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Bird Marella and ACLU File Pro Bono Class-Action Suit Against Federal Prisons over COVID-19 Outbreak

Bird Marella and co-counsel the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Prison Law Office (PLO) filed two class-action lawsuits against Terminal Island and Lompoc federal prisons in connection with the inefficient measures of prison officials to prevent the spread of coronavirus and provide adequate medical care in both facilities, in violation of the Eighth Amendment prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment.

The lawsuits, filed on behalf of several prisoners at Lompoc and Terminal Island, details how overcrowding, unsanitary environments, and lack of preventative measures have led to thousands of infections and several deaths. Furthermore, both Terminal Island and Lompoc have neglected advisement from the CARES Act and Attorney General William Barr to transfer high-risk inmates to home confinement to save lives and reduce the staggering amount of infections.

Bird Marella and the ACLU are requesting the court to put in place an expedited process to reduce the prison population and immediately release into home confinement all incarcerated people who can be released safely, in accordance with the CARES Act and AG Barr's directives, and to direct Terminal Island and Lompoc to implement social distancing measures, provide prisoners and staff with personal protective equipment, improve sanitation, and provide necessary medical care.

Click here to view the ACLU press release. To read coverage from the *Los Angeles Times*, please click here. The Bird Marella pro bono team includes principals Naeun Rim, Terry Bird and Dorothy Wolpert, counsel Shoshana Bannett, and associates Christopher Jumin Lee and Jimmy Threatt.