



PrisonPandemic

A digital archive preserving the stories of incarcerated people, their families, and prison workers

Naomi Sugie, Associate Professor
Gabe Rosales, PhD Student & Co-Director, VNON
Criminology, Law and Society
University of California, Irvine

COVID-19 in Carceral Facilities

<https://uclacovidbehindbars.org>

Showing **cumulative cases** in
carceral facilities

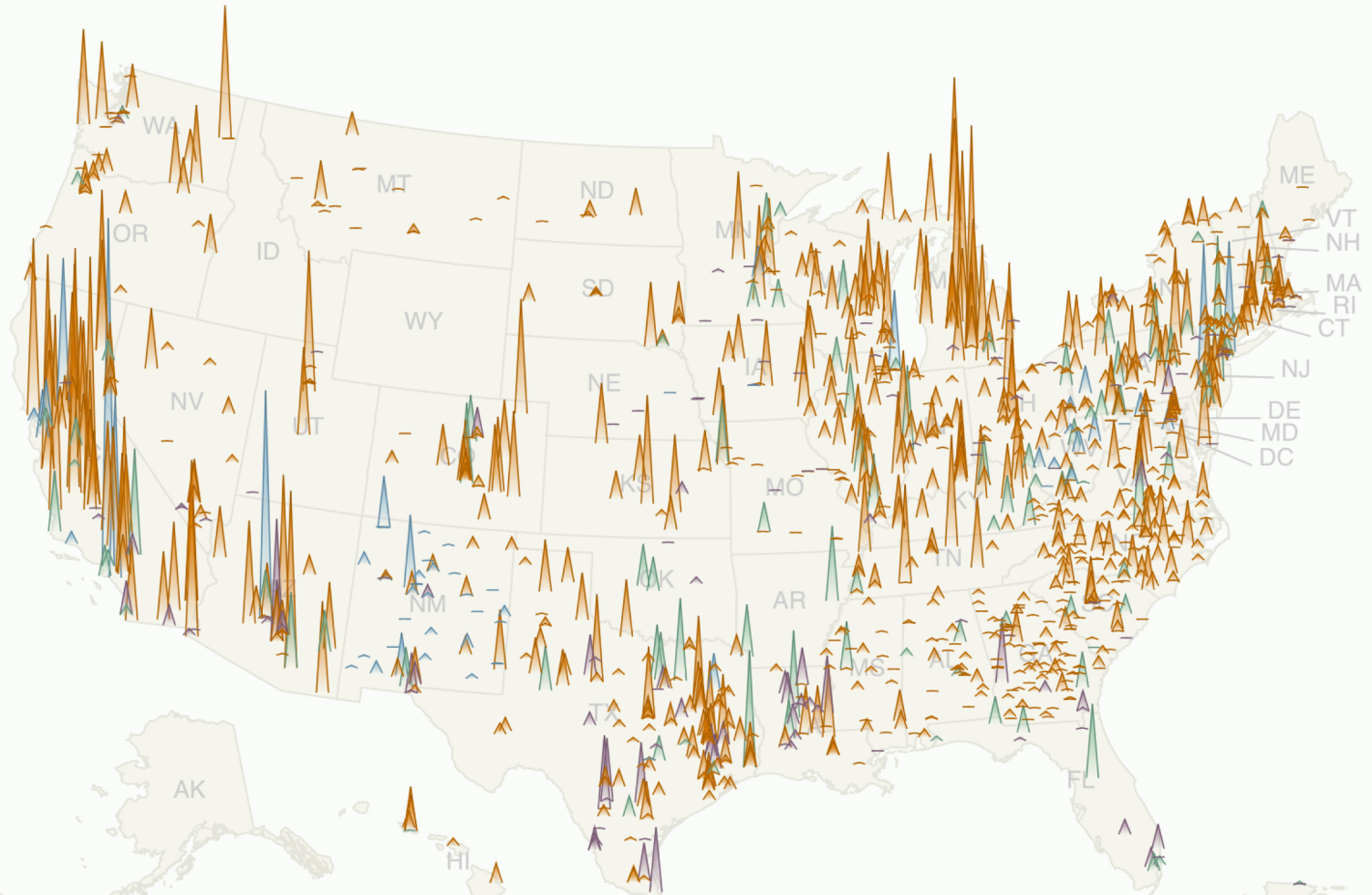
Each spike represents the number of incarcerated people who have had COVID-19 within a facility



This map displays reported COVID-19 cases and related deaths of people incarcerated in carceral facilities across the US. Click on a state to access more data.

Rates and active cases are not available for all facilities.

[Learn why.](#)



Public Health Crisis

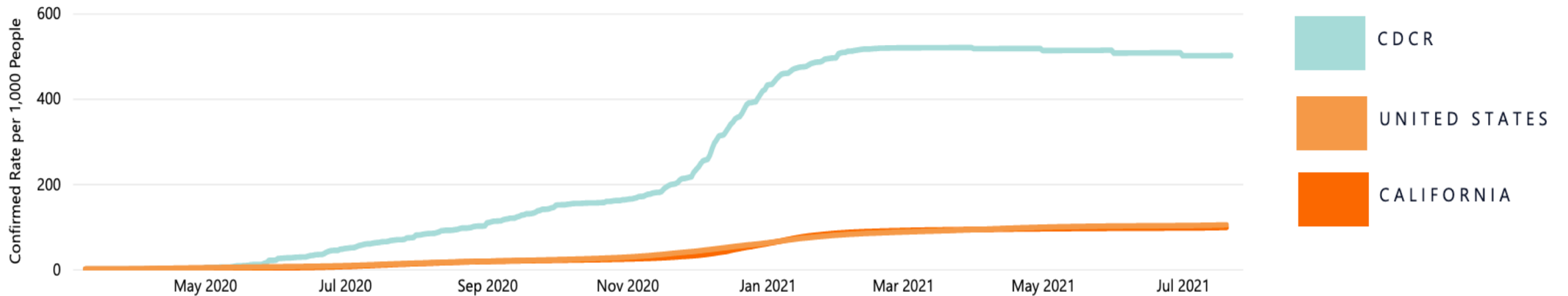
- Incarcerated people particularly vulnerable to COVID-19
 - Inadequate PPE
 - Difficulty social distancing
 - Substandard conditions prior to COVID-19
 - People with concentrated health vulnerabilities

COVID-19 Cases in CA Prisons

<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/covid19/population-status-tracking/>

CONFIRMED CASES - COMPARISON

Per 1,000 People



Data Last Updated: Jul 22 2021 6:27AM

PrisonPandemic: Beginnings

- Immediate response to COVID-19
 - Accounts from community partners
 - Accounts from prison staff
- Op-eds
- Fundraising for PPE (almost \$10K)



Our Team



KERAMET REITER

Criminology, Law and Society Department
Associate Professor



NAOMI SUGIE

Criminology, Law and Society Department
Associate Professor



KRISTIN TURNEY

Sociology Department
Professor



JOANNE DECARO

Criminology, Law and Society Department
Doctoral Student



GABE ROSALES

Criminology, Law and Society Department
Doctoral Student

PrisonPandemic: Collecting & Disseminating Stories

- **Outreach to prisons** via mail, community organizations, prison newsletter ads
- **Collect stories** via hotline calls, letters and other contributions to PO Box, PrisonPandemic website submissions, and gifted submissions.
- **Process stories for website** by redacting identifying information, transcribing phone calls and letters, voicing letters, and creating shorter topical segments tagged with relevant themes (e.g., infection, family, etc.)

PrisonPandemic: Digital Archive

<https://prisonpandemic.uci.edu>

Featured Stories



11/20 **ALL BACKWARDS** **LISTEN**

11/20 **CARELESS STAFF** **LISTEN**

12/20 **WE'RE SCARED** **LISTEN**

11/20 **TOOK OVER THE PRISON** **LISTEN**

11/20 **NO ENFORCEMENT** **LISTEN**

Centering Voices of Incarcerated People

- Incarcerated voices are traditionally censored
 - Prison authorities – Correctional oversight
 - Research accessibility challenges – Protected Population
 - Stigma – People who commit crimes are all “bad people”
- Difficult to collect, share, and amplify personal stories of people who are incarcerated

Ethical Considerations

- Clearly communicated to contributors how their stories would be made publicly available (Consent form)
- Ensured anonymity (Identifying information redacted)
- Protected archive from legal threats (e.g., subpoenas requesting identifying information, retaliation)

Audience

- Scholars across disciplines
- Media (e.g., journalists, documentary filmmakers)
- Advocates (e.g., attorneys investigating constitutional violations in prison)
- Undergraduate students
- Broader public

PrisonPandemic:What's Next

- Expand story-collecting reach (Federal, ICE, Jails)
- Revise website to increase accessibility and searchability
- Long-term preservation and sustainability (with UCI Libraries)
- Outreach via social media, podcast (with Literary Journalism), pedagogical activities, and play (with English)
- Ethics Advisory Board – FI, Families, Program Provider, Newly Released
- Research on COVID-19-related mortality across U.S. (Total Mortality Project)

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