



March 28, 2014

Sheriff John L. Scott
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
4700 Ramona Boulevard
Monterey Park, CA 91754-2169

Dear Sheriff Scott:

On November 1, 2013, the ACLU of Southern California (ACLU SoCal), together with 32 community leaders and social justice advocates, wrote to then-Sheriff Baca and Assistant Sheriff McDonald to express our concern about the continued denial of religious accommodation for Muslim inmates in the Los Angeles County Jail. This was the latest in a series of letters from ACLU SoCal to the Sheriff's Department detailing the ways in which officials at Men's Central Jail and Twin Towers Correctional Facility have denied religious accommodations for Muslim inmates, while permitting it for inmates who practice other religions.

Of particular concern is the ongoing denial of access to congregational prayer for Muslim inmates. As explained in our November 1, 2013 letter, some Muslims, who wish to attend a weekly congregational prayer that is considered mandatory for their religion, have been deprived the opportunity to congregate for this service. This service takes place on Fridays and is known as *Jumu'ah*. Jail officials have persisted in preventing certain Muslim inmates from gathering for *Jumu'ah*, despite allowing inmates with the same security levels to attend congregational prayer services of other faiths.

We have facilitated the completion of the complaint process for dozens of these inmates. Some of them have not been allowed to participate in *Jumu'ah* for months. This stark imposition on a significant religious activity constitutes an effective prohibition on the fundamental right of the affected Muslim inmates to practice their religion. In light of the access other inmates have to their congregational prayer services, there is no serious question that this practice is contrary to the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act. We again request that LASD afford Muslim inmates the same opportunity to gather and pray as inmates of other faiths.

We had hoped that this issue would be resolved during Sheriff Baca's tenure. However, neither Sheriff Baca nor Assistant Sheriff McDonald replied to the letter many religious leaders and I sent November 2013, and we continue to receive credible complaints about these issues from Muslim inmates. We hope that you recognize the importance of the situation and will take

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Sheriff John L. Scott

March 28, 2014

Page 2

prompt action to resolve it. If you do not, we will seriously consider all other options, including litigation. Please respond within the next two weeks.

Sincerely,



Jessica Price

Staff Attorney

ACLU Foundation of Southern California

cc: Brandon Marsh, Irell & Manella LLP
Neal B. Tyler, Executive Officer
Assistant Sheriff Terri McDonald
Warren R. Asmus, Commander



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