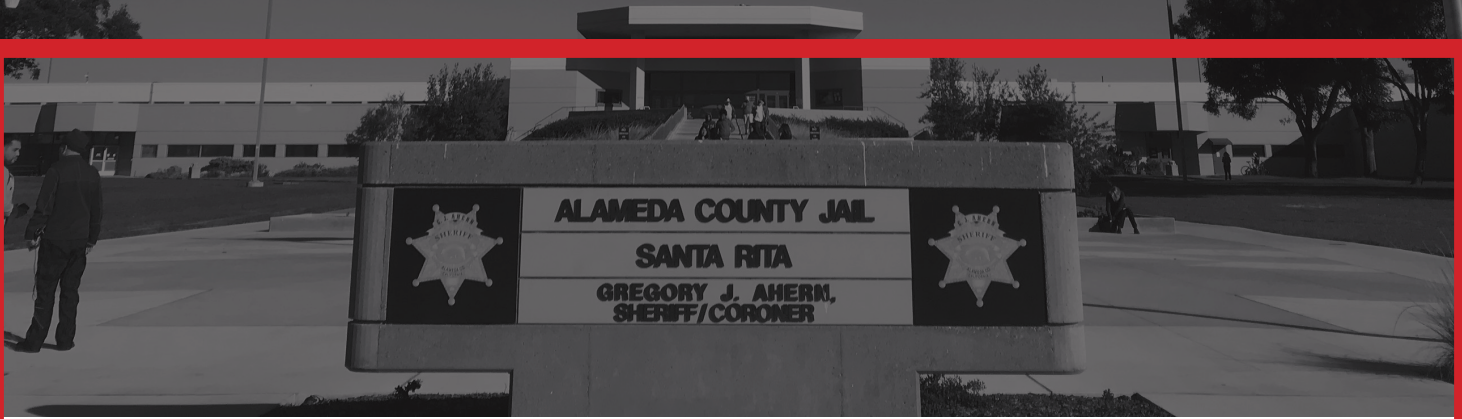
This is the third time this year that a dormitory-style housing unit has been quarantined due to possible contact with a COVID-19 positive person. On January 19, Housing Unit 25 D and E were quarantined due to contact with a positive case. And on

DURBIN STATED DURING THE FRIDAY, MARCH 12 CONFERENCE CALL AT SANTA RITA JAIL THAT IT IS “STILL TOO EARLY” TO SHARE WITH THE PUBLIC THE SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION. HOW WELLPATH BECAME AWARE OF A COVID-19 POSITIVE INDIVIDUAL IN HOUSING UNIT 24 BUT CANNOT SHARE THE SOURCE OF THE EXPOSURE WAS NOT EXPLAINED.

January 28, Housing Unit 34 D, E, and F were quarantined due to close contact with a COVID-positive case. The unit was not fully tested before being released from quarantine on February 10; and, just a month later, the unit was just listed as quarantined again until March 27.

Advocates have raised these concerns directly with Mike Durbin, Wellpath Health Services Administrator. Durbin has insisted each time that the accidental exposures were “absolutely minimal” and that subsequent quarantines have been imposed “out of an abundance of caution.” Durbin stated during the Friday, March 12 conference call at Santa Rita Jail that it is “still too early” to share with the public the source of contamination. **How Wellpath became aware of a COVID-19 positive individual in Housing Unit 24 but cannot share the source of the exposure was not explained.**

Santa Rita Jail Hotline correspondent Stephanie Navarro, currently incarcerated in Housing Unit 24 – West, reports that the quarantine of 24 East has also taken a toll on D, E, and F pods; which are not quarantined but which house mental health and high-risk patients who rely on incarcerated workers (“pod workers”) in 24 East for their basic needs. Pod workers are responsible for sorting, labeling, and delivering special diets – such as diabetic, prenatal, and kosher – to the correct individual. Deputies served breakfast on Thursday, March 11 in lieu of pod workers who are now quarantined. Then, Stephanie reports, they became “lazy” and



TAXPAYERS CONTRIBUTE IN THE MILLIONS TO THE ACSO BUDGET; AND YET THERE IS STILL NO CONTINGENCY PLAN OR PROTOCOL TO ATTEND TO PRISONERS' BASIC NEEDS WHEN POD WORKERS AREN'T AVAILABLE.

instead tasked four individuals who received no training to distribute meals. Not only did many people receive the incorrect meal, but prisoners did not receive clean laundry for several days.

Santa Rita Jail has been impacted by the pandemic – and ACSO has been reporting COVID-19 statistics to the public – for nearly a year. Taxpayers contribute in the millions to the ACSO budget; and yet there is still no contingency plan or protocol to attend to prisoners' basic needs when pod workers aren't available.

APPALLING CONDITIONS IN QUARANTINE UNITS

Housing Unit 22B is currently being used to quarantine people who are newly-booked into Santa Rita Jail. A Hotline caller who was booked at the beginning of March reported on Monday, February 8 to report deplorable conditions in 22B, as well as a sense of complacency from staff who refused to help him. The caller, who prefers to remain anonymous, reports that when he was booked, he received toothpaste, shampoo, a single change of clothing, and a comb. He did not receive a toothbrush for 2 days.

Over the weekend of March 6-7, the caller's cell flooded multiple times due to a clogged toilet and sink. The caller reports that a deputy witnessed and commented on the fact that water was flooding out of the cell door, but did nothing to help him. The caller's socks became soaked with toilet water; and, at one point, he even had to roll up his pantlegs to avoid soaking his only clothes. The caller and his cellmate were not even provided with toilet paper.

The caller, who suffers from asthma, repeatedly requested to use an albuterol inhaler and was denied because allegedly his medical condition was not yet on file.

When he pushed the medical emergency button in his cell, Deputies simply ignored his calls for help. On Monday, March 8, the caller asked for medical request forms so that he could request medical attention. Multiple Deputies ignored his request; he says, "I had to beg to get the forms." Finally, the caller was able to file medical request slips on Tuesday, March 6, but didn't get a response until the weekend, March 13. The caller reports that he is washing his clothes when he showers because he has only been provided with one change of clothes.

Advocates raised the caller's concerns on Friday, March 12 during Supervisor Richard Valle's conference call at Santa Rita Jail. ACSO Captain Dan Brodie claimed that he "had not heard any report consistent with what you're describing."



FEATURED TESTIMONY

Anonymous, Housing Unit 8E

“I don’t want to hurt anybody, but in here it feels like I have to hurt somebody or hurt myself in order to get any help.”

Deangelo Cortijo, PFN# BKH688

Prisons and jails bring out the worst in us. We, by need for food, security, family, and manhood, are forced into animal-like behaviors due to animal-like treatment.

Imagine being fed overcooked oatmeal, beans, and soy as main courses 3 times a day and not having the strength to be proactive or maintain mental and social acuity throughout the day. Imagine having to pay four times the base cost for canteen items, without an income - reduced to begging and engaging in predatory like behaviors for basic needs. Imagine having a brain injury and being denied medical care, left to suffer with dizzy spells, headaches, high blood pressure, and memory lapses. Imagine suffering from a mental disorder and the only form of treatment is sedatives, isolation and safety

BEING REDUCED TO ANIMAL-LIKE TREATMENT IS WHAT IS JEOPARDIZING PUBLIC SAFETY, NOT PROMOTING IT. OUR ISSUES BECOME EXACERBATED AND ONCE AGAIN, THE EXPENSIVE SYSTEM FAILS AT ITS JOB, CAUSING MORE HARM AND PAIN THAN IT DOES GOOD.

cells. Imagine being a childhood sex abuse survivor and being forced to live amongst sexual predators; forced into a state of heightened fear, pain and anger. Imagine living in filth and not being provided with adequate cleaning supplies; forced to smell, breathe, and touch grime. Imagine being stuck in a cell for 23 hours a day and having to listen to blaring televisions; causing pain to ears, brain, and leaving you in frustration. Imagine your only recourse being a grievance system that systematically and wrongfully denies your complaints.

This is an average day in jail here at Santa Rita. Being reduced to animal-like treatment is what is jeopardizing public safety, not promoting it. Our issues become exacerbated and once again, the expensive system fails at its job, causing more harm and pain than it does good.

Read Deangelo’s full article, “Invest in People, Not Systems” at www.srjsolidarity.org.

To view more testimonies from prisoners, please visit 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