



STATEMENT FROM OJRC IN RESPONSE TO THE *OREGONIAN'S* ARTICLE,  
"PRISON STAFF MIXED UP INMATES' BREAST MILK."

February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

The failure of staff at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility (CCCF) to ensure that babies of women incarcerated there received the correct bags of breast milk as reported in the *Oregonian* is deeply concerning. Even more so, because it appears that the women's fears were not taken seriously and their legitimate complaints were both ignored and minimized by staff.

While the transmission of a disease such as Hepatitis C through breast milk may be unlikely, it must be extremely worrying for the mothers concerned that their children may have been exposed. That this needless source of stress would not be present had staff at CCCF followed commonsense protocols to prevent mixing up the bags of milk is very frustrating to us as advocates for women in prison.

Mothers should be supported by CCCF in their desire to provide breast milk for their children, not only because it's good for their babies' health but also because it helps to maintain the family bonds that are so important to successful reentry to society after leaving incarceration.

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