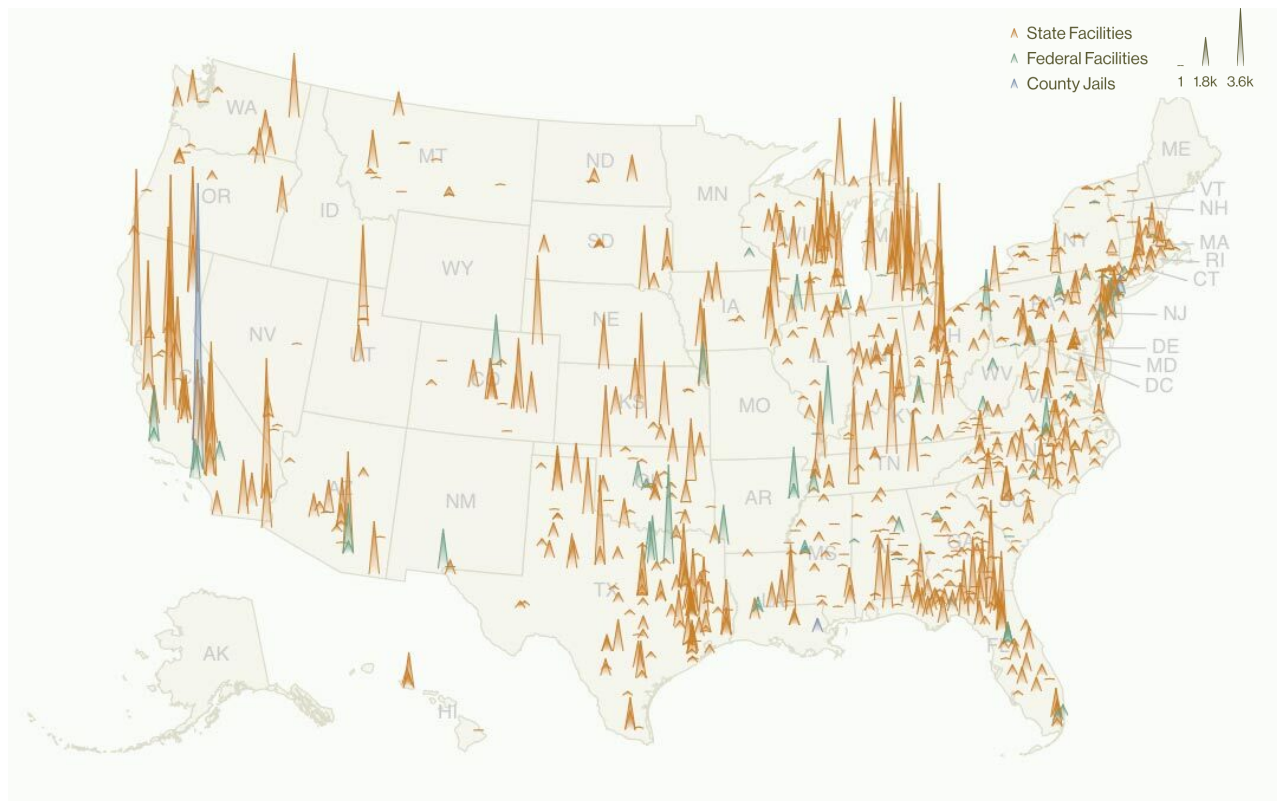


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UCLA Law COVID-19 Behind Bars Data Project Launches New Website Displaying Data about COVID-19 in Carceral Facilities



Map of COVID-19 Cases in U.S. Prison and Jails

Los Angeles, CA — The UCLA Law COVID-19 Behind Bars Data Project announces the launch of its newly designed website featuring a national map of facility-level data on COVID-19 cases and related deaths in over 1,500 prisons and jails across the United States: uclacovidbehindbars.org.

The website, designed by the digital agency Hyperobjekt, also includes state-specific information about COVID-19 in immigration detention facilities, pandemic-related prison and jail releases, legal filings and court orders bearing on the safety of incarcerated people, and grassroots organizing campaigns and fundraisers related to COVID-19. Additional interactive data visualizations are forthcoming, as is data on viral spread in youth facilities.

The UCLA Law COVID-19 Behind Bars Data Project is distinct from others tracking the coronavirus in carceral contexts in that the project collects and displays data for individual prisons and jails. Disaggregated data at the facility level offers critical details about viral hot spots that threaten the lives of incarcerated people, facility staff, and members of neighboring communities.

For example, as of December 16, 2020, the data reveal that there are approximately 1,200 active COVID-19 cases among people incarcerated in Pleasant Valley State Prison in Fresno County, CA; nearly 40% of the population is infected. Intensive care units in Fresno hospitals have less than 2% of beds available. Facility-level data of this nature provide advocates, organizers, and government actors with information they need to effectively respond to viral surges in facilities in their communities.

“The public should have access to information about the spread of the coronavirus inside our prisons and jails. The people incarcerated in and working in these facilities are part of our communities, and we hope our data will be used to advocate for their safety,” said Sharon Dolovich, faculty at UCLA School of Law and director of the UCLA Law COVID-19 Behind Bars Data Project.

The project consists of over 100 staff and volunteer researchers, including data scientists who are available to guide policymakers, advocates, and journalists in interpreting and reporting on the project’s data. The project is generously supported by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Vital Projects Fund, and Arnold Ventures.

About the UCLA Law COVID-19 Behind Bars Data Project

The UCLA Law COVID-19 Behind Bars Data Project responds to the urgent need to collect, share, and act on data related to COVID-19 in prisons and jails by tracking the spread and impact of the virus in prisons, jails, youth facilities, and immigration detention centers across the United States. Its data are available at uclacovidbehindbars.org.