

# SUN TIMES

## Women accuse immigration detention of illegal strip searches

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A complaint was filed on Monday on behalf of a group of woman being held in an immigration detention center, 14 of whom are transgender, that alleges the women faced illegal strip searches.

Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement, who is representing the women, say that 31 women at the Santa Ana City Jail have been traumatized by the invasive practice that goes against state law and federal policy, [according to BuzzFeed News](#).

“Strip searches of people in immigration detention at the Santa Ana City Jail are conducted without reasonable suspicion, sometimes by members of the opposite gender, in view of other detainees, in unsanitary conditions, and have turned into sexual assaults,” the complaint reads, the new agency reports.

Santa Ana City Jail is being used by Immigration Customs and Enforcement to hold individuals suspected of immigration violations. ICE created a special housing facility at Santa Ana for LGBT immigrants in response to complaints of their treatment, according to “[Dignity Denied](#),” a report by the Center for American Progress.

The complaint alleges that such strip searches are used as a blanket policy rather than in accordance with California Penal Code Section 4030, which requires, “individual reasonable suspicion,” [according to BuzzFeed](#).

The news outlet also says that the complaint alleges the women are routinely strip searched after meeting with their attorneys, encouraging them not to speak with legal counsel.

CIVIC has been previously barred from seeing clients in ICE facilities **after filing complaints similar to this one.**

In December, Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders said that **he would address the detention of LGBT undocumented immigrants** if elected president after a transgender woman asked him about his “Families First” immigration policy.