TEXAS CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECT

Oficina Legal Del Pueblo Unido
P.O. Box 17757
Austin, TX 78760
512-474-5073 | txcivilrights.org

Safety Concerns in Prison or Jail
Updated March 2023

Note: We prepared the following information as a general guide. We tried to use the most up to date information, but we cannot guarantee everything here is current or accurate for your situation. This handout is general information only and does not constitute legal advice, nor create a lawyer-client relationship between you and Texas Civil Rights Project. We encourage you to contact a lawyer if you wish to file a lawsuit. If you write to us, we can send a lawyer referral list.

We are sorry to hear about your safety concerns. There are steps you can take depending on your situation. You can contact these people from prison or jail or a family member or friend can send a complaint. These steps are specific to TDCJ prisons, but county jails should have a similar process:

- **File a grievance:** Fill out a grievance form (I-27). List who is making you feel unsafe and why. Write what you need to help you feel safe. The Prison Litigation Reform Act (a federal law) requires you to file Step 1 and Step 2 grievances before you file a lawsuit. You may be barred from taking your problems to court if you do not file grievances and any available appeals. If you want more information about filing grievances, we can send it to you.

- **Contact the unit major:** Send an I-60 form to the major on your unit. Try to keep a copy of the I-60 to show you requested help. Write down who or what is making you feel unsafe.

- **Contact the Safe Prisons/PREA Program:** Write to the Safe Prisons Program. Write who is threatening you and why you do not feel safe. You should write to them if you or someone else has experienced sexual assault or abuse:

  Texas Department of Criminal Justice
  Correctional Institutions Division
  Lorena Steinbecker, TDCJ Safe Prisons/PREA Manager
  PO Box 99
  Huntsville, TX 77342-0099

  Phone: (936) 437-8918
  Fax: (936) 437-6207
  Email: lorena.steinbecker@tdcj.texas.gov

- **Contact TDCJ's Office of the Inspector General:** If you are the victim of a crime, or are being threatened, contact the TDCJ Office of the Inspector General:

  TDCJ Office of the Inspector General
  PO Box 13084, Capitol Station
  Austin, TX 78711

  Phone: (512) 671-2480 or (936) 437-5103
  Fax: (512) 671-2129
  Toll Free Hotline: (833) 296-9818
  Email: oig@tdcj.texas.gov

- **Contact the Office of the Independent Ombudsman:** If you have complaints about your treatment or are worried for your safety, you can write to the Ombudsman:

  Texas Board of Criminal Justice
  Office of the Independent Ombudsman
  PO Box 99
  Huntsville, TX 77342-0099

  Phone: (936) 437-5620
  Toll Free Hotline: (833) 598-2700
  Fax: (325) 223-1334
  Email: io@tdcj.texas.gov
  Contact Form: https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/tbcj/oio/ombudsman_contact.php