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## Lawsuit accuses Ohio jail of stun-gun abuses

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The Associated Press*

**COLUMBUS** - Corrections officers at a central Ohio jail regularly use pain-inducing stun guns to subdue inmates when there's no physical threat and when inmates are restrained, outnumbered, disoriented or mentally disabled, according to a lawsuit filed in federal court.

The suit, filed Friday in U.S. District Court by the Ohio Legal Rights Service on behalf of three inmates, says the alleged actions at the Franklin County jail in Columbus violate constitutional rights as well as jail policy.

It seeks class action status to include current inmates as well as those who become jailed while the suit is pending.

The Legal Rights Service, an independent state agency, says video and written reports show that guards have improperly used stun guns several times since at least January 2008 "to inflict pain, fear, corporal punishment and humiliation" when inmates wouldn't obey commands or used profanity or insults.

"Deputies regularly use tasers in situations where the person does not remotely present a threat of violent behavior ...

"And routinely and deliberately use tasers as first strike weapons without employing or even considering less painful or harmful control tactics," the lawsuit says.

The suit says deputies often exaggerate circumstances that led to use of stun guns and are not trained in the proper use of the devices.

It says that internal sheriff's office reviews deemed all but a handful of the cases justified.

It seeks compensatory and punitive damages, an order that the jail stop improper use of stun guns and the appointment of an independent monitor to oversee reports on use of the devices and recommend discipline and training as warranted.