



COUNTY OF GOLIAD

# Sheriff Roy Boyd

Matthew 20:25-28



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April 14, 2024

Senator Durbin, Chair of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary

Greetings,

I am here today to testify about inmate segregation within the confines of a county jail in the state of Texas. All county jails in Texas are subject to the rules of the Texas Commission on Jail Standards, which oversees and enforces the regulations set forth by processes put in place by the Texas Legislature.

As the Sheriff of Goliad County, I am responsible for the operation of a jail authorized to hold no more than 48 inmates at a time. Other counties like Harris or Dallas hold thousands of inmates on any given day. However, regardless of the size of the facility, all county jails in the State of Texas must comply with the same regulations.

Since this Committee is discussing what was referred to as “solitary confinement”, I will provide you with some information about the classification of inmates as required by Chapter 271, under Title 37, Part 9 of the Texas Administrative Code. Under this Code, each Sheriff is required to develop and implement an objective classification plan, which must be approved by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards.

In Texas, inmates shall be classified and housed in the least restrictive housing available without jeopardizing staff, inmates or the public, utilizing risk factors which include any or all of the following:

- current offense or conviction
- offense history
- escape history
- institutional disciplinary history
- prior convictions
- alcohol and/or drug abuse
- stability factors

Classification criteria shall not include race, ethnicity or religious preference.

Custody levels and special housing needs shall be assessed to include minimum, medium and maximum custody levels and the placement and release of inmates to and from special units including protective custody, administrative separation, disciplinary separation and mental and medical health housing including known pregnant inmates.

With regards to the segregation of inmates, the following are the rules which jails in the State of Texas must comply with:

- Female inmates shall be separated by sight and sound from male inmates
- Inmates assigned to a detoxification cell shall be transferred to a housing or holding area as soon as they can properly care for themselves
- The status of persons confined to a violent cell shall be reassessed and documented at least every 24 hours for continuance of status
- Inmates who require protection or those who require separation to protect the safety and security of the facility may be housed in administrative separation. The status of inmates placed in administrative separation shall be reviewed and documented at least every 30 days for continuance of status
- Inmates housed in administrative separation shall retain access to services and activities, unless the continuance of the services and activities would adversely affect the safety and security of the facility
- Single cells may be utilized for disciplinary or administrative separation
- Inmates in administrative separation shall be provided access to a day room for at least one hour each day
- Inmates in disciplinary separation shall be provided a shower every other day.

The Goliad County Sheriff's Office is a participating member of the ICE 287g program. However, our facility is not an authorized housing facility for federal inmates, including ICE detainees. As such, under our agreement with ICE, the Goliad County Jail classifies and houses inmates under the rules and regulations of the Texas Commission on Jail Standards.

Unfortunately, there is much misunderstanding and false information about the role of law enforcement and the housing of inmates. As the Sheriff and chief law enforcement officer of the county I serve, it is my responsibility to provide a safe environment for people who have been ordered to remain in the Goliad County Jail. Once someone is arrested by law enforcement, the Sheriff is responsible for housing the person. I do not have a say about the bond amount or type. This is done by a magistrate. I do not have a say about whether an inmate remains in jail or is released. This is the decision of the court. These lawful powers remain under separate government authorities to prevent the violation of the Rights of persons arrested and placed in jail.

As a Sheriff and public servant, it is my belief that every person is made in the image of God and shall be treated fairly and in accordance with the rules, regulations, and laws as provided by the legislative body of the State of Texas.

I will be happy to answer any questions members of this Committee may have regarding this topic.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roy Boyd', written in a cursive style.

Roy Boyd