

MEDIA ADVISORY

EMBARGOED UNTIL SATURDAY, May 16th 2:00PM EST/1:00PM CDT

A coalition of statewide activists holds two coinciding COVID-safe car rallies at Indiana State Prison and Pendleton Correctional Facility to demand action from local and state officials to save the lives of incarcerated people.

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A broad coalition of social justice advocates will hold a social distance rally at Pullman Field (550 W 4th St.) in Michigan City, Indiana, followed by demonstrations outside Indiana State Prison (ISP) on Saturday, May 16th starting at 2:00pm EST/1:00pm CDT to demand that state and local officials take action to release incarcerated people. The conditions inside the state's prisons and jails constitute a public health crisis for those trapped inside, the staff, their families, and the broader community.

Phone calls and emails to the Governor have largely been brushed aside, as he has deferred to the courts' power to modify sentences rather than use [clemency powers](#) to issue commutations and reprieves. People imprisoned in IDOC facilities are not being granted release, nor are they being provided with adequate medical care or protection.

In light of officials' inadequate response and the imminent danger to the lives of incarcerated individuals, we deem it necessary to escalate from phone calls and emails to a demonstration. Our COVID-safe car rally, like similar rallies the coalition has staged at Indianapolis County Jails on 4/18, at Indiana Women's Prison on 4/25, and at Westville Correctional Facility on 5/2, will enable activists to exercise first amendment rights while maintaining social distancing.

We demand that the Governor use clemency powers to release everyone with less than a year left on their sentence, use stimulus funds for law enforcement to house those released in hotels, ensure free medical care and access to masks and cleaning supplies, and allow free video visits and communication throughout the duration of the pandemic. We endorse the recommendations of the [emergency plan drafted by formerly incarcerated individuals and advocates](#).

We demand that Laporte County judges release incarcerated people who are elderly or who have underlying health conditions, with a goal reduction in the jail population to a level that allows for proper social distancing. We demand that the Laporte County Sheriff stop honoring ICE holds, ensure free medical care and access to masks and cleaning supplies, and provide free video visits and communication throughout the duration of the pandemic.

Who: Black Lives Matter South Bend, Indiana Undocumented Youth Alliance, IDOC Watch, Michiana Autonomous Defense Collective, Indianapolis Showing Up for Racial Justice, Indianapolis Party for Socialism and Liberation, and the New Afrikan Black Panther Party, NWI Resist, Northern Indiana DSA, IWW Maple City GMB

When: Saturday, May 16th at 2:00pm EST/ 1:00pm CDT

Where: Indiana State Prison

Visuals: Protest signs on the outside of cars with slogans such as “Mass Release Now” and “Free Them All 4 Public Health,” procession of cars in front of Indiana State Prison