

Working with Incarcerated Transgender Women Survivors of Sexual Abuse

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Presenters



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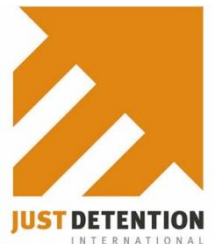


JDI's Work

JDI is a health and human rights organization that seeks to end sexual violence in all forms of detention.

JDI's Core Goals:

1. To hold government officials accountable
2. To change public attitudes about sexual violence behind bars
3. To ensure survivors get the help they need



JDI's Core Principle

No matter what
crime a person
may have
committed,
rape is not part
of the penalty.

JUST DETENTION
INTERNATIONAL
RAPE IS NOT PART OF THE PENALTY

This Webinar Series

This webinar is one of a 13-part series focused on providing accessible services for currently and formerly incarcerated survivors who are from particularly underserved groups.

If you're not already on our mailing list, send us your name and email on the chat and we'll add you so you don't miss announcements about future webinars!



Thanks to OVW

JDI's work to help survivors of sexual abuse in detention is possible because of generous support from the Office on Violence Against Women.

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GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO

TAKE DEEP
BREATHS

NOURISH
YOUR BODY

STEP OUT AS
NEEDED

TURN YOUR
CAMERA OFF



Today's Objectives:

- Identify specific challenges transgender women face in and out of detention
- Recognize dynamics of sexual abuse experienced by trans women in detention
- Learn strategies for making survivor services more accessible to trans women

Defining the Issue



California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Language

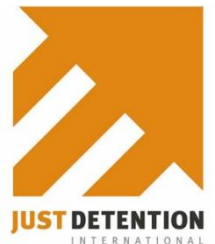


Preferred Terms:

- People who are incarcerated
- Survivor
- Transgender
- Transgender woman
- Trans-feminine

Share Out!

Why do you think it's important to specifically talk about the experiences of incarcerated transgender women?



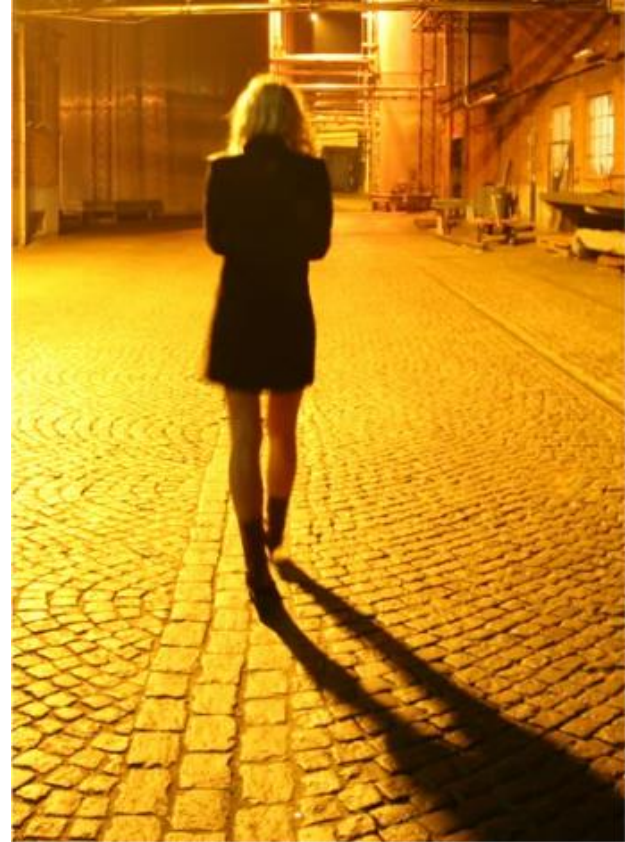
Why It Is Important

Transgender women:

- Face tremendous stigma and discrimination
- Experience disproportionate rates of violence, including sexual abuse, in and out of custody
- Are murdered at higher rates because of their gender, particularly trans women of color

Discrimination to Prison Pipeline

- Job and education discrimination
- Housing discrimination
- Lack of family and community support
- Lack of anti-discriminatory protection



Discrimination to Prison Pipeline



- Unequal access to opportunities and resources
- Participation in underground economies to survive
- Experience pervasive abuse and violence
- Recidivism

Characteristics of Detention

- Transgender women are often in facilities for men
- Hyper-masculine environment
- Deeply rooted systemic racism, and anti-LGBTQIA discrimination
- Intensified power dynamics



California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Transgender Women Are Nearly Always Incarcerated with Men. That's Putting Many in Danger.
NBC News, Kate Sosin, Feb. 26, 2020

Trauma Transgender Women Experience During Incarceration



Let's Discuss!

What are specific challenges transgender women face during incarceration?

Transition Related Care

- Little access to information about transition-related care
- Difficulty accessing gender-affirming clothing and property
- Unable to access name and gender marker changes, often required to use legal name



Limited Medical Care

- Medical staff lack the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of transgender women
- Limited access to Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)
- Little to no access for gender-affirming surgeries
- Serious impacts when medical care is denied


Unsafe Housing in Detention

- Mostly based on sex assigned at birth
- Use of isolation and protective custody
- Transferring to women's facilities
 - CA SB132, WA DOC 490.700

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation SB 132 The Transgender Respect, Agency, and Dignity Act Implementation Review Report

In partnership with the
California Department of
Corrections and Rehabilitation



 STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS	APPLICABILITY PRISON/REENTRY/FIELD FACILITY/SPANISH MANUALS		
	REVISED DATE 8/17/23	PAGE NUMBER 2 of 9	NUMBER DOC 490.700
POLICY			
TITLE TRANSGENDER, INTERSEX, AND/OR NON-BINARY INDIVIDUALS			

REFERENCES:

DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; [RCW 9A.44.160-170](#); [RCW 42.56](#); [RCW 72.09.225](#); DOC 100.500 Non-Discrimination for Individuals; DOC 320.255 Restrictive Housing; DOC 420.140 Housing and Cell/Room Assignment; DOC 420.310 Searches of Incarcerated Individuals; DOC 420.360 Drug/Alcohol Testing; DOC 420.390 Arrest and Search; DOC 440.050 State-Issued Items; DOC 880.100 Corrections Training and Development; [42 U.S.C. 1997](#); [Guidelines for Healthcare of Transgender Individuals](#); [Employee Manual for the Identification, Treatment, and Correctional Management of Transgender, Intersex, and Non-binary Individuals](#); [Washington DOC Health Plan](#)

POLICY:

- The Department has established procedures to ensure equitable treatment of transgender, intersex, and/or non-binary individuals when determining housing, classification, programming, and supervision.
- Drug testing will be completed per DOC 420.380 Drug/Alcohol Testing.
- Searches will be conducted per DOC 420.310 Searches of Incarcerated Individuals. Individuals under community supervision will be searched per DOC 420.390 Arrest and Search.
- Gender-affirming basic state-issued items will be issued per DOC 440.050 State-Issued Items.

DIRECTIVE:

- Responsibilities
 - Appointing Authorities will ensure processes are in place for the management of transgender, intersex, and/or non-binary individuals.
 - All employees/contract staff/volunteers will address individuals by their preferred pronoun or their last name per DOC 100.500 Non-Discrimination for Individuals.
 - Incarcerated transgender, intersex, and/or non-binary individuals will receive medical/mental health care per the Washington DOC Health Plan and Guidelines for Healthcare of Transgender Individuals.
 - The Director of Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Services will maintain a record in a secure imaging system of incarcerated individuals under the



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Unsafe Access to Showers

- Often targeted for abuse and harassment in the shower
- Often not provided the option to shower separately
- Increases gender dysphoria



Dynamics of Sexual Abuse Experienced by Incarcerated Transgender Women



Image: Art created by a participant of JDI's therapeutic art programs in detention

Dynamics of Sexual Harassment

- By staff and peers
- Ongoing anti-trans comments
- Misgendering
 - Name
 - Pronouns
- Hypersexualization



Dynamics of Sexual Abuse

- Coercion
- Protective Pairing
- Sex trafficking
- Corrective Rape
- Abusive and invasive searches



Sheila's Story

"Staff and officials here tell me: "You're not transgender you have a penis," and "This is a men's prison and you're going to be treated like a man."

Dee's Story [Video]



Let's Discuss!

Why might trans women survivors of sexual abuse in detention not report or seek help?

Barriers to Reporting

- Anti-LGBTQIA discrimination
- Fear of being charged with consensual sex
- Risk of retaliation
- Increased isolation of protective custody



AP Photo Elaine Thompson

Dee's Story



"The rape kept repeating itself over and over again in my mind, and I knew that I had to try and do something."

Best Approaches for Supporting Incarcerated Trans Women Survivors



Getting Prepared

- Remember the dynamics of detention and sexual abuse
- Recognize how your identity may impact how you are perceived
- Be a resource for your agency to ensure a nuanced understanding and strategic approach

Tips for Providing Support

- Avoid making assumptions based on appearance or voice
- Always ask for a survivor's name and pronouns
- Discuss who the survivor is out to
- Allow for additional time for building rapport



Tips for Providing Support

- At forensic exams, be mindful of language about someone's body
- Know when to use a survivor's chosen name vs their legal name on letters
- Know the rights of trans survivors and be prepared to advocate on their behalf



Just Detention International

Organizational Considerations

- Think about language used by your agency
 - Be clear and specify that your agency serves transgender people
- Partner with your local LGBTQIA+ organizations
- Learn about national, state and local laws that impact transgender people

Additional Resources

National organizations that support incarcerated transgender women:

- Trans Lifeline
- Transgender Law Center
- Black and Pink
- FORGE



Questions



Upcoming JDI Events:

Office Hours:

- April 24, 2024 at 1pm EST/10am PST

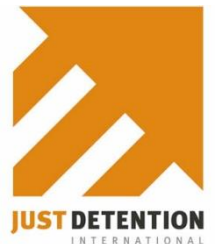
Webinars:

- May 2024: *Supporting Incarcerated Survivors who have Mental Illnesses*
- June 2024: *Supporting Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Incarcerated Survivors*

Coaching Opportunity

- One-on-one coaching from JDI to help expand your services for incarcerated survivors
- Intake session and four personalized 1-hour coaching sessions
- Completely FREE

<https://justdetention.org/coaching-ta-application/#search>



For More Information

For additional information, please visit JDI's Advocate Resource page: www.justdetention.org/advocate-resources

Direct questions to: advocate@justdetention.org

For more information about **Just Detention International**, visit www.justdetention.org.

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