

# ABOLITIONIST PRISON LITIGATORS' CHECKLIST

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- **Abolish Lawyer Centered Litigation.** People in custody and other directly affected folx must drive the legal strategy & make decisions large & small. Demand client presence, respect client agency. Create platforms for client voice & testimony. Engage & communicate with family members/loved ones.
- **Messaging.** Incorporate the language of abolition in legal pleadings—particularly around 1) race; and 2) the criminal legal system's failure to create safe & health communities. Pleadings and legal docs can help educate the courts, communities and media—even when the language doesn't support a "legal" claim.
- **Create transparency & share information.** Fight protective orders that privilege attorneys whenever possible; recognize the power of the info you have access to—commit to sharing widely. Hold teach-ins, create community legal ed materials.
- **Make decarcerative demands.** There are always decarcerative demands to be made—make them even if a federal court can't order them. Don't fear the PLRA—consider settlement if it results in releases.
- **Transcend the limits of the law.** What are the transformational aspirational demands your clients' demand? If the courts can't deliver—who can? How can your litigation bolster the potential of those demands?
- **Reduce harm** through non-reformist reforms—but center your clients' wellbeing and safety.