**From:** (b)(6)
**To:** Salvano-Dunn, Dana; Sharp, Thomas; (b)(6)
**Cc:** (b)(6) CRCLCompliance
**Subject:** COVID-19: Serious UOF Incident @ Bristol
**Date:** Saturday, May 2, 2020 3:07:14 PM

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All, a serious incident of force reportedly occurred yesterday at Bristol involving the use of force, resulting in three detainees hospitalized - due to 10 detainees showing COVID-19 symptoms. Article link below.

(b)(5)

The Sheriff department reported that the detainees caused $25K in damages and that they attacked officers. The sheriff reported the "incident started when 10 ICE detainees reported several symptoms of COVID-19."

The Sheriff referred testing questions by reporters were directed to ICE.

https://www.wbur.org/news/2020/05/01/coronavirus-ice-detainees-massachusetts-detention

CORONAVIRUS COVERAGE

# ICE Detainees Hospitalized, Sheriff Reports 'Extensive Damage' After Coronavirus-Based Incident in Bristol County Jail

04:22

May 01, 2020 *Updated May 02, 2020 2:14 PM*

By Shannon Dooling

The immigration detention center at the Bristol County Sheriff's Office in Dartmouth, Mass. (Jesse Costa/WBUR)

Three U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees being held at the Bristol County House of Correction were hospitalized after a violent

incident at the facility Friday night. The Bristol County Sheriff's Office confirmed to WBUR that the incident began after ICE detainees reported symptoms of COVID-19.

WBUR was contacted by multiple sources who had heard from people inside the facility about a disturbance taking place among ICE detainees.

Several of the detainees were able to reach family and attorneys and reported the use of pepper spray and dogs. The sheriff's office said Friday that corrections officers, special response team members and the K9 unit entered the facility and were attacked by the ICE detainees.

An attorney who represents several ICE detainees inside the facility said his clients called to report being "attacked" with pepper spray.

Lawyers For Civil Rights — a legal group representing individuals who filed a class action lawsuit against ICE and the sheriff's office that alleges overcrowding and inhumane conditions amid the pandemic — described the incident this way:

> *It appears that Correctional Officers attempted to transport individuals held in Unit B [where ICE detainees*

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*are held] to the medical wing. These individuals were justifiably concerned that doing so would dangerously expose them to risk of infection given the cross-contamination with many different individuals from all over the facility who come and go from the medical unit and with many shared surfaces. The Sheriff's office attempted to forcibly move an individual and the conflict escalated, including the arrival of more officers, the deployment of guards in riot gear, and the use of dogs and either tear gas or pepper spray. Sheriff Hodgson was himself on the scene and according to multiple reports, was directly involved in the conflict with [lawsuit] class members. Three class members were hospitalized as a result of the conflict.*

**After Brawl At Bristol County Jail Involving Sheriff, Advocates For Immigrant Detainees Call For Investigation**

**WBUR News** 02:46 May 2, 2020

In a statement released late Friday night, sheriff's office spokesman Jonathan Darling claimed the detainees caused "more than $25,000 worth of damage" and attacked Sheriff Thomas Hodgson and guards during the exchange.

Hodgson said the incident started when 10 ICE detainees reported several symptoms of COVID-19.

"The detainees refused to go to the medical unit for testing," Hodgson said in the statement.

According to Hodgson, detainees became "combatant and ultimately put the lives of themselves and many Bristol County officers at risk with their reckless actions."

WBUR spoke Saturday morning to a man who spent nine months as an ICE detainee in the Bristol County House of Correction. He was recently

released as a result of the class action lawsuit.

WBUR agreed to identify him by his initials, VM, because he fears repercussions for speaking with a reporter.

VM said during his time in detention, anyone complaining of coronavirus symptoms or asking for a test was relocated out of the unit and isolated.

"They use this trick to tell you, 'Oh, we're going to take you to medical or to another unit to test you or to check your pressure or something,' but, we got a medical room in the Unit B [where ICE detainees are held] so they using this [as an excuse] to take you to the hole."

Lawyers and family members of Bristol ICE detainees have reported a similar practice to WBUR.

The Bristol County Sheriff's Office has repeatedly referred WBUR's questions about testing of detainees to ICE. The agency says it is not reporting on testing but is updating its website with positive results. As of Saturday, ICE has not reported any positive tests among detainees held at the three Massachusetts county jails the agency contracts with.

Saying he was "extremely concerned" about the incident, Rep. Joe Kennedy, whose district includes Bristol County, called for an immediate and independent investigation into the incident. He also demanded surveillance footage be released and every detainee present be given immediate access to counsel.

Kennedy told WBUR an investigation should center on the level of violence that was allegedly used against inmates.

"If there was in fact an effort to provide additional treatment and to safeguard the health of these individuals, [there are questions about] why a

violent response was necessary," he said.

## Related:

- 47 ICE Detainees Released From Bristol County; Judge Wants Virus Testing Reports For Those Still Held
- Class Action Suit Calls For Release Of ICE Detainees In Bristol County Amid Coronavirus Fears
- 57 Inmates To A Unit, Bunk Beds 3 Feet Apart; ICE Detainees In Bristol County Cite Overcrowding Amid COVID-19 Fears

**Shannon Dooling** Reporter
Shannon Dooling is an immigration reporter at WBUR, Boston's NPR news station.
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