

September 3, 2022

Baker County Detention Center  
1 Sheriff Office Drive  
MacClenny, FL 32063

*"AMERICA IS A LAND OF SECOND CHANCE"*

To whom it may concern,

My name is Bobbeth Morgan, I am writing this letter to share my experience. I am originally from Kingston Jamaica and came to the United States of America in 1997 for a better life. I am a mother of three and recently became a grandmother. Growing up in Jamaica I felt fatherless; However, at the age of nineteen I moved to the United States and became a legal permanent resident. I have been a legal permanent resident for over twenty-five years now. During that period of my life, I have completed college and worked for Kaplan University in the finance department for well over 11 ½ years. I am a homeowner, and I was an active member of my community.

I am a first-time offender. I remember standing in the courtroom shackled with tears in my eyes watching every and everything around spinning. Listening to the judge sentencing me to 54 months felt surreal. The shock stopped the anguish that washed over me. The hardest part to my prison journey was not knowing what was in store for my future, not knowing what to expect or how to keep my family strong. The three years and eight months I spent in prison was the hardest and most challenging time of my entire forty-four years of life. During my incarcerating, I had the opportunity to reinvent myself by choosing to live up to my fullest potential which was by rewriting my life and being intentional about it. Three days before my scheduled freedom, I received the news from my classification officer that Immigration Custom Enforcement placed a hold on me and that they will be picking me up. The door slammed shut in my face, stunned and I slipped into a miserable state of uncertainty.

I was picked up on May 6, 2022, and was taken into the ICE office in Orlando Florida. I was later transported to Baker County Detention Center. Often there is a valley between what we are paying for and God's answer, and the only way to get to his answer is to walk through the valley. The journey at ICE was not easy. I faced disappointment, discouragement, fear, and frustration. After arriving at Baker County Detention Center at 4:50 pm, I was placed in a cell for hours without being attended to and booked at 1 am the next day. I was given recycled under garments, t-shirts, washcloth, socks, and a towel. All the recycled clothing I was issued was not only used, but they were foul smelling and the under wear has blood stains by the private area. I was then placed in another cell and was told I was going to be quarantined for seven days. I had experienced many highs and lows during my three years and eight months in the state system, but what I was faced with at Baker County Detention Center sent me down on my knees begging God for mercy. The cell was so dirty it had multiple centipedes crawling around and the bunk and walls had blood stains all over. I cried asking God to please work a miracle and wake me up from this nightmare.

The next day a nurse came to covid test me, then stated I will be moved to general population. When I arrived, I was stunned to see how filthy the dorm was. A week being in the dorm, I started to get sick, and all my sick calls were ignored because the only thing the nurse kept telling me was, I am okay. It took one nurse who made mention that is not normal that I am complaining about not being able to breathe.

I finally did an ultrasound and found out that I have multiple cysts on my thyroid. I was then taken out for a CAT scan and later found out that I have a nodule in my lungs. I have still not received treatment for my illness up to now. I am scared to lose my life in this place especially due to my difficulty breathing. I never thought I would be sitting here since I am a legal permanent resident. I have seen detainees get third chances but never witnessed a detainee get a second chance and not to mention I have yet seen a black detainee get release.

This place is not safe. It is filled with mold and filled with disrespectful staffs who feels as though they are above the law. I have been assaulted by a lieutenant and after following proper protocols which was first writing a detainee request then a grievance nothing got done. Instead, the captain stated that the lieutenant did not intend to spit on me. This lieutenant has been retaliating against me. On three different occasions she aggressively snatched my clothing from my hands pulling me forward and told me to write her up because nothing will be done about it.


Baker County Detention Center staff is very unprofessional and does not follow what they advertise which is "ZERO TOLERANCE for sexual abuse/assault". One of the sergeants displayed his unprofessionalism behavior and attitude by entering the cell with both me and roommate asleep without announcing himself and telling us to step out so he can enter. I was awoken to the male sergeant taking pictures. When I asked what his motives was in being in the cell with a cell phone; I was not fully coherent when I sat up not realizing that I was exposed being dressed in only my bra because I was asleep. He disregarded the fact that I was not properly dressed and continued to take pictures and took a while before he turned around and stated that I can write it up. My mental state was high because I was so shocked and stunned about the incident. All policy concerning PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) was ignored and disregarded. I was disrespected and was not treated with the treatment Baker County Sheriff advertise about zero tolerance. Baker County Detention Center states that all inmate/detainees are safe while housed under their custody, however I did not feel like the policy was implied.

I wrote a request to speak to the mental health counselor about this incident and I felt even more unsafe because the counselor came and spoke to me in front of the entire dorm and even an office. I felt exposed all over again because counseling is supposed to be confidential and there was no confidentiality. I wrote a grievance concerning this matter and no one has addressed this situation. The number that is placed in Baker County Detention Center for PREA is a crisis number and is not a line to report sexual abuse while the staff refuses to take complains.

My rights are being violated by Baker County Staff. While sitting on the toilet undressed, coming from the shower in my undergarments I am being watched from staff from the staff tower. Per Baker County Sexual abuse brochure, it is prohibited for staff or inmate to be staring at me while I change clothes or use the toilet. I was advised by Civil Rights Civil Liberties Union that they went to the tower and could see inside of the cells. CRCL questioned Baker County Staff and asked what the procedure is when a detainee needs privacy and Baker County staff lied and said that each cell has a personal curtain which is false. This clearly shows that Baker County staff shows staff misconduct and or staff misconduct of sexual nature. These occurrences of indecent exposure, invasion of privacy or staff voyeurism for reason unrelated to official duties of a sexual gratification. This violates the PREA Act 2003 public law 108-97. Baker County is violating the PREA standards and is non-compliant.

There are many more injustices being done here. The supervisor for ICE refuses to document accurate medical diagnoses which has been given by Doctor's and Specialist from the outside. Ice supervisor continued to give false Notice of Custody Determination letter; she refuses to release detainee under the fraihat due to their sickness that fall under the guideline. As stated, before I have many illnesses which falls under fraihat which makes me eligible to be release. My lawyer filed the necessary paperwork with all my medical records on June 2022. I later received Notice of Custody Determination dated May 11, 2022, on September 28, 2022. The Notice of Custody Determination has none of my medical diagnoses which is on my medical records. The supervisor for ICE of Baker County, stated on the Custody Determination letter that I have Chronic condition which is Obesity but did not include that I have multiple cysts on my thyroid, nodule in my lung, arthritis, and stomach issues, which Ice had to approved to see a Doctor's on the outside. She however denies me and stated I am a threat to public safety. I am afraid of Deportation Retaliation and them wanting to quickly deport me.

With Concern

  
Bobbeth Morgan