



FAMILIES NEED TRANSPARENCY TO RESOLVE ISSUES WITH LOVED ONES

The Point of Contact has received an overwhelming number of messages from family members who are trying to confirm if their loved ones are alive and safe during quarantines.

Why this is a Problem:

The Illinois General Assembly established a Point of Contact within the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) by unanimously passing Public Act 102-535 in 2021. Now, family members can share complaints, suggestions, and requests with the Point of Contact to help ensure contacts with their loved ones are successful, and they are treated fairly.

However, many family members who call and email the Point of Contact say their issues are not being resolved. More transparency and accountability are necessary to identify significant problems and remedy them in future policymaking.

IDOC and the Office of the Independent Juvenile Ombudsman (OIJO) increase transparency by publishing quarterly and annual reports.

- IDOC currently produces quarterly and annual public reports for the General Assembly and Governor.
- OIJO ensures transparency through public reporting. OIJO produces an annual report that has been vital to identifying and rectifying issues and protecting youth welfare in the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.

Solution:

SB 3180 would provide more transparency and accountability by requiring the Point of Contact to publish an annual public report on issues being raised by family members.

The Point of Contact would compile information on family members' complaints, suggestions, and requests about visits and their incarcerated loved ones.

- The annual report would provide data to allow the General Assembly to identify significant problems and address them for future policymaking.
- Each year, IDOC would publish an annual public report on its website and provide it to the Illinois General Assembly and Governor. The annual reporting requirements would mirror the requirements for the OIJO annual report.

SB 3180 would also require each IDOC waiting room to have a sign posted telling visitors how to reach the Point of Contact.