



c/o The Law Office of  
Michelle L. Lewin  
135 W 20<sup>th</sup> St, Suite 302  
New York, NY 10011  
  
info@ParolePrepNY.org  
347-620-5906

The following quotes and narratives have been pulled from letters received by our office between February – April 2025 from individuals incarcerated at facilities across New York State. These quotes, which reflect only a fraction of the stories we've recently received regarding violence in NYS prisons, detail instances of abuse, retaliation, medical neglect, sexual assault, denial of resources, weaponization of disciplinary tickets, and widespread harassment and violence at the hands of corrections staff.

All identifying details have been removed to protect the identity of those reporting the abuse.

"When I asked for OMH [Office of Mental Health], they put me in MHU [Mental Health Unit] for 7 days where I passed out twice. It is very hot. I told the CO I did not feel good and they did not care. I had to cry for toilet tissue. This place needs to be investigated. We are being treated like animals."

"I was threatened by an officer in the yard to be 'fucked up and sprayed' for asking to go back up to my unit and grab my coat.... I was scared to ask to use the bathroom.... I have severe PTSD and I started to panic... One wrong move could screw up my Alternative Shock program and I wouldn't be going home [this year]."

"Officers were doing a cell search on the unit; when [an individual] bent down to pick up the trash they were throwing out her cell, [an officer] punched her twice in the face knocking her out almost. They then held her hands down putting her in a chokehold til she couldn't breathe and started to seize. The CO hit her so hard you could hear it in the rec room. She was not resisting in any way but stunned from what just happened to her."

"None of us is safe. We have had everything taken from us class-wise, program-wise... we need help."

"A few COs assaulted a prisoner, and they sprayed four canisters in the air. This had all of us coughing uncontrollable, with our throats burning as we battled just to breathe. It's obvious that many of the staff that have returned back to work [after the strike] have a negative attitude and are extremely angry."

"The force I've seen the National Guard take on women 7-to-1 is not cool. They have special training none of us could predict. Some are cool, others talk to us very badly like some COs here. Degrading us on many levels."

"I was sucker punched and slammed on my neck. [The CO] repeatedly banged my neck against the tiled floor numerous times which resulted in me having a seizure." (For putting a pillow back in their cell during a search.)

"Incarcerated individuals are dying because they do not take medical needs seriously."

"I am scared for my safety every day. COs here are unpredictable with their actions."

"[Pepper] spray entered my cell and I was denied medical attention. I could not breathe. I had to put my face in a dirty toilet for air."

"A nurse wore a gray hooded sweatshirt inscribed in the front and back with the following statements: 'I stand with correctional officers' on front and 'I am NYSDOCCS' on back. Such a message is disturbing as it comes during the time of the Robert Brooks homicide... For a nurse to wear attire with such a message is actually scary... us incarcerated individuals expect nothing less than neutrality. We should not have to be put in a position where we are made to feel skeptical or cynical as to whether we are able or willing to trust the nurse and/or other medical staff."

In 2024, "staff attempted to murder me. It's on camera. They knocked me unconscious, beat my head while I was unconscious. My hands and feet still have loss of sensation because while i was unconscious they cuffed and shackled me so tight that my nerves were damaged. They never got me no medical to this day."

"I have tried to fight back. In return I have been raped, beaten, starved and deprived medical and mental help... I have many times dodged hits set up by corrections officers, been fed food I'm highly allergic to, starved, other inmates paid to hurt me. I'm going to be killed eventually."

"I was beat up, almost killed, by 3 COs, another stood in the doorway and sgt let it happen. I wrote a grievance. One of the COs threw it away. The CO called me a nigga, put water in my food tray, pushed it in the slot, called in a hang up [suicide]."

"I've been on the waiting list for ASAT and ART for 13 years."

"While I was in RRU they wouldn't give me toilet paper for over a week. I had to rip up my sheets and socks and use that instead."

"I've been in solitary for 51 days. I have been denied hygiene – soap, toothpaste."

There are COs "that are prejudiced and racist and just hate inmates and hate being here. You can see it in their face, and then they deliberately start [to] mess with us and they say that we are assaulting staff when in fact they start messes and then say we are assaulting them."

"There is an old chinese man, he's been here since dust was made... he started fussing with a lady CO about his meds [and] they beat the shit out of him. Gave him a black eye and limping the next day."

"Another kid, they smashed his face into the wall, breaking his teeth. Other inmates told him, don't say anything [about the beating] or you won't make it out of here."

"I saw COs and a sergeant beat a inmate until the inmate begged for his life just because a lady CO told him to lock in but he forgot his watch in the shower and went to get it."

"The only ones who is making their work an unsafe environment is the executive team and the corrections officers... they have been antagonizing the prison population for years. That is why they do not want the bill [giving CANY access without advance notice] to become law."

“COs ran in an I/I’s cell, sprayed him with 4-5 big cans of MK-9 and commenced to whip and beat him with their batons. Meanwhile all windows was closed, whereas the entire block was choking on the effects of the chemical agent called MK-9, which is only allowed to be used in the outdoors on bears in the wild.”

Individual received a total of 90 days SHU. Spent 78 days in SHU before tier 3 disciplinary ticket was reversed on appeal. “During my time in solitary confinement I have experienced cruel and unusual punishment, mental anguish, medical neglect, pain and suffering.”

While the facility was on lockdown, “COs were searching the entire facility for an ‘unknown substance,’ and that led them believing I had something on me. I was sent to the infirmary on contraband watch. I had to be in a cell locked in with the lights on. I had to use the bathroom in front of them either in a water jug to piss in or a bucket to #2, [so that] the officers could see if any contraband was in my body. I felt humiliated and degraded to the lowest level. I was experiencing that for a total of 11 days. They did not allow me to shower through that entire process. They finally brought me back to my original cell location without any contraband being found.”

“I fear for my life every day that I’m incarcerated that I won’t make it home to my children who are 7, 6, 5 and 4 years of age. My ribs are popping when I breathe, move, stand up, lay down or even sit down. I keep requesting x-rays of them. [I’m also unable] to close my jaw all the way due to excruciating pain on the right side of it.”

Individual slipped and fell in cell. Medical did not believe he was in pain until 6-9 months later the pain had progressed to the point that he lost all feeling below the knee in one leg. Had to hold a lighter up to his foot in front of medical staff to prove that he had lost feeling. When finally x-rayed, discovered that 2 vertebrae had been so dislodged by fall they were “floating,” causing severe back pain, permanent loss of sensation in one leg below the knee, and requiring longterm physical therapy.

“[This facility] doesn’t have a protective custody wing so they place anyone in it in the RRU/box [as Involuntary Protective Custody]. I do not get all the things I am entitled to there like rec and programs. When they do have programs [once in two weeks], I’m restrained to the chair, table wing ankle restraints.”

“Grievances are backed up by [a backlog of] almost 345 [grievances,] so none of our grievances are being acknowledged.”

“Medical staff [give] inmates’ private health info to officers, making fun of inmates or using it against them.”

：“Left in a bullpen while suicidal... 29 hours without eating, all types of things [around] to harm myself.”

“I entered prison HIV positive. That information was immediately shared with my peers by officers and I knew I had to toughen up to protect myself against how I’d be targeted. There’s a lot of stigma around HIV here and officers know that.”

Officer forced individual into strip search rather than body scanner (when scanner was available) after regular visit with family, and looked at him luridly while laughing and requesting him to bend over further, twice. Individual had experienced sexual violence as child and filmed strip search experience triggered severe PTSD.

“Officers walk around with no bodycam and cover up their name tags so you can’t write them up...one officer told me to suck his dick and threatened that I would not eat or receive a tablet for the day. I wrote the superintendent 3 times with no response.”

“My nightmare started when I was assaulted and almost killed by certain corrupt officers. For the beatings I took I received a misbehavior report for assault on staff and spent time in SHU.”

Experiencing a lot of harassment from staff, including frequent searches, pushing up against the wall, and blaming for things he wasn't present for/didn't do. Concerned that guards are turning off their body cams before interacting with him.

“On the last day of February 2025 an inmate here was beaten repeatedly and had fingers pulled out of socket, head busted, and something happened to his ankles. Then he was put in the box.”

Severe beating by CO for smoking, kicked and punched all over, causing him to urinate blood. Lives in fear of retaliation by COs who continue to make threatening verbal comments after speaking with OSI about the beating. Has not had the proper medical tests run to assess the extent of damage.

“The officer told all the inmates that I am a transgender female and to beat me up and stab me to get me out the housing unit, and the sergeant ain’t gonna write nobody a ticket. I was jumped and stabbed in my head. One officer swung on me and then they started beating me up. I was handcuffed and multiple officers beat me almost to death and then an officer cut me under my left eye.”

“The officers set inmates up with weapons, jump on them and then claim they were assaulted.”

Medical neglect: Individual visited medical four times with stomach pains – told first it was constipation, next a pulled abdominal muscle, then nothing (after a sonogram), then finally informed they have a hernia. Saw a doctor and was told they should have surgery on it within 6 weeks. That was 6 months ago – they’ve heard nothing in that time while the pain increases, causing hip pain and difficulty using the bathroom.

Medical neglect: individual has stage four cancer and is being denied all the medications recommended by the oncology and pain management staff. Has requested mental health medication and was told “that I would not be the first person with stage four cancer having depression and anxiety, that I can deal with it on my own.”

Medical Neglect: Following surgery on ACL, “I have not been instructed how to change the angle of the brace, I have not been put in physical therapy, and after a month in the infirmary with no help from the doctors, I removed my stitches myself.”