

Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Investigative Findings and Next Steps

On January 25, 2023, following an extensive investigation, the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Civil Rights Division and the three U.S. Attorney's Offices for the State of Louisiana notified the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections (LDOC) that it had reasonable cause to believe that LDOC incarcerates thousands of individuals each year beyond their legal release date, in violation of incarcerated persons' constitutional rights.

In summary, the investigation found:

- **LDOC denies individuals' due process rights to timely release from incarceration by detaining them weeks and often months past their release dates.** Between January and April 2022, 26.8% of all people released from LDOC custody were overdetained. In that four-month period alone, the cost of overdetention to LDOC was at least \$850,000.
- **LDOC fails to implement adequate policies and procedures to prevent systemic overdetention.** LDOC does not have a uniform system for receiving or delivering necessary sentencing documents and it maintains a time-consuming process for calculating release dates, which also lacks an accountability process to ensure sentencing computations are done correctly.
- **LDOC is deliberately indifferent to the systemic overdetention of people in its custody.** LDOC has been on notice of this issue for more than a decade and attempts to improve that process thus far have been inadequate.

Now that the investigation into LDOC is complete, our goal is to work with LDOC to resolve the identified constitutional violations and implement remedial measures.

Please note, that although the DOJ does not have the authority to provide legal assistance to individuals who may have experienced overdetention by LDOC, we still encourage anyone with questions, ideas for reform, or comments, to contact the DOJ team:

Community.LouisianaDOC@usdoj.gov

or

833-492-0097 (toll-free)