Prison Fellowship’s Statement on

Federal Prison Lockdown During Protests

***Federal Prisons Under National Lockdown as Protests Continue After the Death of George Floyd***

June 2, 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Contact: Jim Forbes**

703.554.8540

**Washington, D.C.**— [Prison Fellowship](https://www.prisonfellowship.org/)®, the nation’s largest Christian nonprofit serving prisoners, former prisoners, and their families, released the following statement after the Federal Bureau of Prisons imposed a national lockdown in the wake of continuing civil unrest after the tragic and senseless death of George Floyd:

“Prisons are already on tight restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic—creating an environment where our incarcerated men and women are unable to meet their loved ones and family members,” said [*James J. Ackerman*](https://www.prisonfellowship.org/about/leadership-board/)***, president and CEO of Prison Fellowship***. “In addition, maintaining social distancing is difficult at best and completely impossible in many facilities. Now, with the lockdown order, prisons face another challenge.

“Prison Fellowship honors the life of George Floyd as we would any life taken through injustice or violence. We also recognize people of color are disproportionately arrested, prosecuted, and represented in our prisons and jails across the country. That’s why Prison Fellowship continues its work to end unjust disparities in the criminal justice system and the many collateral consequences men and women face after paying their debt to society. We believe each person is made in the image of God and should be treated with the utmost respect and dignity.

“Prison Fellowship’s work in criminal justice reform began when our founder, [Charles Colson](https://www.prisonfellowship.org/about/chuckcolson/), visited a prison not long after a serious riot took place over prison conditions. He realized that personal transformation and growth is impacted when people are held and housed under conditions that are not humane or safe. Since our founding more than 40 years ago, we continue to oppose and advocate against abuse in all forms.

“We applaud those citizens all over the country who have expressed their views in a peaceful manner, and we call on all our fellow citizens to protest peaceably—avoiding conflict and criminality. We ask for a return to calm, which will allow for some freedom of movement in our communities in and out of prison.”

**Prison Fellowship**® is the nation’s largest Christian nonprofit serving prisoners, former prisoners, and their families, and a leading advocate for criminal justice reform. The organization was founded in 1976 by Charles Colson, who served seven months in federal prison for a Watergate-related crime. Through an awakening to new hope and life purpose, Prison Fellowships helps those who once broke the law be transformed and mobilized to serve their community, replacing the cycle of crime with a cycle of renewal.