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**ACLU of Ohio, Children's Law Center, and Juvenile Justice Coalition Condemn
Lack of Transparency Around Teen's Death in Ohio Facility**

Columbus, OH February 17, 2021 — Following the death of a teenager in Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility (CJCF) in August 2020 and continued calls for transparency, ACLU of Ohio, Children's Law Center, and Juvenile Justice Coalition released the following statement:

It has been almost six months since a young person died alone in a locked cell at the Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility (CJCF), and there has still been no information publicly released about the cause or circumstances of his death. This is completely unacceptable. We continue to extend our condolences to his family as they face unimaginable pain and seek answers about the death of their loved one.

Incarcerated youth are often subjected to poor health conditions and medical neglect and face an even greater risk amid this deadly pandemic. Children and teenagers who remain in youth prisons in Ohio live with a persistent threat to their physical and mental health every day, which this tragic death further highlights. These facilities, by law, are tasked with providing for the care and protection of the youth in their custody, and youth have the right to be protected from harm.

Considering the state's obligations, and the increased risk historically that youth are subjected to inadequate care while incarcerated, it is vital that when a child dies in custody of the state - in a facility, away from his family, and alone in a cell - officials must work expeditiously to be transparent and accountable. We call for the completion of the investigation, the release of information about this alarming death to the public, and an immediate and thorough review of staff and security at CJCF to ensure that the young people currently incarcerated are protected.

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