



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT  
*Governor*

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# Utah Department of Corrections

## Executive Office

ROLLIN COOK  
*Executive Director*

BROOKE ADAMS  
*Public Information Officer*

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Brooke Adams, Public Information Officer  
801-545-5536 (o)  
801-560-7608 (c)  
[brookeadams@utah.gov](mailto:brookeadams@utah.gov)

### **Hunger Strike Update**

The hunger strike letter the Utah Department of Corrections received on Friday from 42 inmates in our Uinta Facility listed six demands, including the relocation of gang leaders currently housed in one of our maximum-security units.

Some demands address issues that in recent months we have been in the process of reviewing and revising, such as our inmate classification system, programming and out-of-cell time in our maximum-security areas. Months ago, and again this weekend, we informed these inmates of this work-in-progress.

We also recently met with representatives of the ACLU of Utah, the Disability Law Center and the Utah Prisoner Advocate Network and provided them with an overview of changes we are considering and inviting their input.

All of these changes require careful consideration of our ability to provide safety and security for inmates, staff and the facility given our limited resources and the design of the Uinta buildings.

We disagree with how the letter characterizes aspects of our operations and practices. While we respect the right of these inmates to refuse to eat, we believe there are more positive ways to raise concerns and bring about change. We do not negotiate or respond to demands, threats or intimidation from inmates.

We continue to offer the inmates participating in the strike three meals each day as regularly scheduled. We also are continuing to monitor their health and will again offer medical checks to each inmate on Monday.

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