

PRISON ISSUES



Native Women's
Association of Canada

L'Association des
femmes autochtones
du Canada

Incarceration and Indigenous Women

- Despite accounting for less than 4% of the female population, Indigenous women make up 39% of the female prison population.
- In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Indigenous women represent approximately 85% of female admissions to federal custody, a number that increases in territorial jurisdictions.¹
- Indigenous women are also more likely to be involuntarily segregated and face longer segregation placements than non-Indigenous women.
- Presently, Indigenous women make up 50% of federal segregation placements, in which prisoners may be, "isolated from others for months and even years on administrative grounds."
- Indigenous women also account for 50% of maximum-security placements.
- Further, upwards of 50% of federally-sentenced women have identified mental health needs and many others have significant histories of trauma and abuse. The comparable figure for men is 26%.
- Indigenous women, with their lived experience of colonial patriarchy, intergenerational trauma, and state violence are uniquely vulnerable to the harmful effects of isolation.²



“The over-incarceration of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people in corrections is among the most pressing social justice and human rights issues in Canada today.”⁴

- Ivan Zinger, Correctional Investigator of Canada



TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE CONTACT:

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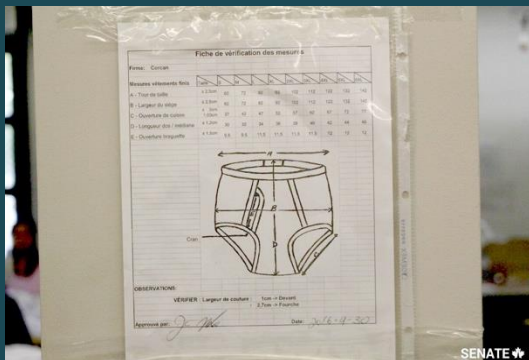
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END THE PRACTICE OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT BY ANY NAME:

Administrative segregation, disciplinary segregation, modified movement, clinical seclusion, lockdown, suicide watch, enhanced supervision . . .

At the Joliette women's prison in Quebec, the only work available is sewing underwear for male prisoners held in other federal institutions.⁵



Works Cited

- 1 Statistics Canada. (2017). Women and the criminal justice system. Ottawa, ON: Minister responsible for Statistics Canada. Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11416-eng.htm>.
- 2 Office of the Correctional Investigator (2016). *Annual report 2015-2016*, Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada Publications.
- 3 Office of the Correctional Investigator (2017). *Annual report 2016-2017*, Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada Publications.
- 4 See footnote 3.
- 5 See footnote 3.

Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

30. We call upon the federal government to commit to eliminating the over-representation of Aboriginal people in custody over the next decade, and to issue detailed annual reports that monitor and evaluate the process in doing so.

31. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to provide sufficient and stable funding to implement and evaluate community sanctions that will provide realistic alternatives to imprisonment for Aboriginal offenders and respond to the underlying cause of offending.

35. We call upon the federal government to eliminate barriers to the creation of additional Aboriginal Healing Lodges within the federal correctional systems (S. 81 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act).

36. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to work with Aboriginal communities to provide culturally relevant services to inmates on issues such as substance abuse, family and domestic violence, and overcoming the experience of having been sexually abused (S. 84 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act).

37. We call upon the federal government to provide more support for Aboriginal programming in halfway houses and parole services.