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Ohio youth prisons ordered to ensure inmates fed

The Associated Press

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COLUMBUS, Ohio — A federal judge has ordered Ohio youth detention facilities to alter a practice of withholding food from inmates who don't report for meals in the cafeteria.

U.S. District Judge Algenon Marbley says in the order filed Friday in Columbus that a meal refusal policy used at the Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility and others did not put a priority on inmates' health and safety.

The Ohio Department of Youth Services says the Circleville facility stopped taking meals to inmates in May 2009 because too many were not going to the cafeteria. Officials say carrying meals to the units disrupted schedules and increased costs.

The agency says prison staff continued to take meals to inmates who stayed in their rooms because of perceived threats from gangs or others.

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