



End Prison Torture in California

ABOLISH THE SHU
(SECURITY HOUSING UNITS)

WHAT IS A SHU?

CRUEL & UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT!

- ✦ A prison within prison
- ✦ Isolation & sensory deprivation units targeting Black, Latino, and Indigenous people and prisoners who are actively fighting for their rights
- ✦ Prisoners are locked in their 6' x 8' windowless prison cells 22 - 23.5 hours a day
- ✦ No contact visits with family, friends or lawyers
- ✦ Prisoners cannot communicate among themselves
- ✦ No phone privileges
- ✦ Exercise "dog-pen" (15'x10' cement enclosed area, no sunlight, plexiglass roof, no equipment, all alone for 1 - 1.5 hours at a time)
- ✦ All meals eaten alone

Average yearly cost per SHU prisoners = \$50,000 to \$70,000

California Dept. of Corrections (CDC)

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There are 5 official SHUs in California State prison system:

Prison	Location
Pelican Bay State Prison SHU	P.O. Box 7000 Crescent City, CA 95531-7000 (707) 465-1000
Valley State Prison for Women SHU	21633 Avenue 24 Chowchilla, CA 93610 PO Box 92 Chowchilla, CA 93610-0099 (559) 665-6100
California State Prison at Corcoran SHU	P.O. Box 8800 Corcoran, CA 93212-8309 (559) 992-8800
Corcoran SATF (Substance Abuse Treatment Facility)	P. O. Box 7100 Corcoran, CA 93212 (559) 992-7100
California Correctional Institution at Tehachapi SHU	P. O. Box 1031 Tehachapi, CA 93581 (661) 822-4402

Organizations to Abolish the SHU:

California Prison Focus (CPF)
2940 16th St. Suite B5
San Francisco, CA 94103
tel: (415) 252-9211
<http://www.prisons.org>

Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM)
P.O. Box 40799
San Francisco, CA 94140
tel: (415) 267-4879
<http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/prisons>
<http://www.abolishcontrolunits.org/>

Barrio Defense Committee
P.O. Box 1523
San Jose, CA 95109
tel: (408) 885-9785
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<http://barriodefensecommittee.org/>

United Front to Abolish the SHU

Contact Information by City

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ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF SHUs:

Short-term discipline for violent prisoners
- no more than 1 month (1970)

Control units have become a common tool of repression:

- Political & social control of prisoners already locked up in secure institutions
- To break the prisoners' spirits
- The spiritual, psychological, and physical breakdown of prisoners
- SHU threat hangs over heads of all prisoners

Who is in the SHU?

- 80 - 90% are Mexicans & other Latinos, Africans, and Indigenous people who are already a disproportionate part of prison populations

Who is targeted for SHU placement?

- Prisoners who are trying to wage legal defenses for themselves
- Prisoners who speak out about inhumane conditions in prison
- Prisoners who are organizing with other inmates against prison guard abuse
- Prisoners who question arbitrary policies and practices of prison administration
- Prisoners who register for educational programs
- Prisoners who help other prisoners

How prisoners get into the SHUs:

1. Behavior: supposedly violent behavior. Threat to other inmates or staff. Up to 6 years determinate sentence
2. Status: Validated as a gang member or associate. At least 6 years or

indeterminate sentence

How prisoners are validated as gang members:

CDC must verify 3 pieces of information to determine gang membership, includes:

- Self admission
- Tattoos and symbols
- Written material - gang related info
- Photographs
- Staff information
- Other law agencies
- Association with "gang" members or associates
- INFORMANTS (60%) - confidential sources, anonymous finger pointing
- Offenses (fighting with or against "gangs")
- Legal documents evidencing gang affiliation
- Visitors
- Letters, phone calls, birthday cards
- DEBRIEFING REPORTS (using info from all the above)

SHU placement, lack of due process of the law:

- Bogus evidence is used to put prisoners in the SHUs
- Prisoners are not allowed to present evidence or witnesses in their own defense
- It is virtually impossible for prisoners to challenge their SHU placement

How inmates get out of the SHU:

1. Parole
2. Snitch
3. Die
4. Become an Inactive Gang Member

(review after 6 years, but rarely given)

SHU confinement is torture

SHU confinement violates international laws. UN report:

- ◊ UN has clearly outlined acceptable treatment of prisoners
- ◊ All prisoners should retain fundamental human rights

SHU confinement violates our US

Constitution regarding cruel & unusual punishment

Californians have no right to lecture any country in the world on prison conditions or violations of human rights.

California prisons are not about REHABILITATION - as the world community dictates. California prisons are about INDUSTRY, BIG BUSINESS. To remain in business, they have to continue to build their populations.

California had 27,000 inmates in 1970. Now we have over 180,000.

California prisons have no interest in giving prisoners opportunities to live a better life after prison

Californians need to demand that our governing body abide by the UN principles it claims to uphold!

ALL SHU UNITS IN CALIFORNIA SHOULD BE ABOLISHED (and in the US overall)