

# UPLC Six-Month Report

## Summary of Progress in the Case

As noted in Uptown People's Law Center's (UPLC) first quarter report, plaintiffs retained Dr. Craig Haney, a nationally- recognized mental health expert who has spent several decades studying the impact of solitary confinement on the mental health of people in prison and Dan Pacholke, the former Director of the Washington State prison system who has served as an expert on corrections generally and solitary specifically in a dozen or so class action cases in states across the United States. In October and November of 2022, UPLC staff accompanied these experts on tours of all of the Illinois prisons with the largest populations of people held in solitary confinement. During those tours, the experts interviewed dozens of prisoners at length and did brief cellfront interviews with over 100 people held in the solitary units of those prisons.

Since completing the tours, plaintiffs have been working with the defendants to obtain the files for the prisoners interviewed by the expert team. This includes both disciplinary files and mental health treatment files. All such files are still maintained only on paper in the Illinois Department of Corrections, so we have been faced with long delays in obtaining those files. As of late March, we finally received a complete scanned set of those files. Counsel is now in the process of indexing those files using the Relativity platform, so that they are usable by the experts.

## Significant Decisions

As the case has been focused on expert reports, there have been no issues of significance presented to the Court for decision.

## Progress Anticipated in the Next Six Months

The next step is for the experts to review the files electronically, and complete their reports. Once these reports are completed, the defendants will, presumably, depose both experts. The defendants will then have an opportunity to disclose any rebuttal experts they intend to call.

## Media Coverage

While there has been no media coverage of our specific case, there was an op-ed published by the [Chicago Tribune](#) calling for the abolition of solitary confinement, written by Professor David Shapiro of Northwestern University, which was based in part on, and mentioned, our work on solitary confinement. While not specifically related to our case, we were also thrilled that [John Oliver](#) on Last Week Tonight recently did a segment on the horrors of solitary confinement.

## Photos

Here are pictures of various solitary cells in Illinois:

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A cell at Menard Correctional Center where people are held in solitary confinement. (So many people are in solitary confinement that sometimes they are double-celled. As isolating as solitary is, most people report having a cellmate is actually worse.)



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One of the tiers where people are held in solitary confinement at Menard Correctional Center:



The “yard” used by people held in solitary confinement at Pontiac Correctional Center:



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## Attorney to Contact for Additional Information

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