

# Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

## Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: May 22, 2009

### ***ARPAIO CANCELS LOCKDOWN AND ALLOWS VISITATION IN JAILS***

### **INMATE THREATS AND HUNGER STRIKE SUBSIDES**

(Phoenix, AZ) Effective today, May 22, 2009, the Maricopa County jails that have been on indefinite lockdown will be lifted by Sheriff Arpaio.

Since May 2, inmates have participated in a periodic hunger strike with evening meals repeatedly refused by hundreds of inmates. Those inmates who accept the evening meals have been repeatedly threatened by other inmates. Since the problems began, six inmates have requested to be placed in protective custody so they can eat without fear of reprisal, according to the Sheriff.

The hunger protest inside the facilities began when an illegal immigration rights march culminated with 2,000 citizens loudly demonstrating in front of the Sheriff's jails.

During the past week a number of inmates refusing to eat ranged from 1800 to just a handful last night. Arpaio says, "If the hunger strike comes back and the threats resume, the lockdown will be re-instituted".

Arpaio also states he will not back down from his critics or the ACLU. In case people didn't know "I run the jails, not the inmates or my critics".

News Release

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