

Social justice, prisoner rights groups call for reduced incarceration levels in Massachusetts

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More than 20 social justice and prisoner rights advocacy groups will unveil a 10-point emergency plan Tuesday calling on the Baker administration to further reduce incarceration levels in Massachusetts prisons and jails. Warning of a “health care emergency” in correctional facilities, the group said decarceration can protect inmates as well as correction officers and the families to whom they return after work.

“Social distancing is impossible in prisons, and infections are spreading dangerously fast,” the groups wrote in a joint press release, writing that COVID-19 tests came back positive at a 54 percent rate in the Shirley prison, a 25 percent rate in Bridgewater and a 37 percent rate in Framingham.

Groups involved in the 10 a.m. Tuesday press conference, which will be livestreamed on Zoom, include the Massachusetts Communities Action Network, Prisoners Legal Services, the Committee for Public Counsel Services, and the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts.