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[www.cacj.org](http://www.cacj.org)

June 30, 2020

Governor Gavin Newsom  
State Capitol, Governor's Office  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: COVID-19: Prison Reforms**

Dear Governor Newsom:

The California Attorneys for Criminal Justice (CACJ), a statewide association of criminal defense attorneys in private practice and working in public defender offices, asks that specific prison reforms be implemented in order to protect inmates in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on prisons across the State. CDCR is seeing a tragic spread of the disease in prisons like San Quentin, Susanville, and many others. San Quentin alone has reported over 1,000 cases, and cases continue to rise across the prison system. Many inmates across the state are also considered high risk, making this spread even more concerning. These outbreaks are not isolated incidents and require broad reforms in order to be addressed.

It is more important now than ever for the State to respond aggressively to curtail the spread in our prisons. If significant steps are not taken to address this outbreak, we will continue to see cases skyrocket, and deaths mount, among the incarcerated population. While CDCR has made efforts to protect inmates and reduce exposure, the recent spike in prison cases shows that much more needs to be done.

CACJ, its members, and their clients are stakeholders in the design and implementation of policies to protect the lives of inmates across the state. To that end, CACJ request that the attached list of specific policy reforms be implemented to better protect our state's prisoners.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these reforms further, please contact Hernandez Strategy Group, (916) 447-9719.

Respectfully,

**Stephen Munkelt**

Stephen Munkelt

Executive Director, California Attorneys for Criminal Justice