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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

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ASHOK BABU, ROBERT BELL, IBRAHIM  
KEEGAN-HORNSBY, DEMAREÁ  
JOHNSON, BRANDON JONES,  
STEPHANIE NAVARRO, ROBERTO  
SERRANO, and ALEXANDER  
WASHINGTON on behalf of themselves and  
all others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA; GREGORY J.  
AHERN in his official capacity as Sheriff of  
the Alameda County Sheriff's Office; CAROL  
BURTON in her official capacity as Interim  
Director of the Alameda County Behavioral  
Health Care Services Agency; and DOES 1 to  
20, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. CV

**CIVIL COMPLAINT FOR  
DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE  
RELIEF**

**CLASS ACTION**

- (1) **Cruel and Unusual Use of Isolation:** Violations of 8th and 14th Amendments of U.S. Constitution, and Article I, Sections 7 and 17 of California Constitution
- (2) **Failure to Provide Due Process to Prisoners:** Violations of 14th Amendments of U.S. Constitution, and Article I, Section 7 of California Constitution
- (3) **Failure to Provide Adequate Mental Health Care to Prisoners:** Violations of 8th and 14th Amendments of U.S. Constitution, and Article I, Sections 7 and 17 of California Constitution
- (4) **Failure to Provide Reasonable Accommodations to Prisoners with Disabilities:** Violations of Americans with Disabilities Act, Rehabilitation Act, and California Government Code § 11135

**NATURE OF ACTION**

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1. The Alameda County Jail system is broken, especially when it comes to the way it treats people with psychiatric disabilities. Due to understaffing, poor management, and lack of treatment space, Alameda County relies almost entirely on the unconstitutional use of isolation to manage prisoners, including prisoners with significant disabilities and mental health needs, resulting in horrific suffering. Alameda County’s use of isolation has had tragic consequences and, over the last five years, at least thirty-three individuals incarcerated in the Alameda County Jails have died, including thirteen individuals who committed suicide with many more unsuccessful attempts. These deaths are not isolated tragedies but rather are indicative of the harsh and unconstitutional conditions in the Jails.

2. Instead of working to ensure prisoners with psychiatric disabilities are cared for adequately, per Alameda County policy, these prisoners are classified as “mentally disordered” and held in either the Behavioral Health Units or in Administrative Segregation because of their disabilities and with little to no access to programming, minimal out of cell time, practically no access to the outside, and no meaningful mental health treatment. Mental health treatment is virtually non-existent at the Jails, even on the Behavioral Health unit – which is designated as the unit for prisoners with significant psychiatric disabilities. Jail staff are untrained or otherwise unresponsive to the mental health needs of prisoners and fail to respond to emergency call buttons pressed by prisoners who are mentally ill and in the midst of a crisis. Jail staff also fail to check on the well-being of prisoners who are suicidal, resulting in preventable deaths. Mental health appointments are incredibly brief, often lasting only a few minutes, and occur cell side or at open tables on the unit where other prisoners and custody staff can hear everything being said.

3. Prisoners with psychiatric disabilities are frequently punished for their disability-related behaviors by being put in Administrative Segregation, which is even more restrictive than the Behavioral Health Units. Prisoners in Administrative Segregation are only allowed five hours of out of cell time per week and rarely, if ever, are allowed to

1 go outside. Alameda County uses isolation as punishment, in what is referred to in its  
2 policies as “Disciplinary Isolation”, and fails to provide prisoners in isolation generally, or  
3 in the Administrative Segregation units specifically, with due process and a meaningful  
4 method of challenging their placements.

5       4. Prisoners who are suicidal are thrown into what are referred to as “safety  
6 cells” where they are stripped naked and given only a smock to cover themselves. The  
7 safety cells contain no furniture and only a hole in the ground for prisoners to use as a  
8 bathroom, meaning that prisoners have to sleep and eat on the same floor that they must  
9 also urinate and defecate on and are also unable to wash their hands after going to the  
10 bathroom. Prisoners in the safety cells are not allowed any out of cell time and are not  
11 allowed to keep any personal possessions in the safety cells, including reading material and  
12 toilet paper. By Jail policy, prisoners can be confined for up to 72 hours in these cells.  
13 Yet, prisoners have been forced to stay in such cells for a week or more at a time.  
14 Conditions so bad, prisoners have stopped reporting suicidal feelings to staff in order to  
15 avoid being thrown into safety cells.

16       5. This civil rights class action lawsuit seeks to remedy the dangerous,  
17 discriminatory, and unconstitutional conditions in the Glenn Dyer Detention Facility  
18 (“Glenn Dyer”) in Oakland, California and the Santa Rita Jail (“Santa Rita” and  
19 collectively the “County Jails” or “Jails”) in Dublin, California. The eight individual  
20 Plaintiffs in the Jails bring this action on behalf of themselves and those similarly situated  
21 against Defendants County of Alameda (“Alameda County” or the “County”), Gregory J.  
22 Ahern (“Ahern”) in his official capacity as Sheriff of the Alameda County Sheriff’s Office  
23 (“Sheriff’s Office”), and Carol Burton (“Burton”) in her official capacity as Interim  
24 Director of Alameda County Behavioral Healthcare Services (“BHCS”) (collectively,  
25 “Defendants”).

26       6. Plaintiffs seek a declaration that Defendants’ ongoing policies and practices  
27 violate their constitutional and statutory rights, and further, such injunctive relief  
28 compelling Defendants to (1) cease the harmful, excessive and unconstitutional use of

1 isolation; (2) provide due process to prisoners regarding their placement in isolation; (3)  
2 provide prisoners with psychiatric disabilities meaningful access to the Jails’ programs,  
3 services, and activities, including by housing them in the least restrictive setting  
4 appropriate to their needs; (4) provide constitutionally adequate mental health care; and (5)  
5 stop and/or limit the use of safety cells to only those prisoners who are truly in crisis for  
6 the shortest term possible before they are transferred to a hospital.

7 **JURISDICTION**

8 7. This Court has jurisdiction over the claims brought under federal law  
9 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1343. This Court has jurisdiction over the claims  
10 brought under California law pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367. Plaintiffs seek declaratory and  
11 injunctive relief under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1343, 2201, and 2202, 29 U.S.C. § 794a, 42 U.S.C.  
12 §§ 1983 and 12117(a), California Government Code § 11135, and Article I, Sections 7 and  
13 17 of the California Constitution.

14 **VENUE**

15 8. Venue is proper in this Court, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(1), in that  
16 Plaintiffs’ claims for relief arose in this District and one or all of the Defendants reside in  
17 this District.

18 **PARTIES**

19 **I. PLAINTIFFS**

20 9. PLAINTIFF ASHOK BABU is a California detainee and has been held at  
21 Santa Rita since on or around August 6, 2017. He is housed in Unit 09, which is the  
22 Behavioral Health unit, in A pod and has been placed on Intensive Observation Log  
23 (“IOL”) for most of his stay at Santa Rita. IOL is a form of suicide watch. Individuals on  
24 IOL are not allowed to have socks or underwear and cannot participate in programming,  
25 including classes and yard time. While on IOL, BABU is confined to his cell for 23 to 24  
26 hours per day. BABU was first placed on IOL on or around August 18, 2017.

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1           10.     After being on IOL for approximately six weeks, BABU was transferred to  
2 John George Psychiatric Hospital (“John George”) on September 30, 2017 on a 5150 on  
3 the grounds of danger to self and grave disability.

4           11.     When BABU was discharged from John George on October 13, 2017 he was  
5 placed back on IOL and held in the Outpatient Housing Unit (“OPHU”) for seven days in a  
6 cell for 24 hours a day without access to outside yards, programming, or even day room  
7 facilities. While he was held in the OPHU all his mental health visits were conducted  
8 either through his closed cell door or at his cell with the door open.

9           12.     Once BABU was moved back to Unit 09 he remained on IOL status until it  
10 was discontinued on January 30, 2018. However, BABU was placed back on IOL less  
11 than a month later, on February 19, 2018. BABU has remained on IOL status for more  
12 than ten months, since February, and in total, he has spent nearly 15 months on IOL status.  
13 Defendants have given him no indication that he will be removed from IOL in the  
14 foreseeable future.

15           13.     Since arriving at the Jail, BABU has not been able to go outside to the  
16 exercise yard. With no access to books, classes, or programs, BABU spends his time  
17 sleeping and crying. He also experiences shaking and dizziness and while incarcerated  
18 began using a cane for mobility. Being housed on IOL has not helped to stabilize him.  
19 BABU regularly hears voices telling him that he is “living in a cemetery” and “falling into  
20 a creek” and he continues to be suicidal, depressed and additionally suffers from anxiety  
21 attacks. According to Defendants records, BABU has been diagnosed as having “other  
22 specified schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorder” consisting of “Depressive  
23 Disorder with Psychotic Features and ‘Schizophrenia Unspecified.’” BABU is a person  
24 with a disability as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 12102, 29 U.S.C. § 705(9)(B), and California  
25 Government Code § 12926(j) and (m).

26           14.     PLAINTIFF ROBERT BELL is a California detainee held at Santa Rita.  
27 BELL was initially held at Glen Dyer, beginning on or around January 9, 2018, but after  
28 making suicidal statements BELL was placed on IOL and transferred to the Behavioral

1 Health Unit at Santa Rita. BELL remained on IOL for over four months, until May 21,  
2 2018. While on IOL, BELL was confined to his cell for at least 23 to 24 hours per day,  
3 was not allowed to wear socks or underwear, and rarely received clean clothing. In order  
4 to get off of IOL, BELL informed mental health clinicians that he was no longer suicidal  
5 so that he could receive more time out of his cell. BELL's mental health improved after  
6 being discharged from IOL and his desire to commit suicide decreased because, at that  
7 time, he could spend more time outside of his cell.

8 15. Even though he still feels suicidal from time-to-time, BELL does not report  
9 that to mental health staff or deputies because he fears being placed back on IOL. BELL  
10 hears voices and takes psychotropic medications to address his mental health needs, which  
11 include auditory hallucinations, anxiety, insomnia, and depression. According to  
12 Defendants' records, BELL has been found to have Major Depressive Disorder, Post  
13 Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Panic Disorder. BELL is a person with a disability as  
14 defined in 42 U.S.C. § 12102, 29 U.S.C. § 705(9)(B), and California Government Code  
15 § 12926(j) and (m).

16 16. PLAINTIFF IBRAHIM KEEGAN-HORNSBY is a California pretrial  
17 detainee held at Santa Rita. KEEGAN-HORNSBY was previously incarcerated at the  
18 County Jails in 2016 and 2017 and was housed in Unit 09, the Behavioral Health Unit, for  
19 the duration of each of his prior incarcerations. KEEGAN-HORNSBY was booked back  
20 into Santa Rita Jail on December 28, 2017 following an approximately one week stay for  
21 inpatient treatment at John George.

22 17. When he was admitted to Santa Rita on December 28, 2017, BHCS  
23 recommended that he be returned to John George for additional care because he was still  
24 suicidal. However, the Sergeant on duty disagreed with the recommendation and the  
25 Sheriff's Office overrode BHCS' clinical judgement and instead placed KEEGAN-  
26 HORNSBY into a safety cell in the OPHU, which has no programming, day room, or  
27 outside area for recreation. KEEGAN-HORNSBY was placed in the safety cell for a day  
28 without his clothes and with only blankets, which he used to sleep on the floor. After

1 begging mental health staff to release him to a normal cell, KEEGAN-HORNSBY was  
2 moved to the Behavioral Health Unit and placed on IOL for the next five months. During  
3 this time, KEEGAN-HORNSBY was kept on IOL status even though mental health  
4 providers noted that he presented as calm, cooperative, and without suicidal ideation on  
5 multiple occasions. While on IOL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY was not allowed to wear  
6 underwear or socks and was also not allowed to take classes or go outside. Since being  
7 released from IOL status, KEEGAN-HORNSBY fears sharing information about his  
8 mental health state with staff because he does not want to be returned to a safety cell or be  
9 put back on IOL. Instead of talking to mental health staff KEEGAN-HORNSBY tries to  
10 manage his own mental health by reading religious texts.

11 18. Mental health staff have also refused to prescribe KEEGAN-HORNSBY the  
12 same psychotropic medications that he received at John George. He has been struggling  
13 with the side-effects of the medications that the Jail has instead prescribed for him.  
14 According to Defendants' records, KEEGAN-HORNSBY has been diagnosed with  
15 Adjustment Disorder with Depressed and Anxious Mood. KEEGAN-HORNSBY is a  
16 person with a disability as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 12102, 29 U.S.C. § 705(9)(B), and  
17 California Government Code § 12926(j) and (m).

18 19. PLAINTIFF DEMAREA JOHNSON is a California pretrial detainee and has  
19 been held at Santa Rita on and off since 2012. He was most recently booked into Santa  
20 Rita on June 27, 2018 and has been housed in an Administrative Segregation unit, in Unit  
21 01, since arriving at Santa Rita. During previous stays at Santa Rita, JOHNSON was  
22 housed in the Behavioral Health Unit. Typically, JOHNSON is let out of his cell for one  
23 hour every other day, meaning that he usually spends 23 to 24 hours a day in his cell.  
24 According to Defendants' records, JOHNSON has been diagnosed with schizophrenia and  
25 his psychiatric history includes self-harm and command auditory hallucinations.  
26 JOHNSON is a person with a disability as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 12102, 29 U.S.C.  
27 § 705(9)(B), and California Government Code § 12926(j) and (m).

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1           20.     PLAINTIFF BRANDON JONES is a federal pretrial detainee held at Santa  
2 Rita. JONES was previously incarcerated at Santa Rita for portions of 2016, 2017 and in  
3 the Winter and Spring of 2018. JONES was most recently booked back into Santa Rita on  
4 or around July 5, 2018. Throughout his prior incarcerations and in his current stay JONES  
5 has been housed in the Behavioral Health unit. On December 7, 2016 JONES was placed  
6 in an isolation cell and severely decompensated. Custody staff requested assistance from  
7 mental health after observing JONES flooding his cell, peeing on the floor, and dumping  
8 his food and water on the floor. When mental health staff arrived they noted that JONES  
9 was “standing naked in his cell and his mattress was on the floor and everything was wet.”  
10 Mental health staff transferred JONES to John George but he was returned to Santa Rita on  
11 December 8, 2016, less than 24 hours later, and placed in a safety cell in the OPHU.  
12 Prisoners in the OPHU have no access to the yard or a day room and are held in their cells  
13 for 24 hours a day. After returning from John George on December 8<sup>th</sup>, JONES was held  
14 in the OPHU for more than 72 hours in 24-hour-a-day solitary confinement, until at least  
15 December 11<sup>th</sup>, despite having been cleared by classification to return to the Behavioral  
16 Health unit two days earlier, on December 9<sup>th</sup>. When JONES returned to the Behavioral  
17 Health Unit he was placed back into an isolation cell similar to the one he had  
18 decompensated in only days prior. The only interactions JONES had with mental health  
19 staff prior to being sent to John George and after returning from John George were  
20 conducted at his cell door, frequently through a slot in the door, referred to as the cuffing  
21 portal.

22           21.     JONES was booked back into Santa Rita on or around July 5, 2018 but was  
23 not seen by mental health staff until September 4, 2018, nearly two months later, despite  
24 his history of requiring mental health treatment during his prior incarcerations and despite  
25 being again housed in the Behavioral Health Unit. The records from the September 4 visit  
26 note that JONES was not seen upon arrival at the Jail and that although classification  
27 officers at booking noted JONES’ “history of ‘mental’ classification” they transferred  
28 JONES to the Behavioral Health unit without notifying mental health.



1           22.     According to Defendants' records, JONES has been diagnosed with  
2 schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. JONES is a person with a disability as defined in 42  
3 U.S.C. § 12102, 29 U.S.C. § 705(9)(B), and California Government Code § 12926(j) and  
4 (m).

5           23.     PLAINTIFF ROBERTO SERRANO is a federal pretrial detainee and has  
6 been held at Glenn Dyer since on or around April 22, 2017. SERRANO has been housed  
7 in isolation in Administrative Segregation since arriving at Glenn Dyer over a year ago.  
8 On a typical day, SERRANO is locked in his cell for 23 to 24 hours a day and has  
9 sometimes gone months without being able to go outside for exercise and recreation.  
10 SERRANO has been given no meaningful opportunity to challenge his placement in  
11 isolation. SERRANO has and continues to suffer significant harm from his prolonged  
12 isolation and, he now experiences paranoia, fear and distrust of others, loss of social skills,  
13 chronic insomnia, anxiety, agitation, and depression as a result of his continued isolated  
14 confinement.

15           24.     PLAINTIFF STEPHANIE NAVARRO, who is also known as JAMEE ANN  
16 NAVARRO, is a California pretrial detainee in custody at Santa Rita. NAVARRO has  
17 been held at Santa Rita before and during a prior stay in 2014, NAVARRO was confined  
18 in two separate safety cells. NAVARRO was most recently booked into Santa Rita on  
19 March 14, 2017 and has been housed in isolation in Housing Unit 21, the woman's  
20 Behavioral Health unit referred to on BCHS forms as the "mental pod", and in Housing  
21 Unit 24, which is the woman's Administrative Segregation Unit. In November of 2017,  
22 NAVARRO was transferred to Napa Psychiatric State Hospital for competency restoration  
23 and was returned to Santa Rita on February 13, 2018. NAVARRO is currently housed in  
24 Housing Unit 24 where NAVARRO is confined to her cell for 23 to 24 hours per day.  
25 NAVARRO's housing pod holds many prisoners with serious mental illnesses, including  
26 prisoners who scream throughout the day and night, which causes NAVARRO to hear a  
27 constant buzzing noise in her head. In the community, NAVARRO is prescribed  
28 medications to treat her PTSD, but Santa Rita mental health staff have refused to prescribe

1 the same medications. NAVARRO has been designated as “mental classification” by  
2 Defendants, which she has been told means that she cannot be housed in any units besides  
3 the women’s Behavioral Health unit and the woman’s Administrative Segregation unit.  
4 According to Defendants’ records, NAVARRO has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder,  
5 Borderline Personality Disorder, and PTSD and is a person with a disability as defined in  
6 42 U.S.C. § 12102, 29 U.S.C. § 705(9)(B), and California Government Code § 12926(j)  
7 and (m).

8         25.     PLAINTIFF ALEXANDER WASHINGTON is a California pretrial  
9 detainee held at Santa Rita. WASHINGTON was initially booked into Santa Rita in  
10 March of 2017. Upon intake WASHINGTON was identified as suicidal and was initially  
11 placed on IOL and assigned to the Behavioral Health Unit, Unit 09. However, the  
12 following day WASHINGTON was placed into an isolation cell in the Administrative  
13 Segregation Unit, Unit 02. Once placed in the isolation cell WASHINGTON  
14 decompensated and began flooding his cell, banging his head, and yelling that he wanted  
15 to die. He was then moved to a safety cell in Unit 02 where he was held for an additional  
16 day before being returned to Administrative Segregation. Safety cells contain no furniture  
17 and only a hole in the floor to use as a toilet. WASHINGTON was not allowed any of his  
18 possessions or clothes and was instead only provided with a “modesty garment” and  
19 blanket to cover himself. In addition, the safety cell he was kept in did not have a working  
20 light and was covered in feces and blood from previous occupants. On March 19, 2017,  
21 BHCS recommended that WASHINGTON be moved to Housing Unit 09. Despite BHCS’  
22 recommendation, WASHINGTON was kept in Administrative Segregation on Unit 02 for  
23 an additional six weeks, through at least May 5, 2017. WASHINGTON was subsequently  
24 released but was arrested again on August 16, 2018 and sent to John George before being  
25 booked back into Santa Rita on August 17, 2018.

26         26.     Since August 17, 2018, WASHINGTON has been housed in the Behavioral  
27 Health Unit on Unit 09. After one day, WASHINGTON was moved to IOL, where he  
28 remained for one month. When he was finally visited by mental health staff,

1 WASHINGTON told mental health staff that he was no longer suicidal so that he could be  
2 discharged from IOL. During his current incarceration at Santa Rita, WASHINGTON has  
3 tried discussing traumatic events in his life with therapists at Santa Rita but cannot do so  
4 safely because custody staff insist on listening in to his appointments. WASHINGTON  
5 has sometimes gone significant periods of time without seeing a psychiatrist and once had  
6 to endure painful side effects of psychotropic medications for approximately four to six  
7 weeks before being able to see a doctor who could adjust his medications. According to  
8 Defendants' records, WASHINGTON has been diagnosed with PTSD and Depressive  
9 Disorder. WASHINGTON is a person with a disability as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 12102,  
10 29 U.S.C. § 705(9)(B), and California Government Code § 12926(j) and (m).

## 11 **II. DEFENDANTS**

12 27. DEFENDANT COUNTY OF ALAMEDA (the "County" or "Alameda  
13 County") is a public entity, duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of  
14 California. The County employs 50 or more persons. Defendant Alameda County  
15 operates and manages the County Jails including through the County's management and  
16 operation of the Alameda County Sheriff's Office ("Sheriff's Office"), and Alameda  
17 County Behavioral Health Care Services ("BHCS"). Defendant Alameda County is, and  
18 was at all relevant times mentioned herein, responsible for the actions and/or inactions and  
19 the policies, procedures, practices, and customs of the Sheriff's Office and BHCS, and  
20 their respective employees and/or agents. The County is responsible for ensuring that the  
21 basic human needs of individuals in its custody are met, and for ensuring that individuals  
22 are not at risk of serious harm, including by providing appropriate funding, oversight, and  
23 corrective action to ensure adequate conditions. The County is also responsible for  
24 ensuring that jail policies and practices do not violate prisoners' constitutional rights. The  
25 County by law possesses ultimate authority over and responsibility for the mental health  
26 care, treatment, and safekeeping of Plaintiffs and the class and subclass they seek to  
27 represent. The County receives state and federal funds for use in the operation of the  
28 County Jails.

1 28. DEFENDANT GREGORY J. AHERN (“AHERN”) is the elected Sheriff of  
2 the County of Alameda and, as Sheriff, is responsible for overseeing all Alameda County  
3 detention facilities run by the Alameda County Sheriff’s department, including Glenn Dyer  
4 and Santa Rita. AHERN is sued in his official capacity only.

5 29. DEFENDANT CAROL BURTON (“BURTON”) is the Interim Director of  
6 the Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services Agency. As Interim Director,  
7 BURTON is responsible for the provision of mental health care in the Jails. BURTON is  
8 sued in her official capacity only.

9 30. Plaintiffs are ignorant of the true names and capacities of defendants sued in  
10 this complaint as DOES 1 through 20, inclusive, and therefore sue these defendants by  
11 such fictitious names. Plaintiffs will amend this complaint to allege their true names and  
12 capacities when ascertained. Plaintiffs are informed and believe and thereon allege that  
13 each of the fictitiously named Defendants is responsible in some manner for the  
14 occurrences alleged in this complaint.

15 31. At all times mentioned in this complaint, each Defendant was the agent of  
16 the others, was acting within the course and scope of this agency, and all acts alleged to  
17 have been committed by any one of them was committed on behalf of every other  
18 Defendant.

19 **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

20 **I. DEFENDANTS’ JAIL FACILITIES**

21 32. Defendants operate and control two Jail facilities in Alameda County, Glenn  
22 Dyer Detention Facility (“Glenn Dyer”) in Oakland, California and the Santa Rita Jail  
23 (“Santa Rita”) in Dublin, California, (collectively, the “Jails”).

24 33. Glenn Dyer is a 20-level, 234,000 square-foot, maximum-security lockup.  
25 The facility provides booking, intake, and custodial services for all of Alameda County.  
26 Glenn Dyer also houses federal prisoners under a contract with the U.S Marshal Service.

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1           34. Santa Rita is considered a “mega-jail” and ranks as the third largest facility  
2 in California and the fifth largest in the nation. Santa Rita houses detainees who are either  
3 awaiting adjudication of their pending criminal matters or serving a sentence determined  
4 by the courts.

5 **II. DEFENDANTS ROUTINELY OVERUSE AND IMPROPERLY USE**  
6 **ISOLATION AND SUBJECT PRISONERS IN ISOLATION, INCLUDING**  
7 **PRISONERS WITH DISABILITIES, TO INHUMANE CONDITIONS**

8           35. Defendants are deliberately indifferent to the substantial and obvious risk of  
9 harm caused by Defendants’ policies and practices of locking prisoners in isolation,  
10 including prisoners with psychiatric disabilities, for prolonged periods of time. Over the  
11 last several decades, mental health and correctional experts have documented the harmful  
12 effects of prolonged isolation. Common side effects of prolonged isolation include  
13 anxiety, panic, withdrawal, hallucinations, self-mutilation, and suicidal thoughts and  
14 behaviors. Due to these side effects, prolonged isolation is known to worsen existing  
15 psychiatric disabilities and can cause prisoners without pre-existing psychiatric disabilities  
16 to develop them.

17           36. Placement in isolation imposes an atypical and significant hardship on the  
18 prisoner in relation to the ordinary incidents of incarcerated life, so as to create a liberty  
19 interest protected by due process. Defendants fail to provide process adequate to protect  
20 that liberty interest. Despite the harmful and punitive conditions in these units, Defendants  
21 lack an effective, accurate classification system to determine who gets placed in isolation.  
22 Prisoners are placed in isolation indefinitely, with some individuals held in isolation for  
23 years while they resolve pending criminal cases. Defendants offer prisoners no  
24 meaningful way to challenge their placement in isolation, despite purporting to conduct  
25 regular review of these placements. Defendants assign prisoners to isolation units based  
26 on their classification as mentally ill, even where those pending charges do not involve  
27 acts of violence.

28           37. Defendants use multiple terms to refer to isolation including Administrative  
Isolation, Disciplinary Isolation, and Temporary Isolation. Defendants also use the term

1 “Special Cells” to refer to isolation cells and safety cells. Individuals housed in these areas  
2 are referred to as “Special Management Inmates.” Class I Special Management Inmates  
3 are defined to include all prisoners in Administrative Isolation, Disciplinary Isolation,  
4 Temporary Isolation, Protective Custody, all prisoners assigned to the Behavioral Health  
5 units and all prisoners in isolation cells. Class II Special Management Inmates are defined  
6 as individuals on IOL status. Housing Units may also have isolation cells specific to those  
7 units. Plaintiffs refer to all of the above housing statuses, collectively, as “isolation.”

8 38. Approximately 10% of all prisoners at Santa Rita and approximately 20% of  
9 all prisoners at Glenn Dyer are housed in what is known as Administrative Isolation.  
10 Prisoners on Administrative Isolation are housed alone in a cell and are only permitted to  
11 go outside of their cell alone for extremely limited periods of time, further depriving them  
12 of any social interactions.

13 39. Defendants use isolation as a form of punishment, including for behaviors  
14 that are related to an individual’s psychiatric disabilities. Disciplinary Isolation is defined  
15 in Defendants’ policies as “punitive segregation from the general jail population and  
16 restricted privileges for an inmate who has committed a serious rule violation.” Such  
17 “serious rule violations” include being generally disrespectful, excessive whistling or other  
18 noise, possessing unauthorized clothing, reporting to a program late, failing to cooperate  
19 with work or education programs, possessing more than 15 vending machine tokens, or  
20 failing to return a tray after meal time. Individuals in Disciplinary Isolation are permitted  
21 to leave their cells for up to one hour a day, five days a week. There is no cap on the use  
22 of Disciplinary Isolation and prisoners may be held in Disciplinary Isolation for more than  
23 30 days, even for a single rule violation, where authorized by the Commanding Officer at  
24 the Jails.

25 40. Defendants control housing assignments and house prisoners in isolation in  
26 various housing units in the jails, including, but not limited to, in Administrative  
27 Segregation units, which house prisoners on Administrative Isolation, Disciplinary  
28 Isolation, Temporary Isolation and Protective Custody (men’s Housing Units 01, 02, and

1 08 and women’s housing unit 24) and Behavioral Health units (men’s Housing Unit 09 and  
2 women’s Housing Unit 21), for 22 or 23 hours or more per day. Prisoners housed in  
3 Administrative Segregation, including those with serious psychiatric disabilities, are  
4 sometimes kept in their cells between 23 and 24 hours per day, sometimes only being let  
5 out of their cells to use the dayroom for one hour every other day. In these units, this scant  
6 dayroom time is the only chance people have to shower, make phone calls, or order  
7 commissary. All of the beds in these units are located in locked cells and prisoners are  
8 typically required to eat meals in their cells as well.

9 41. Prisoners in the Behavioral Health Units are kept in their cells for 22 to 23  
10 hours per day and sometimes not let out at all in a 24 hour period. When they are let out  
11 for cells for one or even in some cases two hours, they must compete with the other  
12 prisoners for access to services such as the phone (both for making calls to attorneys and  
13 family and for placing commissary orders), showers, and hygiene tools such as nail  
14 clippers and razors. Approximately one hour of this extremely limited out of cell time is  
15 also consumed each day by pill call. In the Behavioral Health Units, some prisoners are  
16 double-celled, but being locked with a cellmate in a small cell does not compensate for the  
17 severe isolation. Instead, this double-celling requires two strangers with psychiatric  
18 disabilities to live around-the-clock in intolerably cramped conditions. Deputies in the  
19 Behavioral Health units verbally harass mentally ill inmates, calling them slurs like  
20 “crazies” and telling them things like “you crazies go back to your cells now” and to “stop  
21 faking” mental illness.

22 42. Prisoners held in Administrative Segregation units are typically locked in  
23 single-occupancy cells and cannot have conversations with other individuals unless they  
24 speak into the vents in their cells, or shout loudly enough for people to hear through the  
25 cell walls and doors. Any communication among suspected gang members, even just a  
26 greeting, may be and has been used by Defendant to justify extending isolation.  
27 Defendants also typically shackle prisoners housed in Administrative Segregation every  
28 time they have contact with anyone outside of their cells.

1           43.     Disability-related behaviors may also be used to justify extending isolation.  
2 BHCS records indicate that, on at least one occasion, Plaintiff NAVARRO became  
3 hypomanic, a symptom related to her bipolar disorder, and instead of providing her with  
4 the mental health treatment she sorely needed, Defendants moved her from the Behavioral  
5 Health Unit to the Administrative Segregation unit. BHCS records indicate she was  
6 moved due to her “hypomanic” behaviors and because a deputy, not a BHCS mental health  
7 professional, found she was not “re-directable” by that deputy’s standards.

8           44.     Prisoners with psychiatric disabilities who are moved to the Outpatient  
9 Housing Unit (“OPHU”) for treatment or monitoring have no access to an outside yard or  
10 day room. Prisoners housed in the OPHU are supposed to be escorted by deputies to  
11 exercise facilities on other units but, upon information and belief, this rarely - if ever -  
12 happens. As a result, prisoners housed in the OPHU because of their disabilities are kept  
13 in their cells 24 hours a day in isolation without any access to programming. Plaintiffs  
14 BABU, JONES, and KEEGAN-HORNSBY have all been housed in 24 hour a day  
15 isolation in the OPHU due to behaviors related to their underlying psychiatric disabilities.  
16 Plaintiff BABU was held in the OPHU for seven days without ever leaving his cell and  
17 during that time was also denied access to reading materials, the phone and to showers.

18           45.     Defendants subject some prisoners in its jails to even more extreme forms of  
19 isolation. At Santa Rita, some of the isolation cells are located outside of the main housing  
20 units, in the hallway. These cells are completely separated from the rest of the housing  
21 unit such that prisoners cannot hear or see any activity in the housing unit. These prisoners  
22 cannot even attempt to interact with other prisoners. Officers have no line of sight into  
23 these cells, and people locked in the cells experience extreme sensory deprivation.

24           46.     Plaintiff WASHINGTON was recently held in a hallway isolation cell for  
25 two days after telling deputies that he had lice. Instead of assessing him for lice, the  
26 deputies assumed he was hallucinating and put him in the isolation cell. The cell had only  
27 a small window and WASHINGTON could not hear any sounds from his housing unit.  
28 The hallway isolation cell was very cold but WASHINGTON was not provided with



1 blankets or a mattress for the 48 hours he was held there.

2 47. Defendants do not conduct meaningful or effective review of isolation  
3 placements and do not provide prisoners with meaningful methods to understand why they  
4 have been placed in isolation and how they can be removed from isolation.

5 48. At Glenn Dyer, federal pretrial prisoners are often placed in administrative  
6 isolation indefinitely, with some prisoners housed in isolation for years while they resolve  
7 their federal cases. Plaintiff SERRANO has been housed in isolation for over 19 months,  
8 since arriving at Glenn Dyer on April 21, 2017 as a federal pretrial detainee. SERRANO  
9 is housed alone in a small cell. He is allowed out of his cell only for one hour every other  
10 day and always alone. He is allowed access to the outdoor exercise yard only rarely and  
11 has sometimes gone months without going outside. Since being housed in isolation,  
12 SERRANO has been and continues to experience paranoia, fear and distrust of others, loss  
13 of social skills, chronic insomnia, anxiety, agitation, and depression as a result of long-  
14 term extreme isolation. Despite his worsening mental health, SERRANO has never been  
15 told what to do or how to get help if he experiences a mental health crisis.

16 49. Prior to arriving at Glenn Dyer, SERRANO was held at the Santa Clara  
17 County Jail in San Jose, California. When he arrived at Glenn Dyer in April 2017,  
18 classification officers assigned SERRANO to isolation in an Administrative Segregation  
19 unit. Officers told SERRANO that he was being housed in isolation so that he would serve  
20 out the balance of discipline that had been imposed on him at the Santa Clara County Jail  
21 for a fight that occurred at the Santa Clara County Jail nearly two years ago. SERRANO  
22 had no meaningful opportunity to challenge his placement. In response to a grievance, he  
23 was told only that he is in administrative isolation due to his “in house history” and his  
24 criminal case. SERRANO has not been disciplined for any serious rules infraction nor for  
25 any act of violence while at Glenn Dyer, and certainly has not been disciplined for  
26 anything that should result in indefinite placement in isolation. Upon information and  
27 belief, prisoners facing the same or similar criminal charges are housed in the general  
28 population at the County Jails.

1           50. Plaintiff JOHNSON has been incarcerated at Santa Rita as a California  
2 pretrial detainee since June 27, 2018. JOHNSON has been confined in isolation in an  
3 Administrative Segregation unit since he was booked into Santa Rita even though he has  
4 not been disciplined for any act of violence while at Santa Rita. He has not been informed  
5 by Jail staff of the reason for his placement and has had no meaningful opportunity to  
6 challenge his placement. He has also received no notice or other information from Jail  
7 staff regarding his placement in isolation. JOHNSON was told to write to classification to  
8 find out why he is in isolation and he did so but has never received a response from  
9 classification. Upon information and belief, prisoners facing the same or similar criminal  
10 charges as JOHNSON are housed in the general population at the Jails.

11           51. Prolonged isolation is harmful to all prisoners, but it is particularly harmful  
12 for prisoners with psychiatric disabilities. Defendants have not modified their policies and  
13 procedures to accommodate people with such disabilities so that they do not suffer harm,  
14 and worsening of their pre-existing disabilities, from isolation.

15           52. Defendants have a policy of locking prisoners with psychiatric disabilities in  
16 highly restrictive isolation units because of their disabilities and without offering  
17 reasonable modifications that would permit them to be housed in less restrictive areas. As  
18 a result, Defendants deny prisoners with psychiatric disabilities with meaningful access to  
19 the Jails programs, services, and activities. Per the Jails' policies, prisoners categorized as  
20 "mentally disordered" and prisoners on IOL for suicidal tendencies, bizarre behavior,  
21 psychotropic medication, or medical observation must be housed in special management  
22 units (which includes the Behavioral Health units), maximum security units, or in the Out-  
23 Patient Housing Unit – all of which are highly restrictive units that provide significantly  
24 reduced, or non-existent, access to educational and rehabilitative programming compared  
25 to that available to their non-disabled peers. Prisoners with psychiatric disabilities held in  
26 these units may receive as little as five hours of time outside of their cell per week, far less  
27 than their non-disabled peers.

28 ///

1           53. Defendants' disciplinary process fails to take into account behavior which  
2 results from psychiatric disabilities and the lack of adequate mental health care at the Jails.  
3 As a result, Defendants lock people with psychiatric disabilities in isolation, including in  
4 safety cells, for nonconforming and erratic behaviors related to their psychiatric disabilities  
5 without exploring whether less restrictive options or alternatives could resolve the  
6 behaviors. This policy and practice deprives prisoners with psychiatric disabilities of  
7 access to the programs, services, and activities available in the less restrictive units. The  
8 restrictive conditions and lack of programming options in the Administrative Segregation  
9 and Behavioral Health Units serve only to worsen these disability-related behaviors.  
10 Instead of providing treatment, however, Defendants respond by locking prisoners in  
11 isolation for even longer periods of time.

12           54. Defendants also fail to monitor prisoners with and without psychiatric  
13 disabilities or provide sufficient mental health services to prisoners locked in isolation.  
14 This is despite the well-known medical and mental health dangers of locking people in  
15 their cells for prolonged periods of time.

16           55. Plaintiff JOHNSON has been held in isolation for the entirety of his current  
17 stay at Santa Rita despite his significant psychiatric disabilities. Mental health staff at the  
18 Jail have repeatedly emphasized the severity of his mental disorder, noting that he once  
19 had "a cardboard cell phone that he had drawn on, in which he talks with his grandpa,  
20 uncle and 6 kids", that he was "unpredictable" and prone to yelling "time travel. Fiji  
21 man," and that he was "rambling, disorganized... has a fixed delusion about McDonald's."  
22 Despite his clear need for mental health treatment, he has been housed in an  
23 Administrative Segregation unit since June 2018, where he is housed alone in a tiny cell  
24 without access to programming. He has seen mental health staff only once during this  
25 stay, for roughly six minutes at his cell door.

26           56. JOHNSON is allowed out of his cell only for one hour every other day and  
27 always alone. He has never been offered outside yard time during his current stay. He  
28 spends much of his time in isolation watching the TV in his unit's dayroom through his

1 cell door, which he can only see from an angle and cannot hear. This prolonged isolation  
2 has worsened JOHNSON's pre-existing psychiatric disabilities and, as a result, he  
3 experiences repeated and debilitating auditory hallucinations, loss of social skills, anxiety,  
4 agitation, and depression.

5 57. By policy, the County requires only five hours a week of out of cell time for  
6 prisoners housed in isolation. This is below any acceptable corrections standard including  
7 the standards set by the American Correctional Association which require that prisoners  
8 are provided with at least one hour a day outside of their cells. This level of isolation is  
9 harmful to the mental and physical health of any prisoner, but is especially dangerous for  
10 prisoners with mental illness.

11 58. Prisoners in the isolation units, including in Administrative Segregation and  
12 in the Behavioral Health units are rarely, if ever, permitted to go outside and are deprived  
13 of adequate opportunities to exercise. Exercise opportunities at the County Jails are well  
14 below all established detention standards. *See* Cal. Code Regs. tit. 15 § 1065 (requiring 3  
15 hours of "exercise" per 7 days); Cal. Code Regs. tit. 15 § 1006 ("Exercise" means physical  
16 exertion of large muscle groups.); Cal. Code Regs. tit. 24 § 1231.2.10 (defining exercise  
17 area minimum of at least one exercise area of not less than 600 sq. ft.).

18 59. Prisoners in isolation at Glenn Dyer are offered outdoor exercise as little as  
19 one hour per month. Plaintiff SERRANO has at times gone for months without being able  
20 to go outside.

21 60. Prisoners in isolation in Administrative Segregation units at Santa Rita may  
22 receive even fewer outdoor exercise opportunities. Plaintiff JOHNSON has not been to the  
23 outside yard even once since he was booked into Santa Rita six months ago. Plaintiff  
24 NAVARRO has only been able to go outside to the yard three times over the past year  
25 while in the Administrative Segregation unit and is only permitted to go outside alone,  
26 denying her any social interaction with other prisoners.

27 61. Access to outdoor exercise for those in the Behavioral Health Unit at Santa  
28 Rita is likewise rare, with many prisoners not receiving outdoor exercise opportunities for

1 several months at a time. Plaintiff JONES has not been outside to the yard for over a year.  
2 Plaintiffs BELL has not been outside to the yard for several months. When BELL has  
3 asked for yard time in the past the deputies just ignore his request. Plaintiff KEEGAN-  
4 HORNSBY has only been allowed to go to the yard 3-4 times over the past year. He has  
5 requested yard time from deputies, at various times, his requests have been denied  
6 numerous times. Plaintiff BABU has never been permitted to go to the outside yard.  
7 Plaintiff WASHINGTON has also not been allowed to go to the outside yard since he  
8 arrived at Santa Rita in August 2018.

9         62. Defendants offer a wide variety of programs to prisoners which, if  
10 completed, can result in sentence reductions and better enable prisoners to reintegrate into  
11 the community. These programs could also be helpful at sentencing in federal cases.  
12 Defendants prohibit prisoners in isolation cells from attending structured group  
13 recreational, religious, educational, or vocational programs which are offered to general  
14 population prisoners. This includes the Behavioral Health Units and OPHU prisoners with  
15 psychiatric disabilities.

16         63. Glenn Dyer offers several programs to prisoners including: Adult Based  
17 Education and General Education Development, to allow prisoners to get their GED or  
18 High School diploma, Literacy programs, Bible Study, One on One Faith Based  
19 Counseling, and recreational games such as cards and board games. Upon information and  
20 belief only the GED program and One on One Faith Based Counseling are available in  
21 Glenn Dyer's Administrative Segregation unit.

22         64. Santa Rita offers more than twenty-five programs to prisoners including:  
23 Adult Based Education and General Education Development, to allow prisoners to get  
24 their GED or High School diploma; English as a Second Language; Literacy; Sheriff's  
25 Work Alternative Program; Anger Management; Restorative Justice; Bible Study; One on  
26 One Faith Based Counseling; Chapel Services; Career Development programs including  
27 Employability, Computer Technology, Barbering, Cosmetology, Food Service,  
28 Commercial Baking Commercial Kitchen; Parenting classes including Dads Acquiring and

1 Developing Skills (DADS), Teaching and Loving Kids (TALK), and Maximizing  
2 Opportunities for Mothers to Succeed (MOMS); Substance Abuse programs including  
3 Narcotics Anonymous, Deciding, Educating, Understanding, Counseling, and Evaluation  
4 (DEUCE), Breaking the Chains, and Alcoholics Anonymous; and recreational games such  
5 as cards and board games.

6 65. Defendants discriminate against prisoners with psychiatric disabilities,  
7 because those prisoners are housed in restrictive and isolative housing units without access  
8 to the above listed programs offered throughout the rest of Santa Rita. They are thereby  
9 deprived of the opportunity to reduce their sentences and better position themselves for  
10 release because of their psychiatric disabilities. Of these many programs, only two  
11 programs – Breaking the Chains and a GED correspondence class, are offered to prisoners  
12 with psychiatric disabilities in the Behavioral Health unit and only one program, Chapel  
13 Services, is offered to prisoners in the Administrative Segregation units, which also  
14 includes prisoners with psychiatric disabilities.

15 66. Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY, JOHNSON, JONES,  
16 NAVARRO, and WASHINGTON would like to participate in the Jail's educational  
17 programs, group, and/or religious services, but cannot because of they are placed in  
18 restrictive and isolative housing units because of their psychiatric disabilities. If there  
19 were education and other programming opportunities offered in their respective housing  
20 units, they would participate. Plaintiff KEEGAN-HORNSBY needs to take a domestic  
21 violence class to assist him with his criminal case but has been unable to do so because the  
22 class is not offered in the Behavioral Health unit. He was told he could transfer to a general  
23 population unit to take the class but would then be unable to get needed mental health  
24 treatment, putting him in the impossible position of choosing between mental health  
25 treatment and obtaining needed rehabilitative programming. Due to the severity of his  
26 mental health needs KEEGAN-HORNSBY had no choice but to forgo the rehabilitative  
27 programming and instead stay in the Behavioral Health Unit.

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1           67. Adding to the harmful effects of isolation, lack of outdoor exercise, and lack  
2 of structured programming, conditions in the isolation units are deplorable. Some  
3 prisoners with inadequately treated mental illnesses smear themselves and the walls of  
4 their cell with excrement. The smell of feces pervades throughout the units. These  
5 unsanitary conditions are compounded by the failure to provide soap to prisoners who  
6 cannot afford to purchase soap, and by custody staff's failure to distribute adequate  
7 cleaning supplies to prisoners or provide sufficient time to allow prisoners to clean their  
8 cells. Defendants also serve prisoners bland and extremely repetitive meals with little  
9 nutritional value which are frequently contaminated with rocks, plastic, and rodent feces.

10           68. Some prisoners in the isolation units are incoherent, unresponsive, or  
11 actively delusional. Some are partially or fully naked in their cells. Some scream  
12 repeatedly in anguish, or are so consumed by auditory or visual hallucinations that they are  
13 unable to communicate.

14           69. The conditions in isolation significantly increase the risk that prisoners with  
15 psychiatric disabilities will have their condition decompensate when placed in isolation. A  
16 significantly disproportionate percentage of suicides occur in isolation units. Because of  
17 the risks posed by isolation to prisoners with psychiatric disabilities, a consensus has been  
18 reached in mental health correctional communities that prisoners with psychiatric  
19 disabilities should only be placed in isolation if absolutely necessary. In addition, if  
20 prisoners with mental illness are placed in isolation, there must be limits on the amount of  
21 time they remain in such units, they must be monitored closely, and they must be provided  
22 with significant structured and unstructured out-of-cell time.

23           70. Defendants do not have adequate safeguards in place to ensure that prisoners  
24 with psychiatric disabilities are only placed in isolation when absolutely necessary. In  
25 fact, upon information and belief, Defendants have a policy and practice of placing  
26 prisoners with the most serious psychiatric disabilities in Housing Unit 1 F-Pod, Housing  
27 Unit 2 F-Pod, and Housing Unit 8 F-Pod, all Administrative Segregation units. As a result,  
28 rather than only placing prisoners with psychiatric disabilities in isolation when absolutely

1 necessary, Defendants have a policy and practice of placing mentally ill prisoners there  
2 *because of* their disabilities and keeping them there for long periods of time.

3 71. For example, the coroner’s report regarding the death of prisoner Jesus  
4 Dickey on June 27, 2018 states that Mr. Dickey was initially housed in Housing Unit 8,  
5 pod E, cell #6 as a “mental PC” but was moved to Housing Unit 8 F-Pod (an  
6 administrative segregation unit) because he was “not getting along with other inmates in E-  
7 pod.” Mr. Dickey died in the isolation cell to which he was moved.

8 72. Defendants lack policies and practices to reevaluate whether prisoners with  
9 mental illness placed in isolation should remain in isolation. The amount of unstructured  
10 out-of-cell time that Defendants provide to prisoners in Administrative Segregation—a  
11 maximum of five hours per week—falls below the standard of care and constitutes cruel  
12 and unusual punishment. And no amount of structured out-of-cell time, such as group  
13 therapy of formal group programming, is provided to prisoners in isolation including to  
14 prisoners with psychiatric disabilities in the Behavioral Health Units.

15 73. Defendants’ policy for conducting safety checks is inadequate to ensure the  
16 safety of prisoners with serious mental illness in Administrative Segregation units and in  
17 the Behavioral Health Units. Defendants have a policy requiring safety checks once every  
18 half hour in isolation units, but fail to follow this policy and frequently fail to conduct  
19 appropriate checks at intermittent and unpredictable times. Defendants’ performance of  
20 safety checks is perfunctory and does not include direct visual observation that is sufficient  
21 to assess the prisoner’s well-being and behavior. Defendants fail to utilize verbal  
22 interaction as a part of their safety checks even when visual observation of the subject  
23 prisoner is obscured or circumstances otherwise demonstrate reason for concern about the  
24 prisoner’s well-being and behavior. As a result, prisoners in isolation are placed at an  
25 increased risk of harm.

26 74. The lack of adequate functional emergency call buttons and custody staff’s  
27 slow response times compound the risk to inmate safety presented by the lack of regularly  
28 performed safety checks by custody staff. Custody staff’s failure to perform adequate



1 welfare checks and failure to timely respond to emergencies is exacerbated by severe  
2 understaffing of custody deputies at the Jails.

3 75. Prior to committing suicide, on April 7, 2018, Logan Masterson was housed  
4 in isolation in Housing Unit 2. He had been discontinued from placement in a safety cell  
5 on suicide watch just two days earlier. Incident reports relating to Mr. Masterson's suicide  
6 state that general observation checks were not performed on Mr. Masterson for over an  
7 hour before he was found hanged in his cell. The welfare check that was performed last on  
8 Mr. Masterson was dangerously cursory and superficial. According to the incident reports,  
9 the custody officer's view of Mr. Masterson was "obstructed" and he "could not tell what  
10 Masterson was doing." At this time, the cell was thoroughly contaminated with feces, and  
11 "[t]here was fecal matter on the walls, floor, and window of the cell." Despite having no  
12 clear view of Mr. Masterson, despite the horrific condition of Mr. Masterson's cell, despite  
13 Mr. Masterson's bizarre behavior including flooding his cell, and despite Mr. Masterson's  
14 having been on suicide watch fewer than 36 hours earlier, the custody officer "did not  
15 spend more than a few seconds looking in the direction of [Masterson's] cell."

16 76. Prior to committing suicide, Edwin Villalta was assigned to Administrative  
17 Segregation and held in isolation in Housing Unit 01. Mr. Villalta was found dead in his  
18 cell on November 28, 2017 after hanging himself from the unoccupied upper bunk in his  
19 cell with his County issued blanket. Mr. Villalta was not on IOL at the time and was  
20 discovered during a routine check of the unit.

21 77. Defendants' inadequate policies and procedures for monitoring prisoners in  
22 administrative isolation units, including prisoners with psychiatric disabilities placed both  
23 Mr. Villalta and Mr. Masterson at risk prior to their suicides and contributed to their  
24 suicides because Defendants failed to conduct meaningful safety checks at frequent and  
25 unpredictable times.

26 78. The cumulative effect of prolonged isolation, along with the denial of  
27 opportunities for vocational, recreational, educational, and religious programming, being  
28 housed in a small cramped and filthy cell have caused and continue to cause prisoners at

1 the Jails, including prisoners with psychiatric disabilities, serious physical and  
2 psychological harm and puts them at substantial risk of continued significant harm in the  
3 future.

4 **III. DEFENDANTS FAIL TO PROVIDE MINIMALLY ADEQUATE MENTAL**  
5 **HEALTH CARE TO PRISONERS AND DISCRIMINATE AGAINST**  
6 **PRISONERS WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES**

7 79. Defendants fail to meet their constitutional obligation to provide adequate  
8 mental health care to prisoners in the Jails. Defendants are deliberately indifferent to the  
9 fact that their failure to provide adequate mental health care subjects prisoners to a  
10 substantial risk of deteriorating psychiatric conditions, extreme and unnecessary anguish,  
11 suffering and death. Defendants exacerbate the psychological trauma experienced by  
12 prisoners with serious mental health conditions who are housed in isolation, including in  
13 safety cells, by failing to provide them with necessary mental health care. As a result, their  
14 disabilities worsen and their disability-related behaviors escalate, causing them to be kept  
15 in isolation longer.

16 80. All mental health care in the Jails is provided by Defendant Alameda  
17 County.

18 81. Defendants control prisoners' access to mental health care professionals and  
19 medications, inside or outside of the Jails. Accordingly, prisoners cannot receive any  
20 mental health care services, including psychotropic medication, group and individual  
21 therapy, and suicide intervention, unless Defendants provide them.

22 82. Defendants fail to adequately train custody and mental health care staff in  
23 how to provide appropriate and timely mental health care. The lack of training is evident  
24 from the numerous incidents in which prisoners' health and lives have been, and continue  
25 to be, placed at risk as a result of the deficient mental health care provided in the Jails. As  
26 a result of a lack of adequate training, custody and health care staff fail to: (a) provide  
27 timely and appropriate mental health screening; (b) track and monitor prisoners with  
28 psychiatric disabilities; (c) properly administer and monitor psychotropic medications;  
(d) recognize and properly refer prisoners exhibiting signs and symptoms of psychiatric

1 disabilities to mental health staff; (e) respond adequately to prisoners who are suicidal;  
2 (f) appropriately house prisoners with serious mental illness in the least restrictive setting  
3 appropriate to their needs; (g) properly respond to prisoners' requests for mental health  
4 care or provide appropriate follow-up care; (h) provide confidential spaces for mental  
5 health treatment; (i) maintain accurate and complete mental health records; and fail to  
6 (j) provide appropriate reentry services for prisoners with psychiatric disabilities to allow  
7 them to properly continue their mental health care.

8       83. Defendants' policies and practices for mental health screening and tracking  
9 are inadequate. Defendants fail to adequately identify, track, and treat the mental health  
10 problems of newly arriving prisoners with psychiatric disabilities during the screening and  
11 intake process. Defendants' failure to identify and initiate adequate mental health  
12 treatment via the Jails' intake process places prisoners arriving at the Jails with psychiatric  
13 disabilities at a significant risk of serious harm, including death.

14       84. When a prisoner is newly booked into the Jail, the first step of the intake  
15 process involves custody or medical staff completing a brief one-page general health  
16 screening form, called a Medical Intake Triage/Receiving Screening form, through a  
17 cursory interview conducted with the prisoner in a non-confidential area of the Jail. Upon  
18 information and belief, many questions contained in this form are frequently not asked  
19 during the intake process, including those about mental health history and other basic and  
20 essential data necessary to identify prisoners in need of mental health care, including those  
21 at risk of self-harm. After the initial screening, newly booked prisoners are typically  
22 interviewed by a member of the medical staff. Mental health staff from BHCS play no  
23 role in this process. None of the Plaintiffs were told anything about mental health  
24 treatment available at the Jails during the intake process. Plaintiff BELL was told only that  
25 he would be placed on IOL without any further explanation and Plaintiff KEEGAN-  
26 HORNSBY was similarly placed directly into a safety cell after coming to Santa Rita from  
27 John George without any explanation for why he was being placed in the safety cell or  
28 when he would be moved to a "normal" cell.

1           85.     Mental health staff only evaluate prisoners at intake if the medical care or  
2 custody staff who complete the intake assessment forms refer the prisoner to mental health  
3 care staff. Intake evaluations by mental health staff, when they occur at all, frequently do  
4 not take place until days or weeks after a prisoner is booked into the Jails. Even when  
5 prisoners disclose a psychiatric disability to staff, Defendants do not appropriately follow-  
6 up with the prisoner and some prisoners with psychiatric disabilities may never be seen by  
7 mental health staff during their incarceration. As a result, prisoners with psychiatric  
8 disabilities are either denied care, or their care is delayed, putting them at increased risk of  
9 serious harm including serious injury or death. For instance, Plaintiff JONES was not seen  
10 for nearly two months after re-entering Santa Rita because classification noted his  
11 “mental” classification but failed to properly notify mental health staff.

12           86.     The process prisoners are supposed to use to access mental health care is not  
13 explained to prisoners during intake. The “Alameda County Jail Handbook” states that  
14 prisoners should “[t]alk to someone from the medical staff immediately ... they can  
15 schedule an appointment with [BHCS] Criminal Justice Mental Health.” Upon  
16 information and belief, this handbook is not given to prisoners at intake. Rather, prisoners  
17 must request the handbook from custody staff, often repeatedly, and then may or may not  
18 receive a copy. Plaintiffs BELL, BABU, WASHINGTON, and KEEGAN-HORNSBY  
19 have never received a copy of the handbook. Plaintiffs SERRANO, NAVARRO, and  
20 JOHNSON were only able to obtain a copy of the handbook after filing a written request.  
21 Regardless, the process described in the handbook is inadequate, and it is not followed in  
22 practice at the Jails. Medical staff frequently fail to inform mental health staff, even when  
23 prisoners disclose an active mental health crisis.

24           87.     Prisoners may use the message request system at the Jails to access mental  
25 health staff, but responses typically take one and a half to two weeks. For a prisoner  
26 having a mental health crisis, this is an unacceptably long and dangerous delay and puts  
27 prisoners at increased risk of harm.

28     ///

1           88. Defendants fail to ensure that requests for care reach mental health care staff  
2 in a timely manner, if at all. Upon information and belief, there is no policy in place to  
3 ensure that requests for mental health care are forwarded to mental health care staff. As a  
4 result, prisoners with psychiatric disabilities are not timely seen or adequately treated.

5           89. Plaintiff JOHNSON has not been told how to access mental health care at  
6 Santa Rita. Plaintiff JOHNSON has filed sick call slips requesting to be moved from the  
7 Administrative Segregation unit to the men's Behavioral Health Unit, in the hopes of  
8 receiving more mental health care. He has not received any responses from Jail staff to  
9 these requests.

10           90. By custom and policy, there is poor coordination of care for prisoners with  
11 psychiatric disabilities. Upon information and believe, Defendants do not track the  
12 numbers of prisoners with psychiatric disabilities or their specific housing locations and/or  
13 disability-related needs.

14           91. Upon information and belief, by custom and policy, neither medical nor  
15 corrections staff is adequately trained to recognize signs and symptoms of mental illness,  
16 and to refer prisoners who exhibit such signs and symptoms to mental health staff. As a  
17 result, staff fail to make appropriate referrals and prisoners who exhibit symptoms of  
18 mental illness are not timely treated.

19           92. For example, Plaintiff JOHNSON told medical staff on December 13, 2017  
20 that he was hearing voices telling him to harm himself. Jail mental health staff did not  
21 receive a referral for this contact until December 16, 2017, when a mental health clinician  
22 at Santa Rita reviewed the medical staff referral. Despite JOHNSON's urgent concerns, he  
23 was not actually assessed by a member of mental health staff until December 27, 2017.

24           93. Defendants' policies and practices for prisoners who have been taking  
25 prescribed psychotropic medications are inadequate. Upon information and belief,  
26 Defendants fail to adequately train mental health staff in how to evaluate and treat  
27 prisoners who arrive at the Jails and have been taking prescribed psychotropic medications  
28 and fail to provide adequate treatment to such prisoners. Instead, Defendants routinely

1 refuse to provide prisoners with the same prescribed psychotropic medication regimen they  
2 were taking prior to their arrest.

3       94. Defendants have publicly acknowledged that necessary and appropriately  
4 prescribed medications may not be available at the Jails. During a September 11, 2017  
5 meeting of the Alameda County Mental Health Advisory Board, the Board heard reports  
6 from the Criminal Justice Committee about “the challenges experienced by the mentally ill  
7 in Santa Rita Jail” because “not all medications are available.” As a result, medications  
8 that differ from those prescribed are routinely substituted even after confirmation of  
9 prisoner’s valid prescriptions. These substituted medications can be less effective, cause  
10 unforeseen side effects, and otherwise destabilize a patient, at a time when mental health  
11 stressors for the prisoner are high. Prisoners at Santa Rita with mental illness may also be  
12 over-medicated. Prisoners report observing individuals, who enter with “normal”  
13 behavior, becoming like “zombies” soon after starting on the antipsychotic medications  
14 prescribed by mental health staff.

15       95. Upon information and belief, Defendants lack any comprehensive system for  
16 monitoring the prescription, distribution, efficacy, and side effects of psychotropic  
17 medication and for ensuring continuity of care for prisoners with mental illness.

18       96. As a result of Defendants’ failure to provide medically necessary  
19 psychotropic medications, prisoners with psychiatric disabilities are put at increased risk of  
20 serious harm including: (1) withdrawal symptoms when the medications they were  
21 prescribed before admission to the Jails are abruptly terminated; (2) recurrence of  
22 debilitating symptoms such as hallucinations and suicidality; and (3) severe mental  
23 decompensation. In addition, pursuant to what is known as the “kindling phenomenon,”  
24 interruptions in prisoners’ psychotropic medications can cause a prisoners’ underlying  
25 mental illness to worsen, putting them at increased risk of harm. This not only worsens the  
26 underlying condition, but makes it more difficult to treat the underlying condition.

27       97. Plaintiff JOHNSON entered Santa Rita with valid community prescriptions  
28 for Remeron, Abilify, Zyprexa, and Risperdal for paranoid schizophrenia. He had been

1 released from Santa Rita only two and a half months earlier, during which he was housed  
2 in the men's Behavioral Health unit and was prescribed psychiatric medications. Despite  
3 his very recent history of care, however, he did not receive his community prescriptions for  
4 five days after he was booked and has been housed in the Administrative Segregation unit,  
5 rather than the men's Behavioral Health unit, where he had been housed before. In the  
6 intervening period before his medications were restarted, he began experiencing increased  
7 auditory hallucinations and other symptoms of his psychiatric disabilities. His  
8 decompensation could have been prevented if he had received his medications at his  
9 booking, rather than several days later.

10       98. Upon information and belief, Defendants fail to maintain adequate, accurate,  
11 and confidential mental health care records. For example, upon information and belief,  
12 psychiatrists often change prisoners' medications without documenting a clinical rationale.  
13 Upon information and belief, psychiatrists also fail to document their justification and  
14 reasoning for changing the diagnosis and treatment plans for prisoners returning to the Jail  
15 from psychiatric hospitals. As a result of Defendants' failure to maintain adequate mental  
16 health care records, prisoners suffer from a substantial risk of misdiagnosis, dangerous  
17 mistakes, and unnecessary delays in care.

18       99. Upon information and belief, Defendants fail to request and/or obtain  
19 medical files from outside providers for significant periods of time after the prisoner's  
20 arrival at the Jail (if at all). Defendants' repeated failures to timely obtain medical records  
21 from outside providers or pharmacies reduces the quality of care, as mental health staff  
22 must then treat prisoners without pertinent background information which significantly  
23 increases the risk of misdiagnosis, mistreatment, and harm and places prisoners at an  
24 increased risk of harm.

25       100. Prisoners' mental health records kept by Defendant BHCS usually contain no  
26 records of any community care, even when a prisoner discloses a history of psychiatric  
27 care in the community, and even when Defendants note such prior treatment history in a  
28 prisoner's mental health records. When a prisoner is transferred out of the Jails for care,

1 Defendants fail to obtain records of that care even long after the prisoner has returned to  
2 the Jails.

3       101. The Jails lack adequate facilities to conduct mental health encounters and  
4 routinely conduct rushed mental health encounters in spaces that lack any confidentiality  
5 or patient privacy. At Glenn Dyer, mental health consultations take place in a prisoner's  
6 pod or in the adjacent dayroom, spaces which lack privacy and confidentiality. Custody  
7 deputies are present and can see and hear the full interaction, and other prisoners, including  
8 the patient's pod-mates, can observe the encounter as well. At Santa Rita, mental health  
9 encounters either similarly occur cell-front, on-unit or sometimes in the hallway near the  
10 central clinic, locations which all lack confidentiality and patient privacy. Prisoners who  
11 have requested confidential encounters during cell-door visits have been told that there is  
12 not enough custody staff to provide private meetings. The lack of confidentiality creates  
13 great risks of harm, as Defendants put prisoners to the impossible choice between seeking  
14 help in a mental health crisis and disclosing mental health and medical issues in front of  
15 deputies and other prisoners, making them vulnerable to victimization.

16       102. Defendants are well aware of the serious dangers caused by the lack of  
17 confidential treatment space for mental health encounters. In 2015, the Sheriff's Office  
18 applied for construction financing funding pursuant to California Senate Bill 863. Those  
19 application materials openly acknowledge the lack of sufficient facilities at Santa Rita and  
20 state that: "The layout of [Santa Rita] stretches one-half mile in length, requiring  
21 extensive movement between housing units and program and treatment areas within the  
22 jail. This design is not conducive to providing programming and treatment services in  
23 many ways. ... Approximately 20-25% of [Santa Rita] inmates have been identified as  
24 having some form of mental illness. Out of the more than 1 million square feet of building  
25 space within [Santa Rita], only 1,025 square feet of it was designed as a Mental Health  
26 Clinic for mental health services and treatment. The limited space restricts the overall  
27 number of inmates that can be served. Often times, staff are forced to use a card table in  
28 the open hallway to conduct what should be confidential interviews .... Due to limited



1 space within [Santa Rita], the clinic spaces are shared with other jail services, further  
2 impacting the delivery of mental health services by limited availability and access to  
3 interview rooms. Due to the limited mental health space, counseling appointments for  
4 many inmates occur with mental health clinicians in the housing units, meeting in the  
5 common dining area at a stainless steel dining table with a deputy standing nearby. ...  
6 There is little privacy or confidentiality, as other inmates in the housing unit can see  
7 through their cell door windows or the pod windows that the inmate is speaking with  
8 somebody who is recognizable as a mental health worker and the deputy providing  
9 security for the staff member is within hearing distance. The environment is not  
10 appropriate for therapeutic care and is not conducive for the inmate to speak openly with  
11 the mental health professional. Housing unit operations are additionally impacted during  
12 these appointments since all inmate movement in this area of the housing unit is suspended  
13 to provide as much privacy and confidentiality as possible for the inmate as well as for the  
14 safety of all present. The conditions described above contribute to inmates refusing mental  
15 health services.” Those conditions have not changed materially in the intervening three  
16 years since the report.

17 103. These conditions undermine the efficacy of what mental health care is  
18 provided at the Jails. For example, Plaintiff WASHINGTON, who has appointments only  
19 lasting a few minutes with mental health staff in the common area outside of his pod, was  
20 laughed at by a deputy who was eavesdropping on his conversation with mental health  
21 staff as he was describing childhood sexual abuse and being underfed. Since that  
22 appointment, WASHINGTON has been afraid to talk to mental health staff about his  
23 trauma.

24 104. Plaintiff NAVARRO for a time refused mental health appointments at her  
25 cell door because she did not want her entire unit to know about her mental health needs.

26 105. Plaintiff KEEGAN-HORNSBY’s meetings with mental health staff also  
27 occur within earshot of deputies, and he therefore does not feel comfortable discussing  
28 conditions at Santa Rita with mental health staff because he fears retaliation by deputies

1 who mistreat him.

2 106. Upon information and belief, staff who do not have adequate training  
3 regarding how to treat mental health issues attempt to interact with prisoners on their own,  
4 and end up resorting to use of physical force and/or violence to control prisoners.  
5 Prisoners with severe mental illness have been beaten up by deputies for conduct caused  
6 by their conditions. Plaintiff KEEGAN-HORNSBY was threatened by a deputy while on  
7 suicide watch, who told him he would “smash his face with [his] shield.” Plaintiff  
8 WASHINGTON has been told that “mentals don’t need classes” when he has asked for  
9 programming. Multiple prisoners at the County Jails have reported deputies using racial  
10 epithets against them, and threatening other actions if they file grievances about said  
11 deputies’ conduct or other conditions at the County Jails

12 107. Defendants house prisoners with psychiatric disabilities in highly restrictive  
13 isolation units and offer them no group programming or group therapy of any kind. The  
14 lack of structured out-of-cell time falls far below the standard of care, and places prisoners  
15 with psychiatric disabilities at an increased risk of serious harm.

16 108. For acutely and chronically mentally ill prisoners, the standard of care  
17 requires psychosocial rehabilitation services, which include structured out-of-cell  
18 programming that addresses their symptoms of mental illness, reduces their isolation, and  
19 promotes compliance with treatment and medications. Without this care, seriously  
20 mentally ill prisoners are at an unreasonable risk of decompensating and of not responding  
21 fully to the treatment they do receive. This deterioration can have many damaging effects,  
22 including increased symptoms and non-response to future treatment. Defendants fail to  
23 provide these services to prisoners with psychiatric disabilities and thereby put them at an  
24 increased risk of harm due to the worsening of their disabilities.

25 109. Prisoners who rely on treatments other than psychiatric medication receive  
26 no meaningful mental health care at the Jails. Plaintiff JONES has a history of mental  
27 health conditions and has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, but does not take  
28 psychiatric medications. He has been housed in Housing Unit 09 since arriving at Santa

1 Rita. In the community, JONES manages his bipolar disorder through non-  
2 psychopharmacological means, such as diet and exercise. At Santa Rita, no meaningful  
3 forms of non-psychopharmacological treatment are available to JONES. On a prior  
4 incarceration, the lack of non-psychopharmacological treatment caused JONES to  
5 decompensate and to experience a psychiatric crisis, leading to an emergency hospital  
6 transfer. JONES continues to be held in isolation without access to appropriate treatment,  
7 and as such continues to be at an increased risk of harm. JONES has had no access to the  
8 activities, programs, and services offered to general population prisoners, including  
9 religious services and educational programs, because they are not offered in Housing Unit  
10 09. JONES has not been able to go outside in over a year for recreation or exercise.

11 110. When prisoners interact with mental health clinicians, the encounters are  
12 superficial, and non-confidential. The encounters are also extremely brief, usually lasting  
13 only around five minutes. No therapy is provided. Clinicians typically ask little more than  
14 “are you suicidal?” and “have you been taking your medications?”

15 111. Plaintiff NAVARRO is supposed to see mental health every month but  
16 sometimes goes longer without seeing anyone. These appointments last less than five  
17 minutes and have not been helpful to NAVARRO because such a short amount of time is  
18 not even sufficient to describe her mental health history, much less to address issues which  
19 she is currently experiencing. Plaintiffs BELL and JOHNSON only see mental health  
20 approximately once per month for ten minutes or less, which is not enough time for either  
21 of them to explain how they are feeling. Despite being on IOL Plaintiff BABU sometimes  
22 goes an entire month without seeing mental health staff and when he does see them the  
23 encounters are very brief. Plaintiff WASHINGTON sees mental health staff  
24 approximately once a week but for mere minutes at a time and whenever they meet there  
25 are deputies standing nearby who can hear everything he says.

26 112. Defendants fail to provide adequate and timely mental health care to  
27 prisoners who are experiencing psychiatric crisis. At Glenn Dyer, when a prisoner  
28 discloses that he or she is having a psychiatric crisis, prisoners are transferred to Santa Rita

1 to see a psychiatrist instead of promptly being evaluated by a qualified mental health  
2 provider at Glenn Dyer. Prisoners who are transported from Glenn Dyer for mental health  
3 care may spend hours sitting in a booking cell before being transferred to a housing unit in  
4 order to receive care. Prisoners then may wait for several more hours before being able to  
5 have a brief consultation with a mental health professional and then getting sent back to  
6 Glenn Dyer. As a result, prisoners held at Glenn Dyer often avoid seeking help for mental  
7 health issues to avoid going through the drawn out and frequently traumatic process of  
8 transferring between the Jails and sitting and waiting for many hours. The fact that mental  
9 health services are not provided at Glenn Dyer puts prisoners held there at increased risk of  
10 harm due to the drawn out process they must go through in order to access basic mental  
11 health services.

12 113. Defendants fail to timely respond to emergency calls for help from prisoners  
13 in crisis. The cells at Glenn Dyer lack any call button for prisoner emergencies. While the  
14 cells at Santa Rita are equipped with call buttons, many are non-functional or go ignored  
15 by custody staff when activated by prisoners in crisis.

16 114. Deputies do not respond to Plaintiff JOHNSON and do not check on him  
17 when he presses the emergency button in his cell because he needs to see mental health  
18 urgently. Plaintiff BABU, who is on IOL, is only checked on by staff once an hour despite  
19 the fact that he has expressed a desire to harm himself. When BABU has pressed the  
20 emergency button in his cell to request immediate medical or mental health assistance,  
21 deputies have told him to wait until pill call to ask medical staff for assistance

22 115. Defendants fail to identify, treat, track, and supervise prisoners who are at  
23 risk for suicide. Defendants' policies and practices for screening, supervising, and treating  
24 prisoners at risk for suicide are inadequate.

25 116. These shortcomings in Defendants suicide prevention and treatment  
26 programs have had tragic consequences. According to figures maintained by the  
27 California Department of Justice, from 2014 to 2017 at least 30 individuals have died  
28 while incarcerated in the Jails. Of those deaths, 12 were classified as suicides. Since 2017,

1 there has been at least one suicide and many more attempted suicides at the Jails. The rate  
2 of suicides at the Jail is nearly twice the national average for jail facilities.

3 117. Upon information and belief, Defendants do not adequately train custody  
4 staff to identify prisoners who are at risk of suicide and respond appropriately to prisoners  
5 who are exhibiting suicidal tendencies, putting them at increased risk of harm. This is  
6 especially problematic because custody staff, both during the intake process and for the  
7 duration of a prisoner's time in the Jail, have the primary responsibility for alerting mental  
8 health staff when a prisoner is suicidal.

9 118. Defendants routinely fail to identify and track prisoners who are at risk for  
10 suicide. Logan Masterson was suicidal when he arrived at the Santa Rita on April 4, 2018.  
11 According to a Sherriff's Office Incident Report, Mr. Masterson was initially placed on  
12 suicide watch in a safety cell. The morning of April 6, 2018, Mr. Masterson was rehoused  
13 to Administrative Segregation in Housing Unit 02. The conditions in this isolation unit  
14 place prisoners at increased risk of harm, including suicide. There, Mr. Masterson was  
15 housed alone in a single cell containing a bunk bed. On April, 7, 2018, Mr. Masterson  
16 committed suicide by hanging himself in his cell by his bed sheets, which he tied to the top  
17 bunk.

18 119. Less than two hours before his suicide, at about 2:45 PM, Mr. Masterson was  
19 observed engaging in strange behavior, flooding his cell by clogging the toilet and/or sink  
20 in his cell and causing water to pool inside his cell and leak out into the area surrounding  
21 his cell. At this time, Mr. Masterson had also partially covered the window into his cell  
22 with wet toilet paper. Custody officers observed this behavior, but did not contact mental  
23 health staff, intervene, or question Mr. Masterson about his state. Instead, custody staff  
24 simply ordered the water to be turned off in Mr. Masterson's cell. At about 3:20 PM, a  
25 custody officer conducted a cursory observation check on Mr. Masterson, but his view of  
26 Mr. Masterson was "obstructed" and he "could not tell what Masterson was doing." At  
27 this time, the cell was thoroughly contaminated with feces, and "[t]here was fecal matter  
28 on the walls, floor, and window of the cell." Despite having no clear view of

1 Mr. Masterson, despite the horrific condition of Mr. Masterson's cell, despite Mr.  
2 Masterson's strange behavior, and despite Mr. Masterson's having been on suicide watch  
3 fewer than 36 hours earlier, the custody officer "did not spend more than a few seconds  
4 looking in the direction of [Mr. Masterson's] cell." Over an hour then passed without any  
5 safety check being performed on Mr. Masterson. At about 4:29 PM, Mr. Masterson was  
6 found dead in his cell. Before he died, Mr. Masterson told other prisoners in his pod that  
7 he "wanted to talk to mental health but he said the Housing Unit technician did not respond  
8 to his intercom button."

9       120. Another prisoner, Jesus Dametrius Dickey, died in his Santa Rita cell on  
10 June 27, 2018 from water intoxication. According to the Coroner's report, Mr. Dickey had  
11 a history of schizophrenia and likely suffered psychogenic polydipsia (excessive thirst  
12 caused by his mental illness). Despite his diagnosis, he was housed in an Administrative  
13 Segregation unit instead of the Behavioral Health unit. Unsupervised and housed in  
14 isolation, he drank so much water that he died.

15       121. Defendants routinely house suicidal and seriously mentally ill prisoners in  
16 conditions that result in further deterioration of their mental health in violation of standards  
17 of minimally adequate mental health care and basic human dignity. Rather than  
18 individually determining the least restrictive environment in which a suicidal prisoner can  
19 be safely housed, Defendants have a policy and practice of placing prisoners with serious  
20 psychiatric disabilities in safety cells. The safety cells are single cells with no furnishings,  
21 toilets, or (in most cases) windows for outside light. The only features of the cell are the  
22 door, which has a slot through which food can be delivered, and a grate in the floor that  
23 serves as the toilet. Without toilet paper in these cells, and no way to wash, feces makes  
24 its way across the cell, on the floors, and walls. When housing a prisoner in a safety cell,  
25 Defendants routinely remove all of the prisoner's clothing, leaving the prisoner naked in  
26 the room. In some instances, Defendants permit a prisoner to have a tear-proof smock to  
27 wear and nothing else. There is no mattress or pad, let alone a bed, in the safety cells for  
28 prisoners to sit or sleep on. Prisoners are thus forced to sit, sleep, and eat on the same

1 cold, dirty floor on which the grate for the toilet is located. Defendants' improper use  
2 safety cells places prisoners with psychiatric disabilities at an increased and unreasonable  
3 risk of harm.

4 122. The safety cells are rarely cleaned when a prisoner is being housed in one of  
5 the cells and are not cleaned sufficiently once a prisoner is released from the cell. These  
6 conditions are traumatic for all prisoners, but especially for those who are already  
7 experiencing severe mental health symptoms. Suicidal prisoners perceive the safety cells  
8 as a method of punishment which dissuades them from telling staff they are suicidal.

9 123. For example, Plaintiff WASHINGTON experienced dungeon-like conditions  
10 in one of Santa Rita's safety cells. WASHINGTON was placed in a safety cell because he  
11 was suicidal and that cell was cold, dark and smelled like feces. WASHINGTON  
12 perceived the safety cell to be punishment and no longer reports suicidal feelings to mental  
13 health staff because he fears being returned to a safety cell.

14 124. Plaintiff NAVARRO, who was suicidal and held in two different safety cells  
15 in the span of 24 hours, was moved from one to another wearing only a safety vest, and  
16 describes her experience in the safety cells the most humiliating and degrading experience  
17 of her entire life. She does not intend to report suicidality to mental health again to avoid  
18 being sent back to the safety cell.

19 125. Plaintiff WASHINGTON was held in a safety cell that was covered in feces,  
20 blood, and urine. His clothes were removed and he was only given a safety vest to wear  
21 without underwear, shoes, or socks. WASHINGTON hopes to never go back to a safety  
22 cell ever again.

23 126. Plaintiff JOHNSON was held in a safety cell in these same conditions for  
24 approximately three to four days.

25 127. Plaintiff KEEGAN-HORNSBY was also held in a safety cell, which felt like  
26 he was being punished for being suicidal. Because of his experience he is afraid to tell  
27 staff if he feels suicidal because he does not want to go back to the safety cell.

28 ///

1           128. Defendants exacerbate the psychological trauma prisoners with psychiatric  
2 disabilities experience in isolation by failing to provide them with necessary mental health  
3 care while they are there. These prisoners do not receive sufficient contact with mental  
4 health providers (if they receive mental health care at all). And, the harsh conditions of  
5 their confinement render less effective the minimal treatment they do receive. As a result,  
6 they are put at an increased risk of harm because the conditions in isolation can cause their  
7 symptoms, including suicidality, to escalate and force them to stay in isolation even longer.

8           129. Upon information and belief, when prisoners are housed in isolation, all of  
9 the prisoner’s interactions with mental health care staff take place at the cell front door  
10 through the handcuffing port; none of the interactions are face to face without barriers.  
11 While Defendants may consider safety cells “safe” for suicidal and seriously mentally ill  
12 prisoners, in fact the safety cells lack any therapeutic value, and do not replace the need for  
13 psychiatric hospitalization and treatment.

14           130. By policy, mental health staff are required only to evaluate an inmate placed  
15 in a safety cell 8 hours after the placement, and every 24 hours after that. But even this  
16 inadequate policy is not followed, and prisoners placed in safety cells may go more than 30  
17 hours without any contact or evaluation by mental health staff. Jail staff then abruptly  
18 release these inmates back to their housing units without the administration of any  
19 objective suicide risk assessment tool, without close monitoring of their symptoms, and  
20 without a timely follow-up appointment with a clinician, thereby putting the prisoners at  
21 increased risk of harm.

22           131. Prisoner records show frequent use by mental health staff of “safety  
23 contracts” in an attempt to prevent self-injurious behavior. These “contracts” are  
24 ineffective, and can result in a false and dangerous sense of comfort. They are not a  
25 substitute for adequate mental health evaluation, suicide risk assessment and appropriate  
26 treatment planning.

27           132. Defendants fail to sufficiently observe prisoners who have been identified as  
28 being at risk of suicide, including prisoners who have been placed in safety cells.



1 Specifically, Defendants lack any policy or procedure for, and therefore fail to provide,  
2 constant observation of prisoners who are actively suicidal, either threatening to or  
3 engaging in the act of suicide.

4 133. Defendants fail to ensure by policy and practice that mental health care staff  
5 are consulted prior to placing a prisoner in a safety cell and before a prisoner is released  
6 from a safety cell. Upon information and belief, by not adequately involving mental health  
7 care staff in the decision to put prisoners in a safety cell, Defendants overuse the safety  
8 cells and place prisoners who do not require exposure to the punitive conditions of the  
9 safety cells to those conditions. Upon information and belief, by not adequately involving  
10 mental health care staff in the decision to release prisoners from safety cells, Defendants  
11 increase the risk that a prisoner who still requires enhanced monitoring and intervention  
12 will be placed back into housing conditions where they are not monitored as closely and  
13 are more able to engage in self-harm.

14 134. Defendants fail to adequately follow up with, monitor, and treat prisoners  
15 who have been released from safety cells. Logan Masterson committed suicide while  
16 housed in isolation in Housing Unit 02 fewer than 36 hours after being released from a  
17 safety cell, where he had been placed due to suicidality.

18 135. Suicide hazards are rife at Santa Rita, where all of the cells in the  
19 Administrative Segregation units and the Behavioral Health unit contain bunk beds. In the  
20 Administrative Segregation units, this is true despite these cells being occupied by only  
21 one prisoner. These bunk beds are an easy hanging point and have been used by prisoners  
22 to attempt and commit suicide at Santa Rita, but even prisoners specifically placed on  
23 suicide watch may be left alone in these cells.

24 136. Defendants have knowledge of the substantial risk of harm caused by  
25 inadequate suicide prevention and treatment policies and practices in the Jails, but have  
26 failed to take steps to prevent, or even to diminish, the harmful effects of these unlawful  
27 policies and practices. Defendants are thus deliberately indifferent to the risk of harm to  
28 prisoners created by their failure to operate a constitutionally adequate suicide prevention

1 and treatment program.

2 137. Upon information and belief, Santa Rita’s Behavioral Health Unit, Unit 09,  
3 is overcrowded and this has caused custody and mental health staff to improperly remove  
4 prisoners’ “mentally disordered status” and rehouse them in general population, without  
5 any actual improvement in mental health.

6 138. Defendants fail to maintain sufficient numbers of mental health care  
7 professionals to provide minimally adequate care to the nearly 3,000 prisoners in the Jails.  
8 The understaffing of mental health staff at the Jails exacerbates the problems caused by  
9 inadequate mental health treatment and lack of appropriate treatment space. Upon  
10 information and belief, the small number of scheduled encounters with clinicians are  
11 frequently cancelled or rescheduled due to overbooking. Many cancelled appointments are  
12 never rescheduled, even where a prisoner is in present need of treatment.

13 139. The Jail’s low staffing levels result in mental health care staff being unable  
14 to timely respond to prisoners’ requests for psychiatric evaluations and treatment, to  
15 adequately screen, track, monitor, and provide follow-up care to prisoners who are  
16 suffering from serious mental illnesses, and to provide adequate group and individual  
17 therapy. Upon information and belief, Defendants often place such prisoners in safety  
18 cells until mental health care staff are available to see them.

19 140. The Jail fails to staff sufficient deputies to enable prisoners to access mental  
20 health services and other programs available at the Jails. Plaintiffs have repeatedly been  
21 denied access to mental health care because no deputies were available to allow mental  
22 health professions to access Plaintiffs for treatment, including on their unit or at their cell  
23 door.

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**CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

**Prisoner Class**

141. All Plaintiffs bring this action on their own behalf and, pursuant to Rule 23(a) and (b)(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, on behalf of a class of all adult men and women who are now, or will be in the future, incarcerated in the Alameda County Jails (“Prisoner Class”).

Numerosity: Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(1)

142. The Prisoner Class is sufficiently numerous that joinder of all members of the class is impracticable and unfeasible. Currently, there are more than 2,000 prisoners in the Jails, as well as thousands of individuals either in CDCR custody or in the community on probation, mandatory supervision, home confinement, and Post-Release Community Supervision (“PRCS”), all of whom are subject to being returned to the Jails at any time on an alleged violation or revocation of their supervision or to participate in civil or criminal court proceeding. In addition, the class is fluid as new prisoners enter the Jails and others are released on a daily basis. All prisoners in the Jails are subject to Defendants policies and procedures regarding the use of isolation and the provision of mental health care. Due to these policies and procedures, all prisoners in the Jails are currently harmed or are at substantial risk of being harmed, by excessive placement in isolation without due process and all prisoners in the Jails receive or are at substantial risk of receiving inadequate mental health care.

143. The Prisoner Class members are identifiable using records maintained in the ordinary course of business by Defendants.

Commonality: Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(2)

144. There are multiple questions of law and fact common to the Prisoner Class, including, but not limited to:

- a. Whether Defendants’ use of isolation violates the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and the Cruel and Unusual Punishment Clause of the of the Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution, and Article I, Sections 7 and 17 of

1 the California Constitution;

2           b. Whether Defendants' policies and practices regarding classification to  
3 isolation units violates the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and Article I,  
4 Section 7 of the California Constitution;

5           c. Whether Defendants' policies and practices of not providing a  
6 housing environment free of debilitating and inhumane conditions to prisoners subjected to  
7 isolation poses a substantial risk of serious harm

8           d. Whether Defendants have been deliberately indifferent to the Prisoner  
9 Class members' risk of injury and harm from the debilitating isolation and inhumane  
10 conditions to which they are subjected.

11           e. Whether Defendants' failure to provide minimally adequate mental  
12 health care to prisoners violates the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and  
13 the Cruel and Unusual Punishment Clause of the Eighth Amendment to the United States  
14 Constitution, and Article I, Sections 7 and 17 of the California Constitution.

15           f. Whether Defendants' failure to operate a system that provides  
16 minimally adequate mental health care poses a substantial risk of harm.

17           g. Whether Defendants have been deliberately indifferent to the serious  
18 mental health care needs of class members.

19           145. Defendants are expected to raise common defenses to these claims, including  
20 denying that their actions violate the law.

21   Typicality: Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(3)

22           146. The claims of the named Plaintiffs are typical of the claims of the members  
23 of the proposed class as their claims arise from the same policies, practices, and courses of  
24 conduct, and their claims are based on the same theory of law as the Prisoner Class claims.

25   Adequacy: Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(4)

26           147. Plaintiffs will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the  
27 putative Prisoner Class members and diligently service as Class Representatives.  
28 Plaintiffs' interests are co-extensive with those of the Prisoner Class and Plaintiffs have no

1 conflict(s) of interest that would be antagonistic to those of the other class members.  
2 Plaintiffs have retained counsel who are competent and experienced in complex class  
3 action litigation and prisoner’s rights litigation and who possess the resources necessary to  
4 fairly and adequately represent the Prisoner Class.

5 Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b)

6 148. This action is also maintainable as a class action pursuant to Federal Rule of  
7 Civil Procedure 23(b)(2) because Defendants policies, practices, actions, and omissions  
8 that form the basis of the claims of the Prisoner Class are common to and apply generally  
9 to all members of the Prisoner Class. All of the Jails’ policies are centrally promulgated,  
10 disseminated, and enforced by Defendants. The injunctive and declaratory relief sought is  
11 appropriate and will apply as a whole to all members of the Prisoner Class.

12 **Prisoners with Disabilities Subclass**

13 149. All Plaintiffs bring this action on their own behalf and, pursuant to Rule  
14 23(a), and (b)(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, on behalf of a subclass of all  
15 qualified individuals with a psychiatric disability, as that term is defined in 42 U.S.C.  
16 § 12102, 29 U.S.C. § 705(9)(B), and California Government Code § 12926(j) and (m), and  
17 who are now, or will be in the future, incarcerated in the Alameda County Jails  
18 (“Disability Subclass”).

19 Numerosity: Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(1)

20 150. The Disability Subclass is sufficiently numerous that joinder of all members  
21 of the subclass is impracticable and unfeasible. The exact number of members of the  
22 Prisoners with Disabilities Subclass is unknown. The Sheriff’s Office estimates that 20-  
23 25% of the more than 2,000 prisoners at Santa Rita have a mental illness and are therefore  
24 qualified individuals with disabilities as that term is defined in 42 U.S.C. § 12102, 29  
25 U.S.C. § 705(9)(B), and California Government Code § 12926(j) and (m). In addition, the  
26 Disability Subclass is fluid, as new prisoners with psychiatric disabilities enter the Jails  
27 and others are released.

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1 151. The Disability Subclass members are identifiable using records maintained  
2 in the ordinary course of business by Defendants.

3 Commonality: Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(2)

4 152. There are questions of law and fact common to the Disability Subclass,  
5 including, but not limited to:

6 a. Whether Defendants' policies and practices deny prisoners with  
7 psychiatric disabilities meaningful access to the benefits of the services, programs, or  
8 activities of a public entity.

9 b. Whether Defendants' failure to reasonably accommodate prisoners  
10 with psychiatric disabilities violates the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of  
11 the Rehabilitation Act, and California Government Code § 11135.

12 c. Whether Defendants' failure to house prisoners with psychiatric  
13 disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs violates the Americans  
14 with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and California Government  
15 Code § 11135.

16 d. Whether Defendants' housing policies and practices discriminate  
17 against prisoners with psychiatric disabilities in violation of the Americans with  
18 Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and California Government Code  
19 § 11135.

20 153. Defendants are expected to raise common defenses to these claims, including  
21 denying that their actions violate the law.

22 Typicality: Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(3)

23 154. The claims of the named Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY,  
24 JOHNSON, JONES, NAVARRO, and WASHINGTON are typical of the claims of the  
25 members of the proposed class as their claims arise from the same policies, practices, and  
26 courses of conduct, and their claims are based on the same theory of law as the Disability  
27 Subclass claims.

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Adequacy: Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(4)

155. Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY, JOHNSON, JONES, NAVARRO, and WASHINGTON will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the putative Disability Subclass members and diligently service as representatives of the proposed subclass. Plaintiffs’ interests are co-extensive with those of the subclass and Plaintiffs have no conflict(s) of interest that would be antagonistic to those of the other subclass members. Plaintiffs have retained counsel who are competent and experienced in complex class action litigation and prisoner’s rights litigation and who possess the resources necessary to fairly and adequately represent the Disability Subclass.

Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b)(2)

156. This action is also maintainable as a class action pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b)(2) because Defendants policies, practices, actions, and omissions that form the basis of the claims of the Disability Subclass are common to and apply generally to all members of the proposed subclass. All of the Jails’ policies regarding prisoners with psychiatric disabilities are centrally promulgated, disseminated, and enforced by Defendants. The injunctive and declaratory relief sought is appropriate and will apply as a whole to all members of the Disability Subclass.

**FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION  
(Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution, 42 U.S.C. § 1983)  
(ALL PLAINTIFFS and the Prisoner Class  
Against ALL DEFENDANTS)**

157. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference herein all allegations previously made above.

158. By their policies and practices described above, Defendants subject Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class they represent, to a substantial risk of serious harm and injury from the harmful and inhumane effects of prolonged isolation, the denial of due process in relationship to classification and housing decisions, and inadequate mental health care. Defendants further subject Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class to a substantial risk of serious harm and injury from the way Defendants use safety cells and isolation, including harm

1 caused by the conditions of confinement which provide for inadequate physical exercise  
2 and programming, inadequate mental health treatment, and extreme social isolation and  
3 environmental deprivation. These policies and practices have been, and continue to be,  
4 implemented by Defendants and their agents, officials, employees and all persons acting in  
5 concert with them under color of state law, in their official capacities, and are the  
6 proximate cause of Plaintiffs’ and the Prisoner Class’ ongoing deprivation of rights  
7 secured by the United States Constitution under the Eighth Amendment.

8 159. By their policies and practices described above, Defendants subject Plaintiffs  
9 and the Prisoner Class they represent, to a substantial risk of serious harm from the  
10 provision of inadequate mental health care. These policies and practices have been, and  
11 continue to be, implemented by Defendants AHERN and BURTON and their agents,  
12 officials, employees and all persons acting in concert with them under color of state law, in  
13 their official capacities, and are the proximate cause of Plaintiffs’ and the Prisoner Class’  
14 ongoing deprivation of rights secured by the United States Constitution under the Eighth  
15 Amendment.

16 160. The policies, practices and customs described above are the official policies,  
17 practices and customs of Defendant COUNTY OF ALAMEDA, and are the direct and  
18 proximate cause of Plaintiffs being subjected to known risks of serious harms in violation  
19 of the Eighth Amendment. The policies, practices and customs described above include  
20 Defendant COUNTY OF ALAMEDA’s failure to train its staff in the face of an obvious  
21 need for training to prevent the violations described above.

22 161. Defendants have been and are aware of all of the deprivations complained of  
23 herein, and have condoned or been deliberately indifferent to such conduct.

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1 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class they represent request relief as  
2 outlined below.

3 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

4 **(Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, 42 U.S.C. § 1983)**  
5 **(ALL PLAINTIFFS and the Prisoner Class Against ALL DEFENDANTS)**  
6

7 162. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference herein all allegations  
8 previously made above.

9 163. Placement in isolation imposes an atypical, substantial, and different  
10 hardship on the prisoner in relation to the ordinary incidents of incarcerated life, so as to  
11 create a liberty interest protected by due process. By their policies and practices described  
12 above, Defendants subject Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class they represent, to a substantial  
13 risk of harm due to the denial of due process in relationship to classification and housing  
14 decisions, including placement in isolation and the use of safety cells. These policies and  
15 practices have been, and continue to be, implemented by Defendants and their agents or  
16 employees in their official capacities, and are the proximate cause of Plaintiffs' and the  
17 Prisoner Class's ongoing deprivation of rights secured by the United States Constitution  
18 under the Fourteenth Amendment.

19 164. The policies, practices and customs described above are the official policies,  
20 practices and customs of Defendant COUNTY OF ALAMEDA, and are the direct and  
21 proximate cause of Plaintiffs being subjected to known risks of serious harms in violation  
22 of the Eighth Amendment. The policies, practices and customs described above include  
23 Defendant COUNTY OF ALAMEDA's failure to train its staff in the face of an obvious  
24 need for training to prevent the violations described above.

25 165. Defendants have been and are aware of all of the deprivations complained of  
26 herein, and have condoned or been deliberately indifferent to such conduct.

27 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class they represent request relief as  
28 outlined below.

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**THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION**

**(Article I, Section 7 of the California Constitution)**

**(ALL PLAINTIFFS and the Prisoner Class Against ALL DEFENDANTS)**

166. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference herein all allegations previously made above.

167. Placement in isolation imposes an atypical, substantial, and different hardship on the prisoner in relation to the ordinary incidents of incarcerated life, so as to create a liberty interest protected by due process. By their policies and practices described above, Defendants subject Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class they represent, to a substantial risk of harm due to the denial of due process in relationship to classification and housing decisions, including placement in isolation and the use of safety cells. These policies and practices have been, and continue to be, implemented by Defendants and their agents or employees in their official capacities, and are the proximate cause of Plaintiffs’ and the Prisoner Class’ ongoing deprivation of rights secured by the California Constitution, Article I, Section 7.

168. Defendants have been and are aware of all of the deprivations complained of herein, and have condoned or been deliberately indifferent to such conduct.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class they represent request relief as outlined below.

**FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

**(Article I, Section 17 of the California Constitution)**

**( ALL PLAINTIFFS and the Prisoner Class Against ALL DEFENDANTS)**

169. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference herein all allegations previously made above.

170. By their policies and practices described above, Defendants subject Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class they represent, to a substantial risk of serious harm and injury from the harmful and inhumane effects of prolonged isolation, the denial of due process in

1 relationship to classification and housing decisions, and inadequate mental health care.  
2 Defendants further subject Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class to a substantial risk of serious  
3 harm and injury from the way Defendants use safety cells and isolation, including harm  
4 caused by the conditions of confinement which provide for inadequate physical exercise  
5 and programming, inadequate mental health treatment, and extreme social isolation and  
6 environmental deprivation. These policies and practices have been, and continue to be,  
7 implemented by Defendants and their agents or employees in their official capacities, and  
8 are the proximate cause of Plaintiffs' and the Prisoner Class's ongoing deprivation of  
9 rights secured by the California Constitution, Article I, Section 17.

10 171. Defendants have been and are aware of all of the deprivations complained of  
11 herein, and have condoned or been deliberately indifferent to such conduct.

12 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs and the Prisoner Class they represent request relief as  
13 outlined below.

14 **FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

15 **(Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12132)**

16 **(Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY, JOHNSON, JONES, NAVARRO,**  
17 **and WASHINGTON and the Disability Subclass Against ALL DEFENDANTS)**

18 172. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference herein all allegations  
19 previously made above.

20 173. The Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") prohibits public entities,  
21 including Defendants from denying "a qualified individual with a disability ... the benefits  
22 of the services, programs, or activities of [the] public entity" because of the individual's  
23 disability. 42 U.S.C. § 12132. Defendants are legally responsible for all violations of the  
24 ADA committed by County staff and contractors who provide programs, services, or  
25 activities, including but not limited to mental health care to prisoners in the Jails.

26 174. The ADA defines "a qualified individual with a disability" as a person who  
27 suffers from a "physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major  
28 life activities," including, but not limited to, "caring for oneself, performing manual tasks,

1 seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing,  
2 learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.” 42 U.S.C.  
3 § 12102(1)(A), (2)(A). Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY, JOHNSON,  
4 JONES, NAVARRO, and WASHINGTON and members of the Disability Subclass are  
5 individuals with disabilities as defined in the ADA, as they have mental impairments that  
6 substantially limit one or more major life activities. Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-  
7 HORNSBY, JOHNSON, JONES, NAVARRO, and WASHINGTON are qualified – with  
8 or without reasonable modifications – to participate in the programs, services, and  
9 activities offered by Defendants and are therefore qualified individuals with disabilities  
10 within the meaning of 42 U.S.C. §§ 12102, 12131, and 28 C.F.R. § 35.104.

11 175. The programs, services, and activities that Defendants provide to prisoners  
12 include, but are not limited to, sleeping, eating, showering, toileting, communicating with  
13 those outside the Jail by mail and telephone, exercising, entertainment, safety and security,  
14 the Jail’s administrative, disciplinary, and classification proceedings, medical, mental  
15 health, and dental services, library, educational, vocational, substance abuse treatment,  
16 parenting classes, and anger management classes, and discharge services. Defendants’  
17 programs, services, and activities are covered by the ADA.

18 176. Under the ADA, Defendants must provide prisoners with disabilities  
19 reasonable accommodations and modifications to policies and procedures so that they can  
20 avail themselves of and participate in all programs and activities offered by Defendants.

21 177. Congress directed the United States Department of Justice (“DOJ”) to write  
22 regulations implementing Title II’s prohibition against discrimination. 42 U.S.C. § 12134.  
23 Pursuant to this mandate, the DOJ has issued regulations defining the forms of  
24 discrimination prohibited by Title II of the ADA. 28 C.F.R. § 35.101 *et seq.* These  
25 regulations include regulations specific to adult detention and correctional facilities. 28  
26 C.F.R. § 35.152.

27 178. A public entity must “administer services, programs, and activities in the  
28 most integrated setting appropriate to” an individual’s needs and is therefore prohibited

1 from unnecessarily segregating or isolating the individual. 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(d). Public  
2 entities responsible for the operation or management of adult detention and correctional  
3 facilities “shall ensure that [prisoners] or detainees with disabilities are housed in the most  
4 integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the individuals. Unless it is appropriate to  
5 make an exception, a public entity—(i) Shall not place [prisoners] or detainees with  
6 disabilities in inappropriate security classifications because no accessible cells or beds are  
7 available; (ii) Shall not place [prisoners] or detainees with disabilities in designated  
8 medical areas unless they are actually receiving medical care or treatment; (iii) Shall not  
9 place [prisoners] or detainees with disabilities in facilities that do not offer the same  
10 programs as the facilities where they would otherwise be housed; and (iv) Shall not  
11 deprive [prisoners] or detainees with disabilities of visitation with family members by  
12 placing them in distant facilities where they would not otherwise be housed.” 28 C.F.R. §  
13 35.152(b)(2). Furthermore, a public entity may not “deny a qualified individual with a  
14 disability the opportunity to participate in services, programs, or activities that are not  
15 separate or different, despite the existence of permissibly separate or different programs or  
16 activities.” 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(2).

17       179. In providing any aid, benefit, or service, a public entity “may not . . . [d]eny  
18 a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in or benefit from the  
19 aid, benefit, or service,” “[a]fford a qualified individual with a disability an opportunity to  
20 participate in or benefit from the aid, benefit, or service that is not equal to that afforded  
21 others,” “[p]rovide a qualified individual with a disability with an aid, benefit, or service  
22 that is not as effective in affording equal opportunity . . . as that provided to others,”  
23 “[o]therwise limit a qualified individual with a disability in the enjoyment of any right,  
24 privilege, advantage, or opportunity enjoyed by others,” or “provide different or separate  
25 aids, benefits, or services to individuals with disabilities or to any class of individuals with  
26 disabilities than is provided to others unless such action is necessary to provide qualified  
27 individuals with disabilities with aids, benefits, or services that are as effective as those  
28 provided to others.” 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(1)(i)-(iv).

1           180. When Defendants house individuals with disabilities in isolation due to their  
2 disabilities, Defendants deny Plaintiffs and the Disability Subclass the opportunity to  
3 participate in services, programs, or activities that are in the most integrated setting  
4 appropriate to their needs, that are as effective in affording equal opportunity as those  
5 provided to others, and that are not separate or different from those offered to their  
6 nondisabled peers.

7           181. A public entity may not (1) “impose or apply eligibility criteria that screen  
8 out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or any class of individuals with  
9 disabilities from fully and equally enjoying any service, program, or activity, unless such  
10 criteria can be shown to be necessary[.]” 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(8); or (2) “utilize criteria  
11 or methods of administration . . . that have the effect of subjecting qualified individuals  
12 with disabilities to discrimination on the basis of disability . . . or the purpose or effect of  
13 defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the public entity’s  
14 program with respect to individuals with disabilities[.]” 28 C.F.R. §35.130(b)(3)(i)(ii).

15           182. Defendants have imposed eligibility criteria and methods of administration  
16 that screen out persons with disabilities and subject them to discrimination by housing  
17 prisoners with disabilities in isolation due to their disabilities and disability-related  
18 behaviors. Defendants have not shown that such criteria are necessary for the provision of  
19 the service, program, or activity being offered or that such requirements are based on  
20 actual risks, not on mere speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations about individuals with  
21 disabilities, as required by 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(h).

22           183. A public entity “shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices,  
23 or procedure when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of  
24 disability[.]” 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(7). Defendants fail to make reasonable modifications  
25 to avoid discrimination, including but not limited to: (1) implementing an  
26 identification/tracking system to track prisoners with psychiatric disabilities and their  
27 disability-related needs; (2) modifying policies and procedures to provide prisoners with  
28 disabilities with meaningful access to programs and services; and modifying policies and

1 procedures to prohibit prisoners with psychiatric disabilities from being placed in isolation.

2 184. Defendants have failed to make available information to the Disability  
3 Subclass about their rights under the ADA while detained in the Jails. *See* 28 C.F.R. §  
4 35.106.

5 185. As a result of Defendants’ policy and practice of discriminating against and  
6 failing to provide reasonable accommodations to prisoners with disabilities, Plaintiffs and  
7 the Prisoners with Disabilities Subclass they represent do not have equal access to Jail  
8 activities, programs, and services for which they are otherwise qualified.

9 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs and the Prisoners with Disabilities Subclass they  
10 represent request relief as outlined below.

11 **SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

12 **(Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. § 794)**

13 **(Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY, JOHNSON, JONES, NAVARRO,**  
14 **and WASHINGTON and the Prisoner Class Against ALL DEFENDANTS)**

15 186. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference herein all allegations  
16 previously made above.

17 187. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides, in pertinent part that “[n]o  
18 otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by  
19 reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits  
20 of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal  
21 financial assistance[.]” 29 U.S.C. § 794(a).

22 188. At all times relevant to this action, Defendants are and have been recipients  
23 of federal financial assistance within the meaning of the Rehabilitation Act including for  
24 programs or activities offered at the Jails.

25 189. Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY, JOHNSON, JONES,  
26 NAVARRO, and WASHINGTON and the Disability Subclass they represent are qualified  
27 individuals with disabilities as defined in the Rehabilitation Act as they all have  
28 impairments that substantially limit a major life activity, and they were and/or are all

1 residents of the Jails qualified—with or without reasonable accommodation—to participate  
2 in the programs, services, and activities offered by Defendants. 29 U.S.C. § 705(20)(B);  
3 28 C.F.R. § 41.32.

4 190. By their policy and practice of discriminating against and failing to  
5 reasonably accommodate prisoners with disabilities, Defendants violate Section 504 of the  
6 Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. § 794.

7 191. The DOJ is charged under Executive Order 12250 with coordinating the  
8 implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. 28 C.F.R. § 41.1.

9 192. In providing any aid, benefit, or service, a recipient of federal financial  
10 assistance “may not . . . [d]eny a qualified handicapped person the opportunity to  
11 participate in or benefit from the aid, benefit or service,” “[a]fford a qualified handicapped  
12 person an opportunity to participate in or benefit from the aid, benefit, or service that is not  
13 equal to that afforded others,” “[p]rovide a qualified handicapped person with an aid,  
14 benefit, or service that is not as effective in affording equal opportunity . . . as that  
15 provided to others,” “[o]therwise limit a qualified handicapped person in the enjoyment of  
16 any right, privilege, advantage, or opportunity enjoyed by others,” or “provide different or  
17 separate aids, benefits, or services to individuals with disabilities or to any class of  
18 individuals with disabilities than is provided to others unless such action is necessary to  
19 provide qualified individuals with disabilities with aids, benefits, or services that are as  
20 effective as those provided to others.” 45 C.F.R. § 84.4(b)(i)(iv), (vii). A public entity also  
21 may not “deny a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in  
22 services, programs, or activities that are not separate or different, despite the existence of  
23 permissibly separate or different programs or activities.” 45 C.F.R. § 84.4(b)(3).

24 193. By housing Plaintiffs and members of the Disability Subclass in more  
25 restrictive housing, Defendants exclude them from participating in and deny them the  
26 benefits of Defendants’ education and rehabilitative programs, services, and activities  
27 solely by reason of their disabilities.

28 ///



1 194. As a result of Defendants’ discriminating against and failing to provide a  
2 grievance procedure and reasonable accommodations, Plaintiffs and the Prisoners with  
3 Disabilities Subclass they represent do not have equal access to the Jails’ activities,  
4 programs, and services for which they are otherwise qualified.

5 195. Because Defendants’ discriminatory conduct is ongoing, declaratory relief  
6 and injunctive relief are appropriate remedies. Further, as a direct result of Defendants’  
7 actions, Plaintiffs and members of the Plaintiff Class are suffering irreparable harm,  
8 including lost education and rehabilitative opportunities. Therefore, speedy and immediate  
9 relief is appropriate.

10 196. Pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 794a, Plaintiffs are entitled to declaratory and  
11 injunctive relief and to recover from Defendants the reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs  
12 incurred in bringing this action.

13 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs and the Prisoners with Disabilities Subclass they  
14 represent request relief as outlined below.

15 **SEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

16 **(Cal. Gov’t Code § 11135)**

17 **By Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY, JOHNSON, JONES,**  
18 **NAVARRO, and WASHINGTON and the Disability Subclass Against ALL**  
**DEFENDANTS)**

19 197. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference herein all allegations  
20 previously made above.

21 198. Upon information and belief, each Defendant was, at all times relevant to  
22 this action, and is currently operating or administering a program or activity that receives  
23 state financial assistance within the meaning of section 11135, including educational and  
24 rehabilitative programs and activities offered in the Jails.

25 199. Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-HORNSBY, JOHNSON, JONES,  
26 NAVARRO, and WASHINGTON, and the Disability Subclass were, at all times relevant  
27 to this action, and are currently “persons in the State of California” within the meaning of  
28 California Government Code section 11135. Plaintiffs BABU, BELL, KEEGAN-

1 HORNSBY, JOHNSON, JONES, NAVARRO, and WASHINGTON, and the Disability  
2 Subclass all have disabilities as defined by California Government Code section 12926,  
3 and they were and/or are all residents of the County Jails qualified to participate in the  
4 programs, services and activities of the County Jails.

5 200. Defendants have violated the rights of Plaintiffs and members of the Plaintiff  
6 Class secured by Section 11135 *et seq.* and the regulations promulgated thereunder, 22  
7 Cal. Code Regs. § 98100, *et seq.*

8 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs and the Prisoners with Disabilities Subclass they  
9 represent request relief as outlined below.

10 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

11 Plaintiffs and the class and subclass they represent have no adequate remedy at law  
12 to redress the wrongs suffered as set forth in this Complaint. Plaintiffs have suffered and  
13 will continue to suffer irreparable injury as a result of the unlawful acts, omissions,  
14 policies, and practices of the Defendants as alleged herein, unless Plaintiffs are granted the  
15 relief they request. Plaintiffs and Defendants have an actual controversy and opposing  
16 legal positions as to Defendants’ violations of the constitutions and laws of the United  
17 States and the State of California. The need for relief is critical because the rights at issue  
18 are paramount under the constitutions and laws of the United States and the State of  
19 California.

20 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves, the proposed class and subclass,  
21 and all others similarly situated, pray for judgment and the following specific relief against  
22 Defendants as follows:

23 201. An order certifying that this action may be maintained as a class action  
24 pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(a) and 23(b)(2);

25 202. A finding that the conditions, acts, omissions, policies, and practices  
26 described above are in violation of the rights of Plaintiffs and the class and subclass they  
27 represent under the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution,  
28 the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, Article I, Sections 7 and 17 of the California

1 Constitution, and California Government Code § 11135;

2 203. An order requiring Defendants, their agents, officials, employees, and all  
3 persons acting in concert with them under color of state law or otherwise to cease  
4 inhumane use of prolonged isolation, to cease indefinitely placing prisoners with  
5 psychiatric disabilities in isolation, to establish a constitutionally adequate process for  
6 determination of prisoner classification and housing placement, to cease violating the due  
7 process rights of prisoners; to provide minimally adequate mental health care to prisoners,  
8 and to cease discriminating against and failing to provide accommodations to prisoners  
9 with psychiatric disabilities;

10 204. An order enjoining Defendants, their agents, officials, employees, and all  
11 persons acting in concert with them under color of state law or otherwise, from continuing  
12 the unlawful acts, conditions, and practices described in this Complaint;

13 205. An award to Plaintiffs, pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 794a, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1988,  
14 12205, and California Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5, of the costs of this suit and  
15 reasonable attorneys’ fees and litigation expenses;

16 206. An order retaining jurisdiction of this case until Defendants have fully  
17 complied with the orders of this Court, and there is a reasonable assurance that Defendants  
18 will continue to comply in the future absent continuing jurisdiction; and

19 207. An award to Plaintiffs of such other and further relief as the Court deems just  
20 and proper.

21 Respectfully submitted,

22 DATED: December 21, 2018

ROSEN BIEN GALVAN & GRUNFELD LLP

23  
24 By: /s/ Jeffrey L. Bornstein  
Jeffrey L. Bornstein

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS-CAND 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved in its original form by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the Clerk of Court to initiate the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS

Ashok Babu, Robert Bell, Ibrahim Keegan-Hornsby, Demarea Johnson, Brandon Jones, Stephanie Navarro, Roberto Serrano, Alexander Washington

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Alameda County (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)

Jeffrey L. Bornstein, Rosen Bien Galvan & Grunfeld LLP, 101 Mission Street, Sixth Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105 Tel: (415) 433-6830

DEFENDANTS

County of Alameda, Gregory J. Ahern in his official capacity as Sheriff of the Alameda County Sheriff's Office; Carol Burton in her official capacity as Interim Director of the Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services Agency, and Does 1 to 20

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant Alameda County (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known)

Gregory B. Thomas, Boomazian, Jensen & Garthe, 555 12th Street, Suite 1800, Oakland, CA 94607, (510) 834-4350

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff, 2 U.S. Government Defendant, 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party), 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

Table with columns for Plaintiff (PTF) and Defendant (DEF) citizenship: Citizen of This State, Citizen of Another State, Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country, Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State, Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State, Foreign Nation.

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

Large table with categories: CONTRACT, REAL PROPERTY, TORTS, CIVIL RIGHTS, PRISONER PETITIONS, HABEAS CORPUS, OTHER, FORFEITURE/PENALTY, LABOR, IMMIGRATION, BANKRUPTCY, SOCIAL SECURITY, FEDERAL TAX SUITS, OTHER STATUTES.

V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- 1 Original Proceeding, 2 Removed from State Court, 3 Remanded from Appellate Court, 4 Reinstated or Reopened, 5 Transferred from Another District (specify), 6 Multidistrict Litigation-Transfer, 8 Multidistrict Litigation-Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity): 42 U.S.C. § 1983; 42 U.S.C. § 12132; 29 U.S.C. § 794; Cal. Gov't Code § 11135

Brief description of cause:

Prisoners are subjected to unconstitutional conditions, denied due process, and prisoners with disabilities are discriminated against because of their disabilities

VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:

CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, Fed. R. Civ. P. DEMAND \$ Injunctive relief CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: JURY DEMAND: Yes No

VIII. RELATED CASE(S), IF ANY (See instructions):

JUDGE Jon S. Tigar

DOCKET NUMBER 11-cv-02868-JST

IX. DIVISIONAL ASSIGNMENT (Civil Local Rule 3-2)

(Place an "X" in One Box Only) SAN FRANCISCO/OAKLAND SAN JOSE EUREKA-MCKINLEYVILLE

DATE 12/21/2018

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD

/s/ Jeffrey L. Bornstein

# ClassAction.org

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: [Lawsuit Challenges Alleged 'Disciplinary Isolation' of Mentally Disabled Inmates in CA Jails](#)

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