



**Commission on the Status of Women**  
Wednesday, February 16, 2022 – 6PM  
Zoom Meeting  
**AGENDA**

**PUBLIC ADVISORY: THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE**

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(e) and the state declared emergency, this meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women will be conducted exclusively through teleconference and Zoom videoconference. The COVID-19 state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person and presents imminent risks to the health of attendees. Therefore, no physical meeting location will be available.

To access the meeting remotely, join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android device: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84259716272?pwd=YmtMZ09jRi9qQ1JvOUthTmZRS2FmZz09> If you do not wish for your name to appear on the screen, then use the drop-down menu and click on "rename" to rename yourself to be anonymous. To request to speak, use the "raise hand" icon by rolling over the bottom of the screen. To join by phone: **Dial 669 900 9128 and enter Meeting ID: 842 5971 6272.** If you wish to comment during the public comment portion of the agenda, Press \*9 and wait to be recognized by the Chair. To submit an e-mail comment during the meeting to be read aloud during public comment, email [sallen@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:sallen@cityofberkeley.info) with the Subject Line in this format: "PUBLIC COMMENT ITEM ##." Please observe a 150-word limit. Time limits on public comments will apply.

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order and Roll call
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of January 19, 2022 Meeting Minutes
4. Public Comment
5. ACCW Membership Renewal
6. CA Commissions Grant – Women’s Pandemic Recovery Response Grant
7. CEDAW Presentation
8. Listening session for Townhall preparation
9. Women’s History Month
10. Elections
11. Gender equity disparity in city-awarded contracts as identified in Mason-Tillman report
12. Film speaker event on reproductive rights under Roe v. Wade

13. Recommendation to Council to write a letter supporting the California Coalition for Women Prisoners and Centro de la Raza urging that that U.S. Department of Justice conduct a full and thorough investigation into the allegations of rampant and repeated sexual abuse of female inmates at the Federal Correctional Institution in Dublin, CA
14. Legislative Updates
15. Chairperson's Report and Commissioner Updates
16. Good of the Order
17. Adjournment



### **Communications Disclaimer**

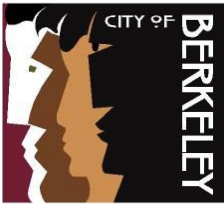
*Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. **Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to a City board, commission or committee, will become part of the public record.** If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary to the relevant board, commission or committee for further information.*

### **SB 343 Disclaimer**

*Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the City Manager's Office located at 2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor.*

### **Commission Contact Information**

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Commission on the Status of Women

**Commission on the Status of Women  
Regular Meeting – January 19, 2022  
DRAFT MINUTES**

The meeting convened at 6:16pm with Chairperson Shanoski presiding.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Shanoski, Hughes, Deguzman, Henneman, Marasovic (arrived 6:44pm)  
Absent: Burton  
Excused: None

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**Comments from the Public**

- Public attendance: 3
- Public comments: 3

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**Action**

**Item # 2: The Commission on the Status of Women approved the agenda.**

**M/S/C: Hughes/Deguzman**  
**Ayes:** Shanoski, Hughes, Deguzman, Henneman  
**Absent:** Burton  
**Excused:** None

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**Item # 3: The Commission on the Status of Women approved the November 17, 2021 meeting minutes.**

**M/S/C: Deguzman/Hughes**  
**Ayes:** Shanoski, Hughes, Deguzman, Henneman  
**Absent:** Burton  
**Excused:** None

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**Item # 5: The Commission on the Status of Women approved a request to Council for annual membership to the Association of California Commissions for Women (ACCW).**

**M/S/C: Hughes/Deguzman**

**Ayes:** Shanoski, Hughes, Deguzman, Henneman, Marasovic  
**Absent:** Burton  
**Excused:** None

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The meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Shallon Allen, Secretary  
Commission on the Status of Women**

# AP investigation: Women's prison fostered culture of abuse

MICHAEL BALSAMO and MICHAEL R. SISAK, Associated Press

Feb. 6, 2022 Updated: Feb. 6, 2022 6:42 a.m.



FILE - The Federal Correctional Institution is shown in Dublin, Calif., July 20, 2006. An Associated Press investigation has uncovered a permissive and toxic culture at FCI Dublin, a Northern California federal prison for women. The prison enabled years of sexual misconduct by predatory employees and cover-ups that kept the accusations out of the public eye. The AP obtained internal Bureau of Prisons documents, statements and recordings from inmates, interviewed current and former prison employees and reviewed thousands of pages of court records. Ben Margot/AP

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inside one of the only federal women’s prisons in the United States, inmates say they have been subjected to rampant sexual abuse by correctional officers and even the warden, and were often threatened or punished when they tried to speak up. Prisoners and workers at the federal correctional institution in Dublin, California, even have a name for it: “The rape club.”

An Associated Press investigation has found a permissive and toxic culture at the Bay Area lockup, enabling years of sexual misconduct by predatory employees and cover-ups that have largely kept the abuse out of the public eye. The AP obtained internal Bureau of Prisons documents, statements and recordings from inmates, interviewed current and former prison employees and reviewed thousands of pages of court records from criminal and civil cases involving Dublin prison staff.

Together, they detail how inmates' allegations against members of the mostly male staff were ignored or set aside, how prisoners could be sent to solitary confinement for reporting abuse and how officials in charge of preventing and investigating sexual misconduct were themselves accused of abusing inmates or neglecting their concerns.

In one instance, a female inmate said a man, who was her prison work supervisor, taunted her by remarking "let the games begin" when he assigned her to work with a maintenance foreman she accused of rape. Another worker claimed he wanted to get inmates pregnant. The warden kept nude photos on his government-issued cellphone of a woman he is accused of assaulting, prosecutors say.

One inmate said she was "overwhelmed with fear, anxiety, and anger, and cried uncontrollably" after enduring abuse and retaliation. Another said she contemplated suicide when her cries for help went unheeded and now suffers from severe anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder.

All sexual activity between a prison worker and an inmate is illegal. Correctional employees enjoy substantial power over inmates, controlling every aspect of their lives from mealtime to lights out, and there is no scenario in which an inmate can give consent.

The allegations at Dublin, which so far have resulted in four arrests, are endemic of a larger problem within the beleaguered federal Bureau of Prisons. In 2020, there were 422 complaints of staff-on-inmate sexual abuse across the system of 122 prisons and 153,000 inmates. The agency said it substantiated only four of them and that 290 are still being investigated.

The Associated Press contacted lawyers for every Dublin prison employee charged with sexual abuse or named as a defendant in a lawsuit alleging abuse, and tried reaching the men directly through available phone numbers and email addresses. None responded to interview requests.

Thahesha Jusino, taking over as Dublin's warden later this month, promised to "work tirelessly to reaffirm the Bureau of Prisons' zero tolerance for sexual abuse and sexual harassment."

She said the agency is fully cooperating with the Justice Department's inspector general on active investigations and noted that a "vast majority" of these cases were referred for investigation by the Bureau of Prisons itself.

"I am committed to ensuring the safety of our inmates, staff, and the public," Jusino said a statement to the AP. "A culture of misconduct, or actions not representative of the BOP's Core Values will not be tolerated."

FCI Dublin, about 21 miles (34 kilometers) east of Oakland, is one of six women-only facilities in the federal prison system. As of Feb. 1, it had about 750 inmates, many of them serving sentences for drug crimes.

Women made the first internal complaints to staff members about five years ago, court records and internal agency documents show, but it is unclear whether those complaints ever went anywhere. The women say they were largely ignored, and the abuse continued.

One who reported a 2017 sexual assault said she was told nothing would be done about her complaint because it was a “he said-she said.” The woman, who is suing the Bureau of Prisons over her treatment, said she was fired from her prison commissary job as retaliation.

In 2019, another Dublin inmate alleged in a suit that a maintenance foreman repeatedly raped her and that other workers facilitated the abuse and mocked her for it. When an internal prison investigator finally caught wind of what was happening, the woman said she was the one who got punished with three months in solitary confinement and a transfer to a federal prison in Alabama.

Then, in 2020, an inmate’s report that two Dublin workers were abusing inmates made its way to the Justice Department’s inspector general and the FBI, triggering a criminal investigation that has led to the arrest of four employees, including former warden Ray J. Garcia, in the past seven months. They each face up to 15 years in prison, though in other recent cases, sentences have ranged from three months to two years.

Two are expected to plead guilty in the coming weeks in federal court to charges of sexual abuse of a ward. Several other Dublin workers are under investigation.

Garcia is accused of molesting an inmate in the months before the pandemic began. Then the associate warden, Garcia made her and another inmate strip naked as did rounds and took pictures that were found on his government-issued cell phone and computer when the FBI raided his office and home last summer, prosecutors said. He would later be promoted.

“If they’re undressing, I’ve already looked,” Garcia, 54, told the FBI in July 2021, according to court records. “I don’t, like, schedule a time like ‘you be undressed, and I’ll be there.’”

Garcia, the highest-ranking federal prison official arrested in more than 10 years, had an outsize influence as warden over how Dublin handling of employee sexual misconduct. He led staff and inmate training on reporting abuse and complying with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act.

He was also in charge of the legally required “rape elimination” compliance audit, first scheduled for early 2020 but not completed until last September — about the time he was arrested. The Bureau of Prisons blamed the pandemic for the delay and said the audit, Dublin’s first since 2017, is not yet finalized and can’t be made public.

The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they grant permission.

Sisak reported from New York.

On Twitter, follow Michael Balsamo at [twitter.com/mikebalsamo1](https://twitter.com/mikebalsamo1) and Michael Sisak at [twitter.com/mikesisak](https://twitter.com/mikesisak) and send confidential tips by visiting <https://www.ap.org/tips>

Written By

MICHAEL BALSAMO and MICHAEL R. SISAK





**FCI Dublin Sexual Abuse Advocacy Letter February 2022  
Initiated by California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP)  
and Centro Legal de la Raza**

**TO THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS (BOP):**

We the undersigned organizations throughout California and the United States write to express our deep concern over repeated sexual abuse of incarcerated people by staff at the Federal Correctional Institute in Dublin, California (FCI Dublin). **The Bureau of Prisons (BOP) must take swift, sweeping action to address the institutional culture that allowed staff to perpetrate this abuse, and to prevent further harm to incarcerated people.**

As you are aware, over the course of the past five months, **federal prosecutors have charged four FCI Dublin officials with sexually abusing people in their custody.** These officials—including former Warden Ray Garcia, Chaplain James Highouse, Officer John Bellhouse, and Technician Ross Clinger—are accused of engaging in abhorrent conduct, ranging from forcing incarcerated women to strip naked and taking photographs (which were then stored on the Warden’s BOP-issued cell phone), to acts of rape and other forced sexual contact.

Staff abuse at FCI Dublin unfolded over the course of several years, and has only now come to light thanks to the bravery and tenacity of incarcerated survivors, as well as the brazen conduct of their abusers. **This abuse cannot be seen as bad acts by a few bad actors; this conduct required the participation and complicity of staff across the facility, and was the product of a deep-seated culture of impunity and retaliation at FCI Dublin.**

We are aware that survivors who previously attempted to report abuse at FCI Dublin in recent years were discouraged, or outright prevented, from seeking redress by facility staff. For example, it has been widely reported that former Warden Garcia (who was *responsible for training FCI Dublin personnel in sexual abuse prevention and compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act*), told one of the women he abused that he was “close friends” with the individual responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct, and warned her that he “could not” be fired. We have heard from other survivors who reported or attempted to report staff abuse and were then subjected to retaliation, including harassment by prison staff and loss of access to vital programming and facility jobs. We have also heard from survivors who have suffered staff abuse but are afraid to report their experiences out of fear of such retaliation.

Unfortunately, as organizations that support people in carceral institutions across the state and country, **we know that staff misconduct, impunity for abusers, and retaliation towards survivors who attempt to seek justice are all too common behind bars.** Study after study have shown that the vast majority of people incarcerated in women's prisons are subjected to sexual harassment and abuse. Indeed, we are aware that the recent string of federal charges represent *the third time in three decades* that FCI Dublin staff have been publicly abused of sexually abusing people in their custody. And the Associated Press recently reported that, in the past two years, over 100 BOP employees have been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for crimes, as the agency continued to ignore rampant staff misconduct.

While we are glad to see the federal government acknowledge these specific instances of abuse at FCI Dublin and attempt to hold the perpetrators to account, we know that **the arrest, conviction, or incarceration of a handful of bad actors will not bring justice for survivors of staff abuse at FCI Dublin.** Instead, we repeat that the BOP must take swift, sweeping action to address the institutional culture that allowed staff to perpetrate this abuse, and to prevent further harm to incarcerated people.

After consulting with our clients and other individuals incarcerated at FCI Dublin, we demand that your offices *immediately and at a minimum*:

- Request that the Department of Justice conduct a **thorough, independent investigation** into staff abuse and complicity in abuse (including retaliation against survivors and their supporters) at FCI Dublin;
- Establish **unmonitored lines of communication** for incarcerated individuals to report staff misconduct to an external, independent body;
- Ensure that personnel accused of abuse cannot have any direct contact with incarcerated individuals, and staff that are found to have abused incarcerated individuals (or facilitated such abuse) are dismissed from their positions entirely;
- Exercise your authority to **release individuals who have survived staff abuse** to their families and communities, in order to prevent further re-traumatization;
- Provide **accessible, comprehensive medical care**, including mental health care, to incarcerated survivors of staff abuse.

**[PLEASE CLICK HERE TO SIGN YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME](#)**