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[NACDL Condemns Inhumane Conditions at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn](#)

Washington, DC (Jan. 7, 2022) – The Brooklyn Metropolitan Detention Center subjects people awaiting trial to inhumane and dangerous pandemic conditions. MDC Brooklyn has the highest number of COVID-19 positive detainees in the nation – more than 15% of the population tested positive as of January 5, 2022, including, remarkably, approximately half of the women detainees. The COVID outbreak has been particularly severe among women detainees because MDC Brooklyn houses women in an open dorm with shared bathrooms and meal spaces making social distancing impossible. Consequently, many women have been infected and, despite experiencing severe symptoms, including vomiting and chills, MDC Brooklyn denies them basic care. Personal accounts from women at MDC Brooklyn describe an alarming failure to follow basic health protocols, serious lapses in food safety, and meals constituting cruel and unusual punishment. The conditions also endanger staff compelled to work in this environment. The Federal Defenders of New York have been advocating for the affected women and are deeply concerned for their welfare.

The abusive conditions at MDC Brooklyn coincide in time with the resignation of the Federal Bureau of Prisons ("BOP") Director Michael Carvajal amid increasing scrutiny over his leadership. These conditions are, unfortunately, the continuation of long-term failures to provide humane conditions. In fact, in June 2016, the National Association of Women Judges' Women in Prison Committee found that conditions for women at MDC Brooklyn were unconscionable and had been so for years, as later exemplified by the conviction of three corrections officers, including two BOP lieutenants, in 2017 of sexual abuse of women detainees at MDC Brooklyn. In April 2021, U.S. District Judge Colleen McMahan found that a woman at MDC Brooklyn was subjected to conditions "as disgusting, inhuman as anything I've heard about any Colombian prison, but more so because we're supposed to be better than that."

