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"FLORIDA'S FAILED GRIEVANCE SYSTEM"

By Ronald Wayne Clark Jr

I was in the FDOC for over a decade, before I even learned about the grievance system. And that was due to being placed on a status for which I had nothing else to read, except the Bible, legal material, and 33- Florida Administrative Codes. I learned early on that this "suppose" to be fair and effective grievance procedure, required by state law 944.331 Florida Statute, and Federal law 42 U.S.C. §1997 (e) was anything but fair and effective. In 2003 I got a grievance appeal approved by Tallahassee, when I showed it to head classification officer Barry v.Reddish, he took it, went and made a phone call, and had Tallahassee reverse their decision. In 2004 here at UCI, I was taken into the captain's office, there was a half dozen staff member's ranking from Sgt up to captain. I'm standing in front of the desk, this captain sitting at the desk fans all my grievances out over the desk, like you would do a deck of cards. He tapped them with his finger and said," This here, this here's going to stop right now!!" He said," look I'm not going to approve a grievance even if your 100 percent correct."He went on to say" if its a legitimate issue write a request, but I don't want to see these grievances anymore, you understand?" I said," Yes." Knowing very well I wants going to abide by it. But I wasn't going to argue with him either. When I was being escorted back to my cell by Sgt Oventrop, who was one of the Sgt.'s in there and the Administrative Sgt here in P-Dorm, I said," You know that's a violation of 33-103.017 section, (1)Reprisal, and 42 U.S.C. § 1997(e). I said jokingly, "are you going to back me up on this?" He said"Oh no, I like my job!" We joked about it as we walked back to my cell. Sgt Oventrop was a good man, who everyone liked and respected. I didn't slow down, about two, maybe three months later, another officer pulled me to the side, and said,"Slow down on them grievances, their fixing to get you." I wrote something up warning about the threats, but not revealing my sources, and they backed up. Over the years I've had my cell destroyed several times. Coffee poured all over legal documents, documents thrown into the toilet, cell looks like a hurricane hit it. And that's no exaggeration!! Yes FDOC staff hates this grievance system with a passion, and discourages it. If you look at 33-103.003 Inmate Grievance - Training Requirements, we're suppose to be trained in it. We're not. The orientation we receive, does not include grievance training. I had staff one time come down and attempt grievance training, due to grievances I had filed on it, but every questions I was asking, concerning 33-103. F.A.C. she didn't know.One of the questions was concerning 33-103.004 Inmate Grievances - Staff and Inmate Participation. She had no clue, because although this is in the rules its not practiced. So she had little to no grievance training her self and didn't understand the rules.

When you start looking at grievance appeals to Tallahassee, you'll see they have a standard rubber stamped response, so they don't have to deal with it. They know most inmates don't want a hold on their account, or just don't have the money to take the next step filing a Writ of Mandamus, or 42 U.S.C. § 1983 law suit in court, so they can respond any way they want denying the grievance. Which is why I got away from the grievances and began writing letters to officials, for I've found more success there. They hate you by passing the grievance process and bringing things to light through state senators, and representatives. And even there,they'll

try to lie to them, knowing that 9 times out of 10, the senator or rep isn't going to come up here and look at the issues in the complaint, and if they do, well their given enough advance notice to conceal the violations within the complaint. A mold test... well it will not lie, and that's what I'm trying to have done. The showers vents and the walls in the back of the cells I'm certain have mold and mildew. This is something that can't be covered up, unless they manipulate and bribe the human doing the test. Which they were unable to do five years ago, when the state shut down R-Dorm here at UCI, for failing a mold test. It is still sitting empty to this day pending demolition. And this building here, needs to be tested and demolished right along with it. Yes our grievance system is little more than a bunch of pretty words outlined and structured in a fashion to make the outside authority see a facade of a system that appears on theory to be a fair and effective outlet for the inmate. But as you can see, in reality its as broken as the FDOC and the honor and integrity that it portrays. Yes change is needed here as well. But welcome to the wonderful world of the FDOC, where little to nothing works as it should, especially if its suppose to be in favor, of the lowly inmate and his or her struggle to correct a wrong. The more you know!

Sincerely Ronald Wayne Clark Jr. #812974

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