

‘We have to be their voice’: Dozens protest Utah Dept. of Corrections as COVID-19 cases grow at Draper prison

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DRAPER, Utah — Dozens of people protested outside the Utah Department of Corrections office in Draper Sunday afternoon after a seventh inmate died of COVID-19 at the prison in Draper.

“I am very concerned [about] people not getting medical care in a timely way. I've gotten a lot of complaints from people who are incarcerated in Draper right now that people are having trouble breathing, they are having serious symptoms, and it's taking way too long for them to be seen by doctor,” said Sara Wolovick, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union of Utah. Seven inmates at the Utah State Prison in Draper have died after contracting COVID-19. The conditions inside the prison are inhumane, according to Brenda Bourgeois, whose son is in the Draper prison.

“There are guys in there, in that area where he’s at, grown men, rolled up in a ball, wanting help and crying,” she said.

Bourgeois’ son tested positive for COVID-19. She said the conditions are awful, and inmates are lucky to get even pain relief medicine. People on the outside have to be the inmates' voices, she said.

“I think people die. It’s unnecessary. I just think our beds being full at the hospitals, do you think these hospital beds that are out here that are left are going to be offered to these guys? No,” she said.

Not enough is being done to protect the inmates, Wolovick said.

“I am very concerned about the medical care they are receiving, and I am very concerned about the prison's apparent inability to safely quarantine and effectively quarantine,” she said.

In a statement to FOX 13 News, a spokesperson for the Utah Department of Corrections spokesperson said: “We respect the rights of individuals to express their constitutional rights. We will continue to work with individuals and advocacy groups to discuss questions and concerns.”



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