



Illinois Sheriffs' Association



ILLINOIS SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION STATEMENT 5/28/2020

Today, the Illinois Sheriffs' Association (ISA) filed suit against Governor Jay Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Corrections for their refusal to accept transfers of parole violators or convicted individuals from jails across Illinois.

On March 26, Gov. Pritzker unilaterally suspended all admissions to IDOC facilities in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. At the time, the leaders at IDOC said they needed time to prepare and install proper intake procedures to reduce the spread of the virus from inmates transferred out of County Jails. However, no such preparations have been made or implemented, despite repeated discussions between members of the ISA and IDOC

Rather than working together with the Sheriffs to find ways to uphold the law while reducing the spread of COVID-19, IDOC has simply shut its doors.

This has left the Sheriffs to bear not only the burden of protecting their detainees and county-sentenced inmates from the threat of the virus, but also those who rightfully should be in the custody of IDOC at a time when space and inmate population are critical components to battling the spread of the virus. Jails continue to accept new arrestees and manage the spread of the virus simultaneously.

Since March 26, IDOC officials have repeatedly denied requests from Sheriff's Offices to transfer individuals to the agency's custody. Currently there are 100's of individuals being held in jails across Illinois instead of a state correctional facility simply because Gov. Pritzker and IDOC have decided to wall themselves off rather than work with their fellow law enforcement partners to address the issue.

The task of safely housing detainees amid this unprecedented pandemic is challenge enough for Illinois Sheriffs without having to also shoulder IDOC's responsibilities as well.

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Jim Kaitschuk, Executive Director
Illinois Sheriffs' Association
217-753-2372