

Palm Beach County Jail pulls religious meal from Muslims, keeps kosher meals for Jewish inmates

Muslim inmates forced to eat vegan meals, no meat

By: Jeff Skrzypek - 07/25/2013

A religious battle over food is erupting at the Palm Beach County Jail after kosher meals were taken away from Muslim inmates and replaced with a vegan meal.

Imam Jaabir Muhammad, the jail chaplain, said he is concerned Muslim inmates are not being treated fairly and not given a tray catered with the Islamic faith in mind.

"They made all of them vegans, vegetarians against their will," said Muhammad.

Muhammad claims inmates were informed on July 15th they would no longer receive kosher or halal meals although Jewish inmates would continue to receive kosher meals.

"If you're just feeding them vegetables, you're not going to have the nutritional value to be able to survive and abstain the rigors of affairs," said Muhammad.

Muslims can eat meat, it just must be prepared or butchered in a special way. Followers of Islam prefer "halal" meat but can eat kosher meals as an alternative.

"If someone breaks a law, punish them for breaking the law. But don't punish them for being human," said Muhammad.

The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office released this statement:

"The Sheriff's Office is in complete compliance with all Jail Accreditation standards prescribed by, the American Correctional Association, the Florida Correctional Accreditation Commission, and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care, concerning meals given to all inmates. Inmates requiring specialty meals are given meals as it relates to each specific religion, and those meals meet the standards for each specific religion. The Sheriff's Office is in contact with the leadership of the Muslims community, and will address any of their concerns as it relates to the standards the jail adheres to, but we will not deviate from those standards."

A jail spokesperson later clarified that the kosher meals were taken away from the Muslim inmates to cut costs.

When asked about why the Jewish inmates continued to receive kosher meals, a spokesperson sent this statement:

"I understand the Muslim religion does not require their meals to be kosher and the Jewish religion does. We provide kosher meals to inmates practicing the Jewish faith. We provide an alternative religious diet to Muslims that follow the Halal dietary requirements. Meals whether they are kosher or alternative religious diet(s), meet ALL the daily nutritional recommendations required."

Jaabir Muhammad said he is disappointed by the change and calls the move unfair.

"It sends to me that there's favoritism, discrimination and that they're discriminating against the Muslims in favor of other religious beliefs," said Muhammad.

http://www.wptv.com/dpp/news/region_c_palm_beach_county/west_palm_beach/palm-beach-county-jail-pulls-religious-meal-from-muslims-keeps-kosher-meals-for-jewish-inmates

Jail vs. Prison

Most people don't realize that there is a difference between jail and prison and use the words interchangeably.

	Jail	Prison
Holds:	People awaiting trial; people sentenced for a short duration, typically less than a year. Not normally used in UK.	People convicted of crimes; sentenced for a longer term
Jurisdiction:	In the USA: Run by the county sheriff's department. In Canada, run by provincial governments.	In the USA: Run by the Prisons and Corrections office in the respective states. There are also federal prisons. In Canada run by the federal government (also called Penitentiaries).

[http://www.diffen.com/difference/Jail vs Prison](http://www.diffen.com/difference/Jail_vs_Prison)