

Exhibit E

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
MACON DIVISION**

RICARDO HARRIS, *et al.*,
Plaintiffs, v.
**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF
CORRECTIONS, *et al.*,**
Defendants.

Civil Action No. 5:18-cv-365-TES

Declaration of Norman Simmonds

1. I have personal knowledge of all of the facts in this declaration. I promise that everything written here is true or correct. I know that I might be called as a witness in this case to explain the facts in this declaration. If I am called as a witness, I will testify to the facts written here.

2. My name is Norman Simmonds. I am in Valdosta State Prison and I have been here since July 2026. Before this, I was in Hays State Prison. I moved from Hays State Prison about two months ago. I entered GDC in August or September of 2024.

3. I developed a hearing disability after I was shot in the head and was in a bad car accident. I was in my mid-twenties when this happened. When GDC tested my hearing, they found that I have moderate to severe hearing loss in my right ear and profound hearing loss in my left ear. In the free world, I used hearing aids in both ears. GDC will only give me one hearing aid. The batteries for the hearing aid I have here only last about two days, but I'm only allowed to get a new battery once every two weeks. Most of the time I don't have hearing aids that work. I told someone at medical that the hearing aid batteries only last two days but she said she was told that she can only give me new ones every two weeks.

4. My hearing disability makes it hard for me to hear, especially in loud places. I

can communicate in quiet, one on one settings, when I have a hearing aid that works. In one on one settings without hearing aids, I need to use a combination of hearing and lip reading, and I need to be very close to the other person to understand them. In the dorms, it's very loud and hard to communicate. I don't communicate much with people outside of my cell because it's too difficult to understand them. It's frustrating.

5. I have told many people at GDC about my hearing disability. At Hays State Prison, I had an appointment with an audiologist. I got my hearing aid after that. At Hays, I filed grievances about the lack of accommodations for my hearing disability. I have talked about my hearing disability to people in medical and mental health here in Valdosta too. Whenever there is a miscommunication with an officer or I miss information, I explain that I have a hearing disability, but the officers don't always believe me. My family has also written to GDC about the problems I am having.

Announcements and Notifications

6. I miss announcements and notifications because I don't hear them and no one tells me about them.

7. My dorm has 50 people in it. There are twenty-five two-man cells. The door to the dorm is probably 60 or 70 feet from my cell.

8. Pill call, chow call, and medical appointments all happen at different times every day. Breakfast might be anywhere from 5am to 8am, lunch is anytime between 11am and 2pm, and dinner is anytime from 2pm to 4pm. Pill call happens at different times too. I've seen pill call as early as 3pm or as late as 9pm. So you can't just be ready at the right time for these things. You have to wait for an announcement about them. And in a dangerous place like Valdosta, you can't just be standing around staring at the door all day, waiting to see the officers

come in. It is dangerous to be doing anything that is unusual. People might think you are a snitch, or are up to something if you stare at the door all day. In August, someone in the dorm I was in was hit over the head with a machete. It seemed random. He was bleeding for a long time until someone finally called 911 from a contraband cell phone, because there were no officers around and they thought he was going to die. Your life is on the line here, and you have to act carefully.

9. In Valdosta, the officers sometimes announce these things by opening the door to the dorm and screaming “pill call” or “chow call” or yelling the name of a person who has a medical appointment. They almost never walk through the door. Sometimes they announce these things by just banging on the window to the dorm and not even opening the door. If you miss the announcement, then you miss what’s happened.

10. I can never hear these announcements. It doesn’t matter if my hearing aid is working or not. It is too loud in the dorm and the announcements aren’t loud enough. I have tried to tell officers that I’ve missed pill call and meals because I don’t hear the announcements because of my hearing disability. They say that it’s not their problem.

11. I mostly stay in my cell because I have PTSD and schizophrenia. Loud places, banging, and yelling trigger me. Being out in the day room is overwhelming and I can’t communicate much anyway. It’s almost impossible to know when announcements are happening when I’m in my cell. Even if I see people moving around in the dorm, it’s not necessarily a sign that something is happening. In fact, when there’s movement in prison, it’s often not something you want to be going towards. If I see people moving around, I’m not going to follow that movement because that could be dangerous.

12. There are major consequences for me of missing announcements. I was missing

pill call so much that I gave up on taking medication for my PTSD and schizophrenia altogether, because I was only able to take the medication two or three times a week. That meant that I was constantly going through painful withdrawal symptoms and not getting the benefit of the medications. My mental health counselor knows about this problem, and has told me that she's been emailing people to try to get it fixed, but nothing has changed. In my records, I think the officers write down that I've "refused" pill call, but that's not true. I very much want to take my medication, but I can't, because I don't know when pill call is.

13. Because I am no longer taking my medications, I have increased anxiety, and I am experiencing hallucinations. I feel like something terrible is about to happen and I can't stop it. It's like the moment right before a car crash when it's too late to stop it and you know something awful is about to happen. The hallucinations include seeing a person with a gun pointed at me. It's scary to be in a place like this without being mentally prepared to be in this situation. You have to be on guard all the time, this is not a place where you can be not in your right mind. It's dangerous already, and I know that my mental health is getting much worse. Before being in prison, I'd been on these medications since 2009 or 2010 and I had been pretty stable on them.

14. I also miss meals a lot. I probably miss about 12 meals a week. This means that I have to rely on my family to put money on my books to buy things from store, but most of the food at store is very unhealthy, and the healthy food is limited. When I didn't have anyone putting money on my books, I couldn't buy things from the store and I lost about 50 pounds. I have gained some of that back now because my family has money to put on my books, but that's not something I can depend on because my family doesn't always have money for me. I often have difficulty reading, remembering things, and speaking clearly when I miss meals because of the lack of nutrition. I don't normally have these issues when I eat on a normal schedule.

15. I have tried to write grievances about many of the problems I have had in GDC. In Hays State Prison I filed a grievance about the lack of accessible announcements for deaf and hard of hearing people and explained that it caused me to miss meals and pill call. The grievance also complained that there is no emergency system for deaf or hard of hearing people.

16. In July 2026, I wrote one grievance about needing halal meals, and another about the retaliatory transfer to Valdosta. The policy says the prison has to answer grievances in a set period of time, and if they don't answer, you can appeal the lack of a response. The prison hasn't answered either of these grievances, and the time to answer them has long passed. But when I have tried to appeal, the counselor has told me I have to wait for a response and has refused to accept an appeal. So for the last two months, I have not been able to file any new grievances.

17. On August 10, 2026, I tried to file an emergency grievance about the lack of nutrition because I was missing so many meals and was experiencing confusion and having difficulty reading because I wasn't eating enough. I wrote "emergency" at the top of the grievance form. I gave it to my counselor, who read the grievance and said she would not accept it because I already have two grievances pending. I told her that I knew that but this was an emergency. She said that I don't get to dictate what's an emergency, she gets to decide if it's an emergency. She refused to accept the grievance.

18. I pay another prisoner to try to get my attention for pill call and chow call. Without him, I would never know about pill call or chow call. But he sometimes forgets. And it's a risky situation to be relying on another prisoner like that. Your life is on the line in this prison. It's very violent. And when I don't have money, then I don't get this help at all. It's not a good situation to have to rely on another person like this.

19. Some officers know I have a hearing disability, but some don't. I'm supposed to

get an ID card and a placard on the door that says that I have a hearing disability, but I don't have either of these things. Most officers don't care. One time, an officer threatened to lock me up for missing the call for an emergency count. I told him that I could not hear the call, and he instructed me to find another prisoner to tell me about the announcements instead of working to fix the problem.

20. No one who works for the prison has *ever* come to my cell or tried to find me personally to tell me about any kind of announcement. And even if they did try to do that, a lot of the time people aren't in their assigned beds because gangs control so much in this prison. So even if they looked for a specific person, they would often not be in the right location. Gang leaders kick people out of their cells and then those people have to find somewhere else to sleep, often on the floor of other cells. This means that some two-man cells have three or four guys living in them. The prison knows this, but doesn't do anything about it. They don't know where people are, and so they couldn't find any particular person even if they wanted to.

21. When I first got to Valdosta, Deputy Warden Davis said that she does not know why they sent me to this facility. She said that the prison does not have the ability to accommodate someone with a hearing disability. She said that there is no visual alert system, no VRS system for deaf or hard of hearing people, no buzzer, and no policy in place for officers to come get prisoners for meals or medical appointments. I think they sent me here in retaliation for the grievances I was filing at Hays. Those grievances were about the same issues I'm having here at Valdosta – trying to get access to notifications, and trying to get a telephone that is accessible for me.

22. Valdosta is extremely violent. Someone was stabbed to death in this prison last week. Someone was hit in the head with a machete in the dorm I was in in August. There are

long periods of time without any officers around, hours and hours.

23. I am often unable to effectively communicate with my attorneys or my family due to the lack of a VRS system in the dorms. I can only speak with my attorneys when they reach out to me.

24. The failure to accommodate my disability has resulted in a decline in my mental and physical health to the point that I will not be able to recover from this damage. I experience these mental and physical effects every day. It's ongoing and may not be able to be remedied.

I promise that everything in this paper is true and correct. I know that this is a serious paper. I know that I am signing this paper "under penalty of perjury." This means that if I lie, I could get a new criminal charge against me for lying. I promise that I am telling the truth.

Dated: 9/28/26

/s/ Norman Simmonds