

5 Saskatchewan Prisoners Sue Over 'Nervous Shock'

Five inmates at the federal prison in Prince Albert, Sask., are suing the federal government, alleging they've been inflicted with "nervous shock."

In Federal Court last month, government lawyers tried to have the lawsuit thrown out. Instead, a judge has stayed it for six months.

He has told the inmates, all prisoners at Saskatchewan Penitentiary, to get a lawyer and amend their statement of claim, which he says lacks information.

In their claim, the prisoners say they have to "self-deaden," because they suffer from sleep deprivation and are "constantly being overwhelmed with hopelessness and erosion of self-worth."

They claim damages in excess of \$50,000.

Justice Robert Hughes said the prisoners have to be more specific about what they allege actually happened to them.

"The court can clearly grasp that the plaintiffs are unhappy to the point of frustration, distraction and despair, with the circumstances of their imprisonment," Hughes wrote in his Nov. 7 decision. "Whether this is a normal and expected consequence of that imprisonment or whether their circumstances have gone beyond those prescribed by the laws of Canada, is not sufficiently clear from the proceedings."

The decision contains allegations from the prisoners that have not been proven in court.

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