



The Illinois Department of Corrections

1301 Concordia Court, P.O. Box 19277 • Springfield, IL 62794-9277 • (217) 558-2200 TDD: (800) 526-0844

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 9/26/25

TO: All Individual in Custody

FROM: Director Latoya Hughes

SUBJECT: Changes to Incoming Mail Processes

Beginning **immediately**, the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) will start to implement changes to incoming mail processes in response to the increasing threat of drug and/or chemical-laced paper entering facilities through the mail which have resulted in a rise in suspected overdoses among individuals in custody and staff exposures.

New Incoming Mail Processes

To better support the safety and welfare of individuals in custody and all those entering IDOC facilities, the following changes will take effect:

1. Discontinue the practice of visitors dropping off publications at facilities.
2. Require publications to be mailed directly by publishers, as defined by IDOC.
3. Digitize or photocopy incoming non-privileged mail.
4. Implement a multi-factor authentication system for legal (privileged) mail.

Publications

As of **Tuesday, September 30**, publications intended for a particular individual in custody will only be accepted through the mail, and they must be mailed directly from the publisher to the individual.

- Visitors may no longer drop off books, magazines, and/or other publications at any facility for a specific individual in custody.
 - Publications received with a postmark **after Tuesday, September 30** must be sent directly from a publisher.
 - Any publications with a postmark **after September 30** will be returned to the sender.
 - A publisher includes any publisher, book club, bookstore, or any other book, magazine, or newspaper distributor, religious organizations or ministries, educational institutions, or units of government conducting mail order business or otherwise delivering publications to
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Mission: To serve justice in Illinois and increase public safety by promoting positive change for those in custody, operating successful reentry programs, and reducing victimization.

readers.

Electronic Scanning of Non-Privileged Incoming Mail

Immediately, all facilities will begin scanning and/or photocopying incoming non-privileged mail.

- Non-privileged mail received for you at the facility will be opened and inspected for contraband.
- Mailroom staff will scan, in color, the front and back of the envelope and each item within, including letters, greeting cards, and photographs.
- PDF images of the scanned documents will be uploaded to the “Bulletin Board” on your tablet for you to view.
 - Instructions on how to access your mail are provided with this memo.
- If you have concerns regarding the quality of a scanned document or the full scanning of mailed material that is not resolved by unit staff, you may file a grievance.
- Scanned documents will be available on your tablet for 6 months from the date they were scanned. Original mail documents will be retained for at least 6 months.
- Individuals who do not have a tablet, whose tablet privileges have been restricted or revoked, or who otherwise do not have access to their tablet will receive paper photocopies of their mail.

Multi-Factor Authentication of Legal Mail

Beginning the **week of October 20th**, legal mail from licensed attorneys, who provide direct legal representation to individuals in custody, and their staff, will be subject to a multi-factor authentication system to ensure that the envelope and its contents are from the sender identified by the return address on the envelope.

- Legal mail received for you at the facility will not be scanned or photocopied.
- Legal mail will be distributed in accordance with the existing procedure and will continue to be opened in front of you.
- You may be asked to confirm receipt of the documents by signing a Legal Mail Receipt.

IDOC understands the importance of mail as a means of connection with loved ones and will support this connection in the following ways:

- IDOC will reproduce cards, drawings, photographs, etc. at your request and at no cost to you, by having them printed on quality paper.
 - Individuals may request that a specific piece of mail be printed by filling out an “Individual In Custody Request Form (DOC 028) Individual in Custody Staff Request Form” with the following information:
 - “Mail Print Request”
 - The document number for the requested piece of mail. This number will be handwritten and located on the document. The document number will begin with the individual’s IDOC number. Ex. Y12345-091925-1
- IDOC is not placing any restrictions or limitations on the number of photos or pieces of paper that can be sent in a single envelope.

- Every individual in custody is currently provided two free 20-minute video calls monthly.
 - IDOC has worked with ICSolutions to implement an application that enables individuals to make phone calls from their tablets.
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