PETER J. ELIASBERG (189110) DAVID C. FATHI (pro hac vice)* 1 peliasberg@aclusocal.org MELISSA CAMACHO-CHEUNG dfathi@aclu.org 2 ERIC BALABĂN (pro hac vice)* ebalaban@aclu.org (264024)3 mcamacho@aclusocal.org **ACLU NATIONĂL PRISON ACLU FOUNDATION OF PROJECT** 4 **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA** 915 15th St., NW Washington, D.C. 20005 1313 W. 8th Street 5 Los Angeles, CA 90017 Phone: (202) 393-4930 Phone: (213) 977-9500 6 Fax: (202) 393-4931 Fax: (213) 977-5299 7 *Not admitted in D.C., practice limited to federal courts 8 CORENE T. KENDRICK (226642) ckendrick@aclu.org
ACLU NATIONAL PRISON 9 **PROJECT** 10 39 Drumm St. 11 San Francisco, CA 94111 Phone: (202) 393-4930 12 Fax: (202) 393-4931 13 Attorneys for Plaintiffs 14 15 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA 16 17 No. 75-CV-04111-DDP 18 DENNIS RUTHERFORD, **DECLARATION OF MELISSA** 19 Plaintiff, CAMACHO-CHEUNG IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' EX 20 PARTE APPLICATION FOR V. 21 TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ALEX VILLANUEVA, Sheriff of Los ORDER AND ORDER TO SHOW 22 Angeles County, in his official CAUSE RE PRELIMINARY 23 capacity, and COUNTY OF LOS **INJUNCTION ANGELES** 24 25 Defendants. 26 27 28

Declaration of Melissa L. Camacho-Cheung

I, Melissa L. Camacho-Cheung, hereby declare:

1. I make this declaration based on my own personal knowledge and if called to testify I could and would do so competently as follows:

2. I am a Senior Staff Attorney at the ACLU Foundation of Southern California (ACLU SoCal) and am admitted to practice law in the State of California and before this Court. I am one of the lawyers who represent the plaintiff class in this action.

3. I serve as ACLU SoCal's lead LA County Jails (Jails) conditions monitor. In that role, I have unescorted access to each of the Jails so that I can talk to individuals incarcerated there and observe conditions first-hand.

4. I receive two daily reports by email from staff in the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) Population Management Bureau. One is the IRC Processing Time report ("IRC Report"), and the other is the IRC Clinic Processing report ("Clinic Report").

5. Both reports are snapshots of IRC data at a specific point in time and are timestamped accordingly. I usually receive reports time-stamped sometime between 9:00 am and 1:00 pm. On information and belief, LASD does not record

the total aggregate length of time each individual spends in all parts of the IRC.

6. The two reports begin with a bar graph, showing the number of people in the IRC (for the IRC Report) and the IRC Clinic (for the Clinic Report) and how long they have been waiting. There follows a table with the Booking Number, Name, Module, Hours, Age, and various classification codes for every person who has been in the IRC or IRC Clinic for at least 24 hours.

7. Relevant Module Codes include: IRCC for IRC Clinic, IRFB for IRC Clinic Front Bench, and IRCL for IRC Custody Line cells.

8. The Clinic Report tracks the time an individual spends in the Clinic portion of the IRC. The clock starts when a person enters the Clinic (generally after

3 4

5

6 7

8

9 10

11

12

13

14 15

16

17

18

19 20

21

22

23

24 25

26

27

28

going through the various booking stations in IRC) and ends when the person leaves the Clinic, even if they move to another area within IRC.

- Attached to this Declaration as Exhibits A through H are true and 9. correct copies of the Clinic Reports from the following dates: June 6, 2022 (Exhibit A), August 22, 2022 (Exhibit B), August 23, 2022 (Exhibit C), August 24, 2022 (Exhibit D), August 26, 2022 (Exhibit E), August 29, 2022 (Exhibit F), August 30 (Exhibit G), and August 31 (Exhibit H). Information related to security codes and levels is redacted for privacy.
- Attached to this declaration as Exhibit I is a table titled "Clinic 10. Processing Time," displaying data from Clinic Reports from August 9, 2022 to September 2, 2022. I created the table by populating the columns with information from the Clinic Reports provided by LASD. The table does not have information for August 16, 2022 because I did not receive the Clinic Report from the Population Management Bureau on that date.
- Attached to this declaration as Exhibit J is a table titled "IRC Front 11. Bench Processing Time," displaying data from the Clinic Reports from August 9, 2022 to September 2, 2022. I created the table by populating the columns with information from the Clinic Reports provided by LASD. The table does not have information for August 16, 2022 because I did not receive the Clinic Report from the Population Management Bureau on that date.
- The IRC Report tracks the length of time people spend in areas of IRC 12. outside of the Clinic. These include the booking front, showers, custody line cells (IRCL), and in-custody release cells (IRIC). On information and belief, the clock on the IRC Report stops when a person enters the IRC Clinic and starts running again from zero if a person moves from the IRC Clinic to another part of the IRC (e.g., a custody line cell).
- Attached to this Declaration as Exhibits K and L are true and correct copies of the IRC Reports for the following dates: August 22, 2022 (Exhibit K) and

- 2
- 3 4
- 5
- 6 7
- 8
- 10
- 11
- 12 13
- 14
- 15 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21 22
- 23
- 24 25
- 26
- 27
- 28

- August 31, 2022 (Exhibit L). Information related to security codes and levels is redacted for privacy.
- 14. Attached to this declaration as Exhibit M is a table titled "IRC Processing Time," displaying data from IRC Reports from August 9, 2022 to September 2, 2022. I created the table by populating the columns with information from the Clinic Reports provided by LASD. The table does not have information for August 16, 2022 because I did not receive the IRC Report on that date.
- On June 6, 2022 I received a Clinic Report that showed exceptionally 15. long wait times in the IRC Clinic. Exhibit A at 1. I immediately went to the IRC to visit the Clinic and speak to the people there, bringing the IRC Clinic report with me.
- 16. The Clinic area was filthy. My shoes stuck to the floor. One of the two toilets behind the rows of Clinic chairs had soaked towels around the base that appeared to be covered with urine and feces.
- 17. In the same area, I observed more than a dozen people sleeping – or trying to sleep -- on the floor.
- 18. I observed five individuals on the Front Bench, which is the area around the raised deputies' station. They were wearing suicide gowns and sitting chained to their chairs with handcuffs and waist chains, as is required in the Front Bench area. Checking against the Clinic Report, I noted that two of the five had been on the Front Bench for over 24 hours. Ex. A at 2.
- The energy in the Clinic was tense. People seemed to be on edge and 19. started calling out to me when word spread that I was with the ACLU. One individual told me that he had broken up multiple fights in the Clinic.
- 20. Individuals called out to me that they had missed court, that they were only getting peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to eat, and that they had been stuck in the Clinic for days.
 - I checked the June 6, 2022 Clinic Report (Ex. A) as I looked at 21.

3

4 5

6

7

10

11

12 13

14

15

16 17

18

19

20

21

22 23

24

25 26

27

28

individuals' wrist bands with their name and booking numbers. I spoke to 14 individuals who were listed as being in the Clinic for over 24 hours. Some complained of waiting for psychiatric evaluations, others about missing court and missing medications.

- 22. I looked into the cells marked 122 and 120. They are sometimes called tanks. These tanks have no fresh air coming into them because they are entirely sealed. One can see into the tanks through plexiglass in the door and the front windows. There were four individuals in 122. Food and trash littered the floor. One person in 120 was laying on the floor. There are no mattresses in the tanks, only metal benches and toilets with attached sinks.
- 23. After I left the Clinic and over the next few days, I called and emailed LASD custodial and command staff, Correctional Health Services (CHS) staff, and staff with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to ask what could be done about the overcrowding, conditions, and long wait times.
- 24. On June 8, 2022, I received an email from the LASD Custody Compliance & Sustainability Bureau Death Review Team with an in-custody death notice for a 72-year-old individual who collapsed in the IRC Clinic on June 6 and passed away on June 7, 2022. I forwarded the email to LASD command staff, CHS staff, and the OIG, again expressing my concern at the emergency situation in the IRC.
- 25. On June 14, 2022 I visited the IRC again, this time in my role as plaintiffs' counsel in *Rosas v. Villanueva*. My role in this visit was to accompany the *Rosas* monitors and help facilitate their interactions with the plaintiff class in that case.
- 26. As we passed the open clinic area, I noticed that many of the chairs were empty. I thought that was strange because our escort told us that the count at 5:00 am that day was 169 individuals in the Clinic. I asked our escorts to walk our group to large cage at the back of the clinic.

- 27. When we arrived outside of the cage, I saw that it was locked. People immediately came up to the bars and started trying to speak to me and plaintiffs' counsel Corene Kendrick. It was very difficult to count how many people were in the cage because of the clamor and the inability to see past the mass of people at the bars to the individuals behind them. The people not at the bars were standing, sitting on metal benches, or laying on the floor.
- 28. Individuals asked us to get the guards to open the door. They complained that it was crowded, that the toilet was disgusting, and that there were people with medical problems. I asked those with medical problems to come closer to the bars to talk to us.
- 29. One individual opened his mouth and pulled his cheek back, and I could see an open wound in his mouth that appeared bloody and unclean. I know that no one in the IRC receives toothpaste or a toothbrush. Another individual raised his pant leg, and I could see a large cut that appeared red and swollen.
- 30. The crowd identified two individuals in medical distress and directed them to the bars closest to us. One person reported being diabetic and that he felt very ill and faint. Another raised his shirt to expose a very large hernia extending from his abdomen. It was approximately the size of a fist. I called out to Commander Tania Plunkett, who was accompanying the tour, and asked her to come to the cage. I explained the apparent medical emergencies, and she directed custodial staff to remove the two individuals in distress. I watched them being escorted from the cage toward the medical offices in the Clinic.
- 31. I left the cage area shortly thereafter to follow the *Rosas* monitors out of the Clinic area. I heard people continuing to yell to me as we walked away.
- 32. Through the end of June and into the beginning of August, I continued conversations with LASD command staff, CHS staff, and two Justice Deputies for LA County Board of Supervisors about conditions and wait times at IRC.
 - 33. I initiated a meeting to discuss IRC conditions, wait times, and any

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 7
- 8
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21 22
- 23
- 24
- 25 26
- 27
- 28

2022 in the administrative portion of Twin Towers Correctional facility. The meeting included Chief Sergio Aloma, Commander Tanya Plunkett, Captain Roel Garcia, representatives from the Population Management Bureau, Dr. Tim

possible solutions with all involved parties. The meeting took place on August 11,

- Belavich and Joan Hubbell for Correctional Health Services, Eric Bates for the Office of the Inspector General, attorneys from County Counsel, plaintiffs' counsel
- Peter Eliasberg, and me. We met for approximately an hour.
- 34. I visited the IRC with my ACLU colleague, Peter Eliasberg, on August 22, 2022. Prior to entering the Clinic, I looked into two of the sealed holding tanks in the hallway outside of the Clinic. Tank 122 was marked K6G in black marker on the plexiglass. The K6G code is given to people who are classified as gay, bisexual, or transgender. There were 6 people in the cell. There were small piles of trash on the floor of the cell. I counted 5 people inside tank 120.
- 35. The Clinic area was filthy and crowded. There were plastic food bags and orange juice cartons in piles throughout the Clinic area. It was difficult to count how many people were sleeping or trying to sleep on the floor in and around the trash. I counted approximately 20 people in the area beneath the TVs, around and between the Clinic chairs trying to sleep.
- 36. I walked to the cage at the rear of the Clinic, and it was unlocked. Upon hearing that we were from the ACLU, people immediately crowded around Peter Eliasberg and me, telling us that they had been stuck in IRC for days. There were about a dozen people trying to sleep on the floor or the metal benches in the cage area.
- 37. Peter Eliasberg and I walked with some people to sit on metal benches just outside of the Front Bench area and to the side of the Front Bench overflow area. These are chairs fitted with handcuffs but outside of the primary Front Bench area.
 - I sat in this area and interviewed declarants for approximately two 38.

3

4

5 6

7

8

10 11

12

13 14

15

17

16

18 19

20

21 22

23

24 25

26 27

28

hours. During that time I heard yelling and looked up to see a man standing up in the Front Bunch overflow area and urinating. He appeared to be trying to aim into an orange juice carton, but the urine was splashing all around his feet and the chairs around him. No custodial staff responded to this incident.

- 39. I saw two to three people in wheelchairs one of whom had a leg amputated just above the knee joint.
- I interviewed a man named Gilberto Perez who complained of an 40. infection on his left leg. He raised his pant leg, and I could see a redness and significant swelling from just below his knee to the sock at his ankle. Perez did not remove his sock for me, but I could tell even with the sock that his foot was swollen. He also lifted his shirt to show me where the rash was spreading on his chest.
- 41. Three men I spoke with in the Clinic broke down crying during the interview. One of them cried while shaking plastic bags with peanut butter jelly sandwiches and cookies at me, holding up three fingers to indicate the number of days he'd been at the IRC.
- 42. I heard one incarcerated individual yelling in the Clinic area below the TVs. I looked up and saw that he was standing and yelling. I could not understand what he was saying. After approximately five minutes, multiple deputies forcibly removed him from where he had been standing. They appeared to handcuff him, but I could not see where they took him after that.
- 43. After leaving the Clinic, Peter Eliasberg and I walked upstairs to the Custody Line cells. These cells are completely enclosed, but the inside is visible through plexiglass windows in the door and on the wall of the cell facing the hallway.
- 44. There were approximately 10 large trash bags full of trash lining the hallway. I looked into cell 218 and counted 8 people, some trying to sleep on the floor. The floor had piles of the same type of food trash as the Clinic – plastic bags,

orange juice cartons, and left over peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

- 45. I spent approximately 5 minutes in front of cell 218 to observe the conditions more closely and try to talk with the people inside through the plexiglass. I saw trash piled up in the corners of the cell and under the metal benches. The 8 people inside kept yelling and mouthing toilet paper, saying that they were not getting any. One person cried. Seven of the eight people lined up to show me their wristbands with names and booking numbers.
- 46. When I checked their names and numbers against the Clinic and IRC Reports for that day (Exs. B & K), I saw that they had been in the IRC for between 45 and 81.9 hours.

Booking Number	Name	Hours Spent in IRC as of 8/22/22 at 9:29 AM
6440838	Johnny Garza	50.9
6442182	Eduardo Torrez 76.7	
6428941	Raul Diaz 45	
6430520	Hector Corteshernandez 59.1	
6442242	Jose Mercado 50.7	
6442979	Adan Guzman	55.5
6440323	Andres Lizarraga	81.9

- 47. I returned to the IRC at 12:45 pm on August 26, 2022 after receiving a Clinic Report that showed 274 total people in the IRC Clinic, 123 people there over 24 hours, two of whom had been there for over 200 hours. Ex. E at 1.
- 48. As I walked into the Clinic I saw multiple Los Angeles Fire Department officers standing around an incarcerated individual seated on a bed near the entrance of the medical office. I watched as they put the man onto a transport chair and wheeled him out of the clinic. He was conscious and alert.
- 49. While I was observing the paramedics, a man sitting in a wheelchair was talking to me. He was crying and holding up his hands for me to see. His

- 50. I took a printed copy of the August 26, 2022 Clinic Report to the deputy station and asked for help locating the two people on the list who had been there for more than 200 hours. Ex. E at 1. One of them, Eddie Velez, booking number 6440601, had just been taken to IRC 231 at 11:00 am. The other, Joshua Robinson, booking number 6440848, was in 122, the K6G tank.
- 51. I walked back to cell 122 and counted 11 people inside. It was crowded, with people trying to sleep on the metal benches and on the floor. I saw trash throughout the cell. A deputy opened the door so that I could speak with the people inside. The air inside was rancid and uncomfortably warm. The people inside told me that the toilet was broken. I asked the deputy who opened the door to come into the cell to check on the toilet. She tried to flush it, and it did not flush. There was urine in the toilet bowl and a plastic food wrapper. The deputy pressed the button above the sink for water, and a little stream dribbled out.
- 52. After I returned to the main part of the Clinic, I observed a crowded Front Bench area. Nearly every seat was filled with people in suicide gowns or jail issued "blues," chained to the seats. I saw two large puddles of urine. I could smell the urine even through my N-95 mask. One man wearing only a suicide gown was lying down on the floor in the middle of the largest puddle of urine. I pointed the puddles out to two deputies who were nearby and asked them to please get someone to come in to clean.
- 53. I walked to the back cage and saw that it was unlocked. There were approximately 30 people inside the cage, many of whom were lying in and around trash on the floor, trying to sleep.
- 54. Walking back behind the rows of chairs in the Clinic I noticed that the movie Groundhog Day, starring Bill Murray, was playing on the TV screens.
- 55. I saw someone who appeared to be medical staff with a rolling tray of approximately 40 dixie cup-sized cups of water. He offered water to those sitting

- 2
- 3 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 8
- 10 11
- 12 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20 21
- 22
- 24

- 25
- 26 27
- 28

- in the main Clinic area. I did not see him offer water to those in the Front Bench, the cage, or any cells before I left the Clinic.
- I left the Clinic and went to IRC 231 to find Eddie Velez. A deputy 56. directed me to a two-person cell and opened the tray slot so that I could speak with him. Velez was sleeping heavily on a metal bunk. He did not have a mattress or bedding. I checked my watch, and the time was 3:14 pm, over 4 hours since Velez had left the Clinic.
- Velez's cell mate woke him up. I introduced myself and tried to talk 57. to him. Velez was very disoriented, and his eyes were red and puffy. I quickly ended the interview when it became apparent that Velez was not awake enough to fully participate in our conversation.
- I visited the IRC again on August 29, 2022 with Peter Eliasberg and 58. ACLU SoCal Criminal Justice Project Director Summer Lacy. Lieutenant Karen Solis and Dylan Ford and Natasha Mosley from County Counsel joined us. The Clinic count during our visit was 129 individuals at 3:26 pm, as shown to me on a print out by Lieutenant Solis.
- 59. I walked into the Mental Health evaluation stations behind the deputy booth. There were five stations, one of which was occupied by mental health staff. There were no incarcerated people present for evaluations.
- 60. I looked into tank 122 and saw K6G written on the plexiglass portion of the door. There were four people inside, two of whom were lying on the floor and trying to sleep. The tank had trash inside around the toilet area and under the bench.
- I walked to cell 111, and when I looked inside, the people there 61. immediately jumped up to try to talk with me through the glass. A deputy from the Population Management Bureau who was taking pictures at our direction opened the door for me.
 - 62. Inside I observed a large pile of trash near the bench to the left side of

5 6

7

10

11 12

13

14 15

16

17 18

19 20

21

22 23

24 25

26

27 28 the entrance, a line of orange juice cartons on the floor in front of the door, and trash throughout the tank.

- Someone had put a white undershirt over the toilet in 111. The people 63. told me that it was to try and keep some of the stench out of the air. The air was thick, stuffy, warm, and smelled of body odor and human waste.
- The four people inside showed me their wristbands so that I could check their names against that day's Clinic Report (Ex. F) to find out how long they had been there. One individual was not on the list, and he told me he had just arrived that morning. As of 9:35 that morning, the timestamp on the Clinic Report for August 29, Trent Graddy had been in tank 111 for 133.7 hours (five and a half days), John Chancy for 111.8 hours, and Jose Merino for 80.9 hours. Ex. F at 2, 4.
- 65. Lieutenant Solis came to tank 111 while I was still talking to the people there. The three men who had been there the longest recognized her as a Lieutenant and started begging her for mattresses and blankets. I asked Lieutenant Solis to please get someone to clean the trash out of 111.
- 66. I left the IRC and walked next door to Twin Towers Correctional Facility (TTCF) to visit an individual who had recently spent days on the Front Bench. The Clinic Report on August 24, 2022 showed that Jhean Banos had been on the Front Bench for 99 hours. Ex. D at 3.
- I spoke to Banos through the plexiglass of his one-person cell in 67. TTCF. He was wearing a suicide gown and had a mattress but no bedding. From a sign on his door, I could read that he was approved for a blanket, but he did not have one in his cell.
- 68. I introduced myself and asked Banos if he wanted to talk about the IRC. Unfortunately, Banos could not speak coherently and did not appear to understand who I was or where he was. He spoke in streams of words, but those words were disorganized. I could not discern any clear narrative in what he said.
 - 69. At one point during our conversation, Banos lifted his hands, and I

noticed marks on his wrists. I asked him to put his hands up to the glass. He did so, and I saw cuts, redness, swelling, and bruising all the way around both wrists. I believe that the marks on Banos' wrists were consistent with being handcuffed on the Front Bench for at least 99 hours.

- 70. After I left Banos' cell, I asked a deputy to give him a blanket.
- 71. I used the Clinic Reports to build a table showing the minimum time each declarant spent in the IRC Clinic. The times below are hours listed the last time the declarant's name appeared on the Clinic Report.

Name	Minimum Clinic Wait Time	Date of Last Appearance on Clinic Report
Bethel, Chuck	85.6	8.23.2022 (Ex. C at 5)
Bolton, Diego	154.7	8.23.2022 (Ex. C at 1)
Dubose, Jerome	98.7	8.30.2022 (Ex. G at 2)
Gonzalez, Daniel	36.9	8.29.2022 (Ex. F at 2)
Howard, Curtis	84.6	8.30.2022 (Ex. G at 3)
Jones, Tony	81.9	8.22.2022 (Ex. B at 6)
Payan, Damian	116.5	8.30.2022 (Ex. G at 2)
Perez, Gilberto	83.4	8.23.2022 (Ex. C at 5)
Porter, Ira	106.2	8.23.2022 (Ex. C at 5)
Reese, Giovanny	83.4	8.23.2022 (Ex. C at 5)
Ruiz, George	180.4	8.31.2022 (Ex. H at 1)
Salinas, Bryan	55.1	8.29.2022 (Ex. F at 6)

72. When reviewing the IRC Report for August 31, 2022 I noticed that declarant Tony Jones was listed and had been in IRCL (a custody-line cell) for 34.8 hours. Ex. L. This was after and in addition to the 81.9 hour IRC Clinic stay

listed in the table above.

- 73. Attached to this declaration as Exhibit N is a transcript of a portion of a presentation Catie Beltz, then Assistant Inspector General with the Office of the Inspector General, made to the LA County Civilian Oversight Commission on September 23, 2021. An intern with the ACLU of SoCal created the transcript at my direction and by watching the presentation available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgZnqc8MfGA. The transcript corresponds to the portion of the video starting at 38:11 and ending at 49:13.
- 74. Attached to this declaration as Exhibit O is a true and correct copy of a report of an IRC inspection undertaken by Sybil Brand Commission for Institutional Inspections Commissioners on June 16, 2022.
- 75. Attached to this declaration as Exhibit P is a true and correct copy of the Custody Division COVID-19 Fact Sheet for August 31, 2022. LASD continually posts updates to this information at https://lasd.org/covid19updates/ but does not maintain publicly available historical records.
- 76. On Friday September 2, 2022 my colleague Peter Eliasberg and I spoke with Dylan Ford from the County Counsel's office by telephone at about 2:05 pm. Mr. Ford confirmed that he was counsel for the County on the *Rutherford* matter. Mr. Eliasberg told Mr. Ford that we were concerned about conditions in the IRC and would be going into Court the following Wednesday or Thursday to seek a temporary restraining order barring the County from holding anyone in the IRC for more than 24 hours and requiring that the County ensure basic minimum conditions including potable drinking water, access to necessary medical care, and sanitary conditions were provided to those in IRC. Mr Eliasberg said that Plaintiffs would seek a TRO unless the County would stipulate to a TRO.
- 77. Mr. Ford responded that he understood Plaintiffs' position but that he was newly assigned to the case and could not agree to either stipulation without talking to his supervisors. He promised that he would reach out to his supervisors