



## **"A Message from the Acting Inspector General: Audit of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Oversight of the Use of Restraints," July 2025**

Hello, I'm Bill Blier, Acting Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Today, my office released a report on the Federal Bureau of Prisons, or BOP's, oversight of the use of restraints. This report followed a July 1 memorandum from my office alerting BOP of concerns we have with BOP policies pertaining to the use of restraints. In some situations, the use of restraints is necessary to prevent an inmate from hurting themselves, staff, or others. However, it is impermissible to use restraints for punishment or in a manner that causes physical pain or extreme discomfort.

There are various types of restraints that may be used in an institution, but our prior memorandum and this report focus mainly on the use of four-point restraints, in which an individual is restrained at both wrists and ankles and secured to a bed or chair.

In the July 1 memorandum, we described concerns from multiple BOP inmates at multiple BOP institutions that they were assaulted or otherwise mistreated while in restraints, or that they suffered long-term injuries after being placed in restraints for prolonged periods. We found that deficiencies and lack of clarity in BOP's policies and practices contributed to these concerns and impaired the OIG's ability to investigate allegations of misconduct by BOP employees.

In today's report, we describe issues we identified with the oversight provided by BOP's regional offices and headquarters related to the use of restraints. In addition, we identified inaccuracies in the BOP's data related to the length of time inmates were kept in restraints and the types of restraints that were used.

Further, we found that the BOP did not have standard procedures for conducting reviews of incidents involving the use of force and application of restraints including a timeframe for when the regional office review should be completed.

Clearer policies that provide more specific guidance and requirements would assist the BOP in protecting inmates from abusive treatment, shielding staff from false allegations, and holding staff who engage in misconduct accountable. In addition, effective oversight by the BOP is of utmost importance to ensure that the BOP is identifying and promptly addressing systemic issues. We made 6 recommendations in the July 1 memorandum and 10 recommendations in today's report to address the concerns we identified.

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To read the July 1 memorandum and today's report, please visit our website [oig.justice.gov](https://oig.justice.gov), or go to [oversight.gov](https://oversight.gov).

Thank you.