

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: July 22, 2009

4TH AVENUE JAIL LOCKDOWN LIFTED TODAY, **ARPAIO SAYS**

(Phoenix, AZ) Fourth Avenue Jail, which houses 1700 of the county's most violent criminal offenders, is back to normal operations effective today, per order by Sheriff Joe Arpaio.

Lifting the lockdown means that inmates housed in the downtown Phoenix jail will no longer be confined to their cells 23 hours a day. Visitation and phone calls have also been restored, Arpaio says.

Sheriff Arpaio ordered the two-week long lockdown after a race disturbance erupted on June 29, 2009.

Hispanic and Black inmates engaged in the disruption as a way to try to force Arpaio to separate the housing units by race. While no serious injuries resulted from the inmate-on-inmate fights, Arpaio said there were concerns that larger scale assaults.

"I run the jails, not the inmates, and housing according to race is not how this Sheriff does things," Arpaio says. "The lockdown was ordered as a way to make that message clearly understood by inmates."

Prior to the lift, Arpaio ordered officers and SWAT team officials to search the 4th Avenue Jail for contraband. The search was conducted and no contraband was found.

Arpaio is hopeful that the two week long lockdown calmed inmates down. If not, and similar problems arise, the Sheriff says the facility will go back on restriction.

The racial breakdown of Arpaio's jails show that 44% of the 10,000 inmates are Hispanic, 37% are Anglo, and 14% are Black. Over half of the Hispanic inmates are illegal aliens.

END

News Release

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