



The PAPPC Journal

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**The 2024 PAPPC Training Institute and Conference
"Building Bridges: Transforming Communities,
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A Message from the President

COREY R. DAVIS, 2023-2024



Greetings,

It is a pleasure and honor for me to accept the position of President of this great organization, The Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections (PAPPCC). As we embark on our 102nd year as an association committed to serving the disciplines of Adult and Juveniles in Probation, Parole, Corrections and ReEntry, as the 2023 PAPPCC Conference theme implied, I am encouraged that we truly have come from Awareness, to a better Understanding, which will provide us the tools we need to forge forward with Best Practices for a New Era. We have learned much as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, having experienced unprecedented loss, changes in how we live, think and work, we are truly embarking on a New Era. We had to revise all that we knew and all that we were accustomed to, in order to get to this point in our lives, careers and levels of comfort.

I am excited to carry the torch as the Association's President, during this time and in this space, where we are as a Criminal Justice Community, where we are as a society and where we are as a people. Recognizing that there is still much work to be done in our field, in our areas of responsibility and under our influence, I accept the challenge of leading this association in doing the heavy lifting to reach our Association's goals and remaining in line with the PAPPCC Mission statement. It is my pleasure to continue the 100 year legacy of this Association in following the footsteps that were laid before me, I promise to put forth my best effort to represent PAPPCC as a professional and as a role model.

As the Association strives to reach new heights, we will envision what our future will look like, how we can have the greatest impact, all while embracing where we are presently, recognizing our roles and responsibilities and never forgetting our past, because that is the indicator as to how far we have come.

Thank you and I look forward to this coming year and what it holds for our Association.

Corey R. Davis

Corey R. Davis

PAPPCC President

Contribute to *The PAPPCC Journal*!

THE PAPPCC JOURNAL is published by members of the Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections. Articles, announcements and other newsworthy material of relevance to our membership may be submitted for consideration to:

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PAPPC

MISSION STATEMENT

THE MISSION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION ON PROBATION, PAROLE AND CORRECTIONS (PAPPC) SUPPORTS AND PROMOTES BEST PRACTICE METHODS AND PROFESSIONALISM IN THE FIELD OF JUVENILE AND ADULT PROBATION, PAROLE, CORRECTIONS, INSTITUTIONAL CARE AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION.

How drone tracking can protect correctional facilities against airspace threats

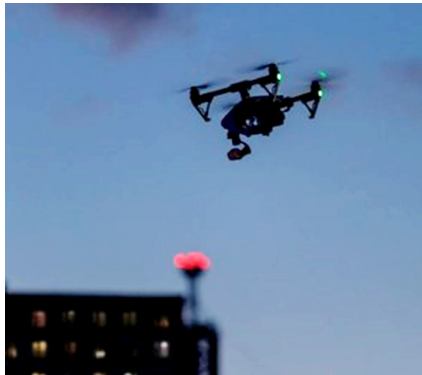
Cloud-based drone monitoring solutions provide users with operator identification from the start of takeoff, as well as real-time monitoring of the current operator location

By Emily Rhodes

Reprinted With Permission. Original Article was Published on Aug 7, 2023

In 2022, more than 23,000 contraband items were confiscated across Georgia's prison system. According to the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC), the contraband included 11,687 weapons, 21,088 grams of methamphetamine and over 100,000 grams of marijuana. This was just in one state. The number of dangerous items being smuggled into America's prisons continues to increase, and it's becoming even more complex and challenging to track, let alone prevent.

Smuggling drugs and other dangerous contraband into prisons is nothing new. Historically, contraband came from enterprises, separate suppliers, and social sharing and trading. However, smugglers and their incarcerated contacts have become increasingly creative and tech-savvy in conducting their operations, using drones to fly above security ports to deliver drugs, weapons, cell phones and other contraband.



In Georgia, multiple agencies conducted an investigation that uncovered inmates engaged in a national drug trafficking ring throughout the southeast. All from within a prison. This multi-level operation was fueled by lottery ticket winnings and compromised correctional officers using drones to deliver contraband items to inmates.

LOOKING TO THE SKIES

According to the National Institute of Justice, drones present a significant security threat to many of the 7,100 federal, state, local, tribal, and military prisons and jails in the United States.

Drone incident data collected from the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) uncovered an increase from 23 drone incidents in 2018 to 57 incidents in 2019, an over 50% increase in one year. As a result, secure facilities are looking toward emerging drone detection systems to help manage the threat

of contraband to correctional facilities. These early warning detection solutions assist correctional officers and their teams in detecting, tracking and mitigating threats to their airspace.

DRONE DETECTION AND DATA MAPPING

Drones are being used not only to deliver contraband to inmates but also to facilitate escape plans. To enhance the safety of both staff and inmates, it's critical that correctional facilities leverage technology that not only detects drones entering prison airspace and surrounding areas but also tracks and maps the drone's activity.

Prison staff can leverage real-time drone data and analytics through a cloud-based platform that offers remote support for easy access. This also provides comprehensive visibility into any airspace activity through an advanced dashboard without impeding daily duties and on-site emergencies. This city-scale network provides real-time data and deep threat analysis. Should unauthorized activity be detected, automated notifications will be sent to the facility's chain of command immediately.

DRONE ACTIVITY ANALYSIS

Following the detection of drone activity, correctional facilities can access full details of the drone's flight path, including identification of the exact location of both the drone and the operator. Cloud-based drone monitoring solutions provide users with operator identification from the start of takeoff, as well as real-time monitoring of the current operator location. This helps local police departments to make the proper arrests and prevent unauthorized flight activity from happening again with the same unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).

Another advantage of cloud-based, city-scale drone detection comes in the form of historical flight data analysis. This crucial information provides secure facilities operations staff with the ability to determine whether a particular drone is a first-time offender of the airspace or if the device has a history of violating the airspace. This information can then be downloaded into a court-ready document to be leveraged by officers of the court for further legal matters.

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DRONE DEFENSE MANAGEMENT AMID PRISON STAFFING SHORTAGES

After evaluating the critical benefits of implementing drone management technology into a prison system, it's important to remember that drones create both opportunity and risk. Yes, they are causing significant issues for corrections facilities when used for criminal activity, but drone technology is also beneficial.

Prisons, like many other industries, are experiencing a massive staffing shortage. Corrections officers and other prison staff have been quitting in droves due to unsafe working conditions and limited pay. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice reported a 40.3% turnover rate

for correctional officer positions in 2021, increasing by nearly 7% from 2020, and the turnover rates continue to climb across the country. As a result, prison leaders are left struggling to protect the prisons.

As a solution, prison officials are deploying drones for crowd monitoring and management during emergency and lockdown situations. Drones also fill the gaps created by a limited number of prison officers by providing a real-time view of the prison facility from above, allowing officials to assess a situation and take appropriate action quickly. Additionally, drones can monitor and manage crowds during emergencies such as riots or fires, providing prison officials with a valuable

tool for ensuring the safety and security of those incarcerated as well as staff.

Advanced drone management technology is critical for ensuring the safety and security of prisons and those incarcerated. Radar systems, geo-fencing, and drone flight pattern analysis are some of the ways these technologies enhance airspace awareness and mitigate the risks involved with contraband being delivered to prisons via drone. By embedding drone detection into a prison's security system, prisons can identify potential threats before they occur, detect any attempts at unauthorized access, and, most importantly, make the facility safer for everyone.

101st PAPPC Annual Conference and Training Institute

The 101st PAPPC Annual Conference and Training Institute was held from May 21st to May 24th, 2023 at the Kalihari Resort and Convention Center in Pocono Manor, Pennsylvania. Throughout our three days of training we had three general/plenary sessions, they were: Thriving Together Through Inclusion by Nicole Tyler, Trauma and Addiction by Ken Montrose, and ACTION Training for Active Threats/Shooters & Multi-Hazards by John Sakoian. There were also breakout sessions during the afternoon portion of the training institute on Monday May 21st. The topics covered many different facets of the criminal justice and corrections system, they were: Real Colors by Rich Podguski, Conversations in Recovery by Dawn

Smitley & Jillian Hauser, Trauma in the Brain by Dr. Carolyn Menta, Re-entry Simulation by Penny Sines, Overcoming Unconscious by Nicole Tyler, Mindfulness by Laurie George & Brian Lane, and Human Trafficking by Tammi Burke. To cap off our Training Institute and have some fun, an 80's Themed Party that was held for all Conference Attendees. The Party was sponsored by 3DK9. Attendance for the Annual Theme Party has grown the last two conferences and we would love to see that trend continue. We would like to thank all of our Conference Attendees as well as our Sponsors for helping to put on our best Conference yet.



Incumbent President Eileen Hager Introduces new President Corey Davis to the Conference Attendees

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The Annual PAPPC Silent Auction for Charity



Conference Attendees Enjoy a Presentation



Ken Montrose presents "Trauma and Addiction"



Indivior Presentation by Josh Getty



PAPPC Board Members: Dawna Miletics, Jim Amatucci, and Tonia Smith



John Sakoian presents "ACTION Training for Active Threats/Shooters & Multi-Hazards"



The 2023 PAPPC Board Members from Left to Right: Dennis Hoerner, Amanda Zimmerman, Darrell Kirkbride, Dawna Miletics, James Amatucci, Robert McGrath, Corey Davis, Eileen Hager, Jeffrey Dengler, Kathleen Lavelle, Michael Hernandez, Claudia Fisher, Tony Dunkelberger, and Janet Hanley



Opening Remarks by Department of Corrections Secretary Dr. Laurel Harry

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Nicole Tyler presents "Thriving Together Through Inclusion"

80's Theme Party Pictures



North Central Secure Treatment Unit for Juveniles Essays

Some of the residents of the North Central Secure Treatment Unit for Juveniles were asked to write a short essay about their current and past life experiences. It was initially supposed to be a competition and the best essay would be featured in the 2023 PAPPC Journal, but all four essays were so impressive and well written that we have decided to include all of them in the Journal. The Authors will remain anonymous although they will undoubtedly leave a great impression upon all of us after reading their life stories and the changes that they are making to improve themselves. They are featured below:

D.W.

I was placed at NCSTU on November 1, 2023. When I arrived at NCSTU I thought it was going to be good, until I was involved in ESPI. After that, I had a negative mindset and didn't care anymore. I said unkind things to staff. I had many thinking errors, always focusing on others and never myself.

My program became more restricted because of my behaviors. Still, my passive-aggressiveness continued and I would take out my anger on the wrong people. My behaviors got out of control and even the District Attorney didn't want me to come to court in person. He knew I would become escalated too easily. I was inconsistent, consistently.

Over time, I have come to realize that my motives can help me – when they are focused on the right things. They give me things to look forward to. My top priorities are school, family, and freedom. I am working on my school work and becoming more intelligent every day. I have goals to go to college and hold a “real” job. I don't want to be known as the girl who has been in and out of the system. I can start to see a bigger picture of what my life can become.

I am working on building relationships with my family, and with myself. I have been respecting myself and others more. I am showing myself love, patience, and grace, and my consistent behaviors mean that I can participate in more programming. These things will help me find freedom one day.

Accepting reality is helping me. I have a chance to reflect and rehabilitate. I can make mistakes under the guidance to correct them. Sometimes life doesn't pan out how we think it will, but that doesn't mean we have to stop envisioning the future or creating the life we want to have. A few irresponsible choices really altered my life, but I am determined to be open-minded and do my time actively, not let the time do me in.

K.S.

I was 12 when I got my first charge. I was hard-headed, didn't care and had no intentions of following the expectations of my probation. It was summer; I was being too grown, running the streets, and not listening to my mom. I stole her car and was arrested two more times. When I went to court, the Judge told me I was going to placement because I had broken the terms

of my probation. I continued on this path of being in and out of detention centers and group homes due to my aggressive and erratic behavior. My family, my Judge, and my community had had enough.

When I came to NCSTU, my mindset was that I was going to do my time and leave. When I got here I met teenagers who did not support any type of bad behaviors. I met staff who genuinely wanted to build relationships with me and figure out what I needed to be successful. I met teachers who actually taught me different things every week and made sure I understood.

My thought process is so different now. I'm five months into my time here and I'm more self-aware of how I am treating people and myself. I'm aware of where my life was headed and where it can go now. I'm so thankful that I was able to stop and take this time to reflect. I am now 14 and thankful for the person I am; I can turn my life around while I'm still young, and have many more years to learn.

N.S.

I have been in the system, often away from my family, my entire adolescent life. I have never had the right love or support. I have been abandoned and abused based on my criminal record, and have sought love in the most destructive ways. My mom doesn't like publicly claiming me as her daughter and doesn't feel safe leaving me with my siblings. When I started running the streets, I saw things that still haunt me, and did things that I didn't want to do. I identify with the saying, 'hurt people hurt people,' because I took out my anger, abuse, and abandonment on innocent people. Why should I care for others, when no one cares for me?

I thought being at NCSTU was a punishment. I felt the staff wanted to see me struggle and suffer. My mom told me that no one will ever truly care about me and NCSTU staff would be no different. I felt numb, just another black kid in the system. There was no need to make a better life; this was my final stop. If my measures were drastic enough, maybe my mom would notice and I would mean something to her.

My counselor continued to explain that I am being challenged because they see potential in me and believe that I can be a better person. I am told something positive about myself every day. I am also guided to work on certain aspects of myself. It is helpful because I am starting to realize my talents in school, writing poetry, and singing. I am still uncomfortable with opening up, but definitely have support to lead me in the right decisions.

I am motivated, despite struggling at times, and I am thankful for everyone who has said, “you're never going to make it. You're never going to graduate. You'll die where you started.” I don't have to listen to those voices anymore. The staff at NCSTU are showing me that I am going to be successful.

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S.B.

When I first arrived at NCSTU, I didn't care about anything or how others felt. It was my way, or the highway. I was stuck in this mindset and I didn't notice how I was making everyone around me feel. While most wanted to ignore me, I had a mentor who made a point to lift me up when I was feeling down and encourage me to do my best. Even though she was trying to help me, I kept her and her advice at arm's length for months.

I didn't start listening to her until about

two months into my treatment. I had a big incident and punched the window in my room. I was placed on a SELF plan. She walked by my room and gave me a look of disappointment. From that day forward, I began to realize that the things I do and say affect a lot of people, people who care about me and want to see me do well. Everything she told me slowly started to come together. Statements like, "you can do whatever you put your mind to," and "hard work pays off," finally started to make sense. I stopped acting

like I didn't care and started relying more on myself to produce change. People who were calling me out weren't there to hurt me. They were here to help me.

Recognizing the need for a mentor has helped me tremendously. She is a model for how to control myself when I'm facing adversity. She's helped me understand that everyone thinks differently and their thinking shapes the things they do. Because of her, I am not the same person. I have developed my ability to think before I act and to let small things go.

Why The Current State Of Court Security Is Cause For Concern

While everyone is acutely aware of the risks necessitating court security and the liability implications of security failures, actual progress toward security remains highly variable

Reprinted with Permission. Original Article was Published on Jun 15, 2023

On a cool spring morning, a man was arrested in a small town courthouse in Bingham County, Idaho because he was carrying a concealed .38 revolver. Superficially, it seems like a mistake many Idahoans could make in a state with few limits on carrying a firearm.

Maybe he just forgot to take his sidearm off. Or, maybe alert court security personnel averted a disaster: the man in question was coming to court for a pre-trial conference on charges of felony first-degree stalking. Across the state line in Wyoming, judges sounded the alarm over increasing threats and violence in their courts, and asked for more security there, too.

The courts are places where nothing ever happens until it does. I learned that while living in three progressively more remote California counties, two of which had fatal courthouse shootings. One of those was the notorious Ellie Nesler case in 1993 when a mother killed her son's accused molester in a tiny makeshift courtroom. Then in 2000, the defendant in a sex abuse case retrieved a small gun he'd hidden in the courthouse



men's room and used it to kill himself after shooting his accuser and her husband.

The courts are places where nothing ever happens until it does.

I marveled at how quickly scarce resources became abundant in the aftermath of those incidents. In both counties, security measures were immediately implemented, and the cases were used as evidence of the need for improved security in other rural California courthouses as well. With that in mind, I reached out to contacts at the Small and Rural Law Enforcement Executive Association (SRLEEA) to see how the court security environment appears in small-town America nowadays.

I spent time by phone with two sheriffs in rural counties in Kansas and Michigan, a major responsible for court security in Adams County, Mississippi, and another in Doña Ana County, New Mexico. (Doña Ana County fits within the rural/remote purview not by virtue of its population size but rather because of its enormous scale, with residents scattered over nearly 4,000 square miles and an overall population density of only 55 people per square mile.)

I discovered that, although everyone I spoke with is acutely aware of the risks necessitating court security and the liability implications of security failures, actual progress toward security remains highly variable. As expected, the smaller and poorer the setting, the fewer resources are devoted to securing the courts. Where obstacles remain, they fall primarily into the following four categories:

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1. HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN

In the past, courthouses weren't built with security in mind but rather as the original multi-use facilities. They had lots of windows and doors, wide approaches, public meeting spaces and county offices from assessors to clerks to tax collectors, all under one roof. That was brilliant in a world before telephones or automobiles; now it's a security nightmare.

Adams County Sheriff's Major Stanley Searcy is responsible for court security in Natchez, Mississippi, a county seat of just under 14,000 residents. "Courthouse shootings around the nation heightened the need for security here," he said. "Our courthouse was built in the 1800s, it's historic. We've made modifications recently, but not all doors close properly and the windows aren't tempered (glass). It makes security challenging."

Brown County (Kansas) Sheriff John Merchant struggles with similar mismatches between modern security expectations and the design of his nearly century-old courthouse. The county's website describes it as sitting "in the center of the public square" and it does, making the idea of secure parking an impossibility. The first two floors of the courthouse are filled with county offices and meeting rooms. All courtrooms and judges' chambers are on the third floor – and the elevator is frequently inoperable. The pandemic made hearings via Zoom normal, thankfully, offering a workaround when the elderly lift won't cooperate.

Both Merchant and Searcy work with what they have to keep their courts safe. In Brown County, inmates walk to the courthouse escorted by a jailer with a TASER. If it's a high-profile case, armed deputies join the escort. In Adams County, inmates are walked to court by two deputies. They use a different entrance from the general public, and when they leave, spectators in the courtrooms remain seated until the area is clear of both inmates and judges.

Management of entrances varies from county to county. In Doña Ana County, New Mexico everyone is screened at the

single main entrance, according to Major Jon Day, who cites the sovereign citizen attack on Forsyth County's courthouse in Georgia as a driver of their security policies.

In Adams County, Mississippi, Major Searcy says that everyone (including judges, attorneys and courts employees), is screened before entering the courthouse. In Brown County, where Sheriff Merchant noted that the court security plan was written not by him but by the county attorney, members of the public are screened, but courthouse staff, judges and their office personnel, and Kansas state employees with offices in the courthouse, are exempt. In Branch County, Michigan, Sheriff John Pollack has further strengthened the entrance to the courthouse with bollards for obstructing an attack with vehicles.

2. TRADITION

Tradition isn't dangerous until "we've always done it this way" gets in the way of needed change. In many smaller towns, the public and even some judges object to restricting access through a single entrance, and to security changes interpreted as "unwelcoming." The perceived loss of a Mayberry atmosphere may seem not just saddening, but insulting. Employees and clients in multi-use historic buildings sometimes resent security screenings; prohibitions on guns, phones and other electronic devices; and the extra steps required when older entrances near the offices they're using are locked.

In the many regions where "constitutional carry" is the norm, restrictions on carrying firearms into courthouses can generate strong feelings and pushback. Merchant felt this topic especially keenly. Five or six years ago, he said, there was no court security at all for the historic courthouse in the county seat of Hiawatha. When he saw "cases of concern" coming up, he approached county administrators who agreed it was time to secure the courthouse door. Part of that security was providing lockboxes inside the

entrance, where visitors can store their legal firearms.

It was not a popular addition. "The public thought that wanting to secure the courthouse meant I was against the Second Amendment," Merchant told me. "That was used against me in the last election. The rumor mill definitely affected the last campaign, but I handled that openly, and personally." The sheriff talked in person with everyone he could, explaining the security plans along with plans to accommodate the legal possession of firearms – just not in the courthouse – and won the next election easily.

3. JUDGES

Since courthouse violence often targets judges, their support would seem like a given, but it's not. Disputes arise from disagreements over the necessity for security measures, over expenditures and over control. Judges are elected; when they think security measures alienate voters, they often resist them.

As Day said, "It's hard to find balance. The question is 'What is the role of law enforcement in the courts?' Judges often see officers as servants, as status symbols. Officers are there for security, and that is all. There have been judges who don't want to cooperate with evacuations or drills."

It's a problem. John Thompson, vice president of SRLEEA, said that when he was assistant sheriff in Prince Georges County, Maryland, they had top-of-the-line security that was not used to its full potential in part because their judges simply didn't want their hallway doors locked.

Designing and implementing security improvements requires mutual respect and a degree of diplomacy when two elected officials disagree. A sheriff or county commissioner may have codified responsibility for court security, but be unable to fully execute a plan without cooperation from judges.

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4. BUDGETS

Budgets affect staffing, equipment and training. They dictate scheduling and response and rarely is the person in charge of court security also in charge of the funding.

Pollack saw drastic cuts in his department budget beginning in 2013. Twenty-three patrol deputies and four full-time court staffers turned into eight and one. Night patrols evaporated, along with full-time court security.

In 2016, a devastating shooting in a small town courthouse two hours away spotlighted vulnerabilities in Branch County; Pollack's department could not respond without gutting his patrol staff. By the state constitution, he was required to provide security for the district courts, but a drastic pay reduction (from \$23/hour to \$16/hour) eroded the department's ability to recruit and retain deputies.

Road officers were doing jail transports, taking them away from patrol duties. One deputy served as bailiff, but he couldn't man the screening station at the courthouse entrance and also respond to disruptions in court. Pollack called up reserves and off-duty deputies to plug holes in coverage and called in favors from nearby police departments. The reserves were a force multiplier but required supervision by a full-time, certified officer.

"The county administrative officer did an evaluation for court security, but didn't say how to pay for it," Pollack said. "I always put in for extra men in every budget, for one reason: so I can say 'Your Honor, you can see that I requested (this) every year, and was denied. I'm putting this responsibility back on you.' You can't be proactive when you're short. Probably 40%-50% of the time, the courthouse entry is unsecured, and the citizenry knows it's open. There have been threats, but no incidents so far."

"I stay up nights asking, 'What can I do better?'" Pollack said. "I have been in office for 10 years, and with this sheriff's office for 35 years. It's very difficult for

small departments to provide the kind of court security that's really needed. We operate on the fringes, hoping nothing happens, and that leaves a lot of angst for department heads."

DOES THIS PUZZLE HAVE A SOLUTION?

My last conversation was with Thompson, who conducted 50 court security surveys over 10 years at the request of National Sheriff's Association members. With a partner, he observed courthouse facilities a night before visiting and then attempted to evade security measures, reporting back with the results afterward. Often the reports were good. Other times, it was alarmingly simple to bypass even apparently tight security.

"Some courthouses had good resources, but no matter how tight, if we wanted to get in, we could get in," Thompson said. "Once we took a real gun through a screening station in the bottom of a potted plant. The pot was metal, and we told the screeners it was a gift for one of the judges. We just handed it to them, walked through the magnetometers, and they handed it to us on the other side. Another courthouse had two entrances. We went to the back entrance dressed as phone repairmen, and we were not confronted. That time, we made it into jury assembly rooms and even the judge's chambers. We left notes under chairs that said 'this could have been a bomb.'"

One courthouse had cameras in every hallway and Thompson was sure they would be caught, but they weren't. "There was one guy with 15 jobs to watch (the monitors), and he never had time to look," Thompson said.

Does that mean court security is a hopeless proposition? Absolutely not. Something is always better than nothing, and in today's litigious environment, a sincere (and well-documented) effort goes a long way to protect those with the responsibility to keep others safe. When you can't do everything, begin with what's easy and low-cost. Build up

from there.

When entrances are restricted, communicate the reasons for that clearly to staffers, along with expectations and potential consequences (like losing access to a card key). Thompson found smokers to be a consistent security risk: they tended to leave doors cracked open on smoke breaks and sometimes allowed others to follow them back inside.

When parking for judges can't be secured, at least don't advertise the vulnerability. Thompson found several courthouses with judges' names stenciled in their parking spots. "Use numbers!" he said. "They can still have their assigned parking space without telling everyone where to wait for them in the morning."

Where cameras go unmonitored, bring in help from other departments. In Adams County, it's not sheriff's personnel but an IT tech who helps to monitor security cameras during the day and checks overnight footage for movement. Any eyeballs are better than none.

Establish relationships with every agency that can provide mutual aid, before it's needed. Asking other nearby police departments to join in with measures like perimeter walks costs nothing but goodwill. Cultivate contacts who can loan officers for extra security on high-profile or multi-defendant cases.

Communicating security concerns and provisions to the public, clearly, consistently, and respectfully, helps break down resistance over time. No one likes surprises or inconveniences.

Don't underestimate risks in civil cases. Emotions and tensions run high when the courts deal with money, family, homes, and businesses. In criminal cases, everyone already knows who the bad guy is; in civil cases, any player can reach a breaking point and become a threat.

Leverage the concerns of judges and court staff in the case for increased security, and ask them for help in seeking the resources that are needed. Judges

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have the option to speak openly to the press, and have even threatened to walk off the bench in unsafe conditions. That influence can be useful.

Finally, reach out to resources like the US Marshals Service, US Deputy

Sheriff's Association, National Sheriff's Association and SRLEEA. All have free or low-cost help with security audits, site evaluations, training and grants.

As Thompson told me, society is reactive; it's human nature. Some places will get

ahead of threats, and others inevitably will wait for a crisis. The best any sheriff can do is identify that crisis, sound the warning and get to work getting ahead of it, one step at a time.

Juvenile Justice Professional of the Year — Laura Reed

Laura graduated from Bloomsburg University with a bachelor's degree in Social Work. Laura has been working with the Bureau of Juvenile Justice Services for 10 years, the last year and a half of which she has held the position of Court Liaison. In addition to her work in the Juvenile Justice Field, Laura also spent 15 months as a Drug and Alcohol Treatment Specialist at SCI Camp Hill. Laura was able to use her experience and knowledge of the Juvenile Justice System/DOC to quickly learn and apply the essential job functions of a Court Liaison and excel in her current position. Some of her responsibilities include processing referrals made by juvenile probation officers and making recommendations to juvenile court as to which of the Bureau of Juvenile Justice facilities will best suit the needs of the youth.

Laura began her career with BJJS as a Drug and Alcohol Treatment Specialist. She then transitioned to the position of Social Worker for two years, before returning to the position of Drug and Alcohol Treatment Specialist. One of the many things that have highlighted her professional skills is that she has coordinated the referral and interview process statewide with our newest contracted facility in Texas. Her first and



foremost work-related goal is to make sure everything she does results in positive outcomes for the youth that are served by BJJS. Her positive outlook, willingness to help others and her overall work ethic are what makes her a pleasure to work with and deserving of this award.

Slow Cooker Barbecue Brisket Recipe

3 tablespoons of vegetable oil
2 large onions, halved and thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoons smoked paprika
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 bottle (12 ounces) of beer
1 ½ cups tomato-based
¾ cup packed light brown sugar
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon dried thyme
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 beef brisket (3 ½ to 4 pounds), trimmed of fat

Heat the oil in a large, nonreactive skillet over medium heat, add the onions, and cook for 10 minutes, or until soft. Add the garlic, paprika, and chili powder and cook for 30 seconds, stirring. Add the remaining ingredients, except for the brisket, and cook until heated through. Remove the skillet from the heat.

Pour half of the sauce into a large slow cooker. Add the brisket and cover with the remaining sauce. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours.

Transfer the brisket to a large casserole and ladle all of the remaining sauce over it. Cool to room temperature. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

Preheat oven to 350 Degrees Fahrenheit.

RECIPE



Transfer the meat to a cutting board. Cut the meat across the grain into 1/3 inch-thick-slices.

Pour the sauce into a large saucepan and bring to a simmer. Return the sauce to the casserole and add the sliced meat. Bake for 30 minutes, uncovered. Transfer the meat slices to a platter and spoon the sauce over the meat.

Should make 8 to 10 servings.

Adult Criminal Justice Professional of the Year — Linda Meyers

A bio of Linda was written by a former colleague: Linda is awesome! She is literally the best employee I've ever worked with in my 24 years in Corrections/Parole. She always has a great attitude and is easy to talk to and work with. Linda started her state career in 2/2005 when she became a Clerk Typist in the Scranton District Parole Office. In 2013 she was promoted to Institutional Parole Assistant at Waymart. After a well-deserved promotion in 2016, she became a Parole Agent and has been amazing at her work ever since. Some of the words that best describe Linda are dedicated, patient, hard-working, dependable, extremely knowledgeable, helpful and resilient. She takes great pride in her work and she is always ready to help when needed. She has been helping train our new Parole Agent, helping other SCI Parole Offices with their caseloads, and in my absence and subsequent transfer to another work site, she has successfully handled any issues that arose in the office. She always seems to have a positive and can-do attitude.

Linda spends her free time volunteering for multiple organizations and helps raise money for local charities and



non-profit organizations. Staff can sometimes find donation jugs in the institution for Socks for Veterans or Colon Cancer awareness and volunteer beside her at some of the 12 Months of Kindness events sponsored by SCI Waymart. Linda is truly a remarkable person and employee and I can't think of anyone who deserves an award more than her!

The rapid & unregulated growth of e-messaging in prisons

A technology that, until recently, was new in prisons and jails has exploded in popularity in recent years. Our review found that, despite its potential to keep incarcerated people and their families connected, e-messaging has quickly become just another way for companies to profit at their expense.

By Mike Wessler

Reprinted with Permission. Original Article was Published on March 2023

Over the last twenty years, advocates and regulators have successfully lowered the prices of prison and jail phone rates. While these victories garnered headlines and attention, the companies behind these services quietly regrouped and refocused their efforts. Seeking different ways to protect their profits, they entered less-regulated industries and offered new products to people behind bars. One new service in particular — text-based electronic messaging or “e-messaging” — has experienced explosive and unregulated growth. As a result, rather than living up to its potential as a way to maintain connections between people in prison and the outside world — something that benefits all of us — high costs and shoddy technology have made

e-messaging little more than the latest way these companies drain money from incarcerated people and their loved ones.

It's not email...it's worse in 7 critical ways

People often refer to this e-messaging technology as “email.” While both services involve sending text-based messages to others, that’s where the similarities end. We’ve identified seven common flaws in e-messaging that make it an inferior product:

1. Interoperability restrictions
2. Doesn't support most attachments
3. Text & form-based documents aren't supported

4. News stories & links can't be shared
5. Non-English characters aren't supported
6. Unnecessary character limits
7. Information ownership questions

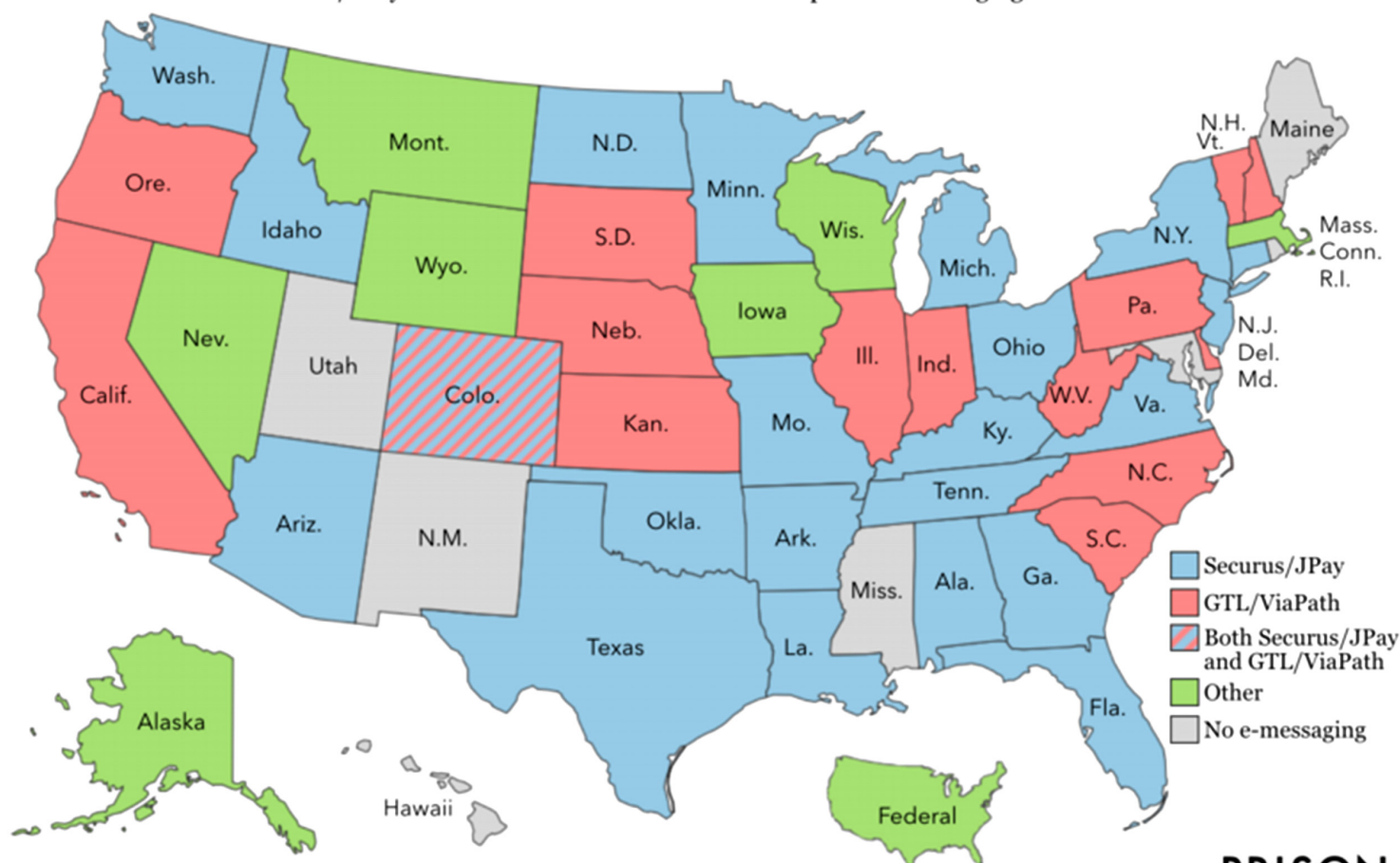
In 2016, we released a groundbreaking report that took a first look at e-messaging, sometimes — but incorrectly — called “email.” At that time, the technology was experimental, untested, and viewed skeptically by many correctional administrators. Since then, though, it has become common inside prison walls.

To better understand this explosive growth in e-messaging, we examined

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Two companies dominate the e-message market

Securus/JPay and GTL hold more than 80% of the prison e-messaging contracts



PRISON
POLICY INITIATIVE

all 50 state prison systems, as well as the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), to see how common this technology has become, how much it costs, and what, if anything, is being done to protect incarcerated people and their families from exploitation. We found an industry that is in flux, expanding quickly, and has yet to face the legislative and regulatory oversight it desperately needs.

The explosive growth of e-messaging in prisons

When we looked at e-messaging in 2016, the technology was relatively new, having breached the walls of only a handful of prisons and jails nationwide. Today, we've found that at least 43 state

prison systems and the BOP offer some electronic messaging option.

Like most prison communications services, e-messaging is dominated by just a few corporations. One company has established a particularly firm grasp on this market: Securus, under its "JPay" brand. The company serves half of the prison systems that offer e-messaging, holding contracts in 22 states. The other dominant company in the space, Global Tel*Link (GTL), which recently rebranded to ViaPath, provides e-messaging for fifteen prison systems. These two companies dominate more than 81% of the prison e-messaging market. The third most common e-messaging provider is CorrLinks, developed and owned by Advanced Technologies Group, LLC

(part of the private-equity-owned Keefe Group family of correctional vendors).

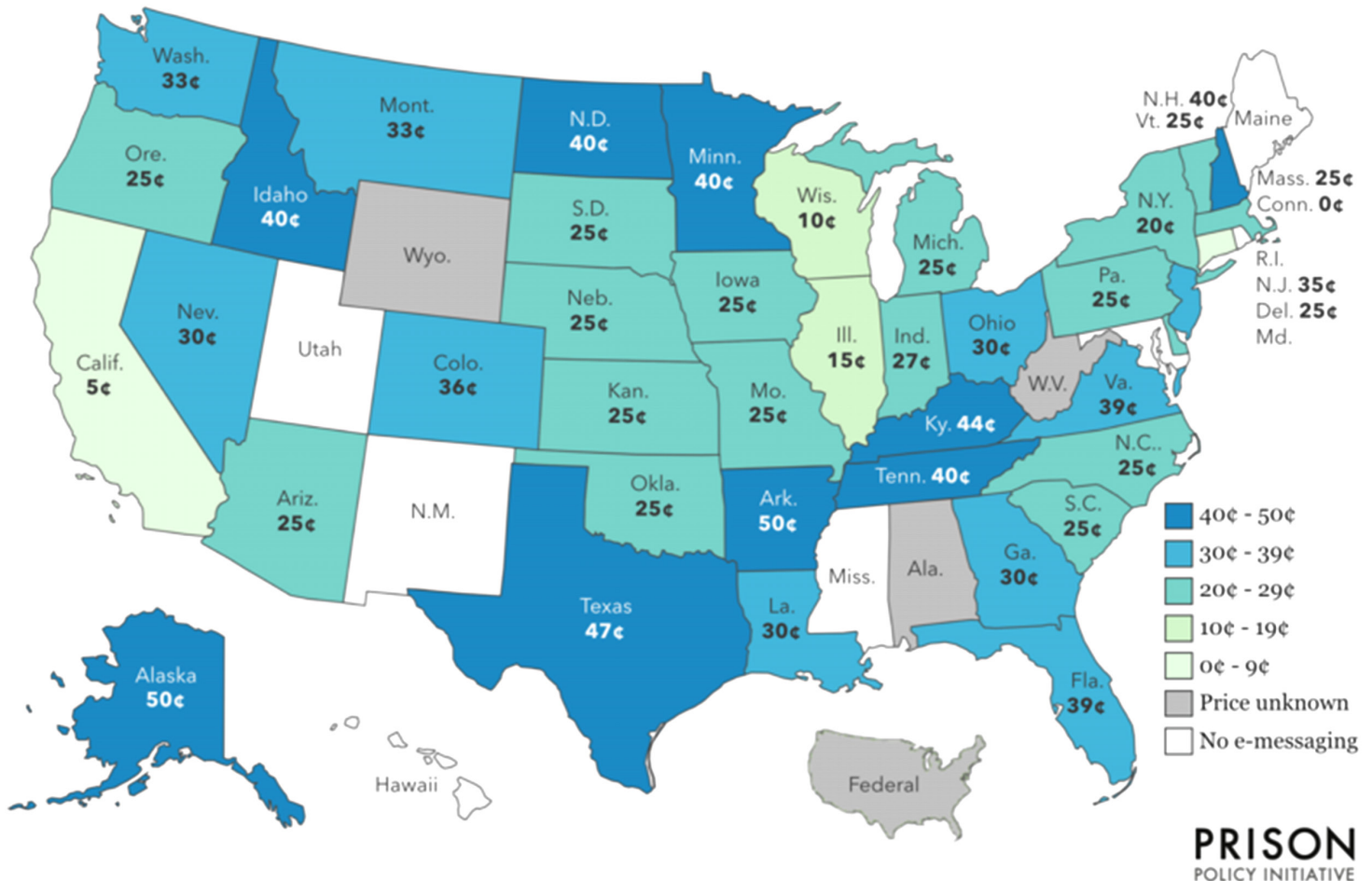
Tablets are the new "it thing"

In the early days of the technology, incarcerated users often had to wait in line to use a shared computer (or "kiosk") to read or send electronic messages. Now messaging is commonly part of a computer tablet package, where each incarcerated user is either assigned their own tablet or checks one out for a set period of time. In terms of usability, this is good news (no one should have to write a letter home with a line of impatient people waiting behind them). But serious questions about the economics of tablet

(continued on pg 15)

Prison electronic message prices are too high

The price to purchase a single e-message from each prison system.



programs remain. These tablets are often touted as “free” but, in reality, are rife with hidden costs. The Covid-19 pandemic has been an economic boon for the companies that operate these programs, yet as tablets become more common, the companies providing them continue their relentless push to monetize every aspect of incarcerated peoples’ communications, reading, listening to music, and formal education. There are also grave privacy concerns when one company controls all communications channels to which incarcerated people have access.

Prices are down...sort of

The per-message price of sending an electronic message appears to have inched down since 2016. Unfortunately, some companies have found new ways to maximize their profits while hiding the actual cost of the service.

In our 2016 survey, the typical cost of sending a message was roughly the cost of a first-class postage stamp (at the time, a stamp was 49¢). We’ve previously explained that the price of a stamp has nothing to do with the cost of providing electronic

messaging services, so there is little justification for tying the two products together. The costs to the company when an incarcerated person sends a message should be nearly nothing considering it requires no paper or staff labor, and the many other ways the companies already make up the cost of providing their so-called “free” tablets. Fortunately, linking the price of an e-message to the cost of a stamp has become less prevalent.

Today, our rate survey found the cost to send an e-message ranges from being free in Connecticut to a high of 50¢ in Alaska and Arkansas, with prices most often between 27¢ to 30¢. This wide range suggests that prices are not tied to the actual costs companies incur to transmit a message but rather set at the point that will maximize profits.

Bulk-pricing schemes are common, confusing, and harm the poorest people

A frequent tactic used by companies is “bulk-pricing.” About half of the states that offer electronic messaging include bulk-pricing schemes, where customers pay a higher cost

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unless they prepay for larger blocks of messages. This method has two primary problems: First, it often results in people buying large packages of messages they may never use, ultimately wasting their money. Second, it charges the poorest people in prison — people who can only afford a small number of messages at a given time — the most money.

For example, in Alaska, if someone has the money to purchase 40 messages at once, they'll pay \$14 or 35¢ per message. However, if they can only afford one message at a time, they'll pay 50¢ per message — a roughly 43% price increase. Bulk pricing structures like these are common outside of prison and often are an effective way for businesses to sell their products and for consumers to get discounts. But, inside the prison walls, where most people are already economically disadvantaged and have little means to earn money, bulk-pricing schemes are effectively a fee paid only by the poorest people.

These schemes invite the question: Why don't these companies charge the lowest price possible for every message?

The hidden costs of per-minute pricing

Per-messaging pricing only tells a part of the story, however. Some states use a more complex pricing structure that can dramatically increase the amount people pay, and companies earn from a single message. In these states, people sending a message to a loved one in prison are charged a simple per-message price. However, people in prisons are charged per minute to use the tablet computer to read and respond to messages. For example, in Delaware, GTL/ViaPath charges people on the outside 25¢ to send a message. However, it costs 5¢ center per minute for incarcerated people to read or respond to the message.

This pricing structure is troubling for many reasons. First, research has shown that people in prison often have lower literacy levels, meaning it likely takes them longer to send and read e-messages.

Per-minute pricing acts as a literacy tax, making it far more expensive for people who struggle to read and respond to messages. This pricing structure also makes it nearly impossible to assess what incarcerated people are charged for e-messaging and means companies are profiting twice off of the same message — once when someone sends a message to their loved one in prison and again when that loved one reads it. It is hard to determine how many prisons use this model, but it seems to be most frequently used in prisons that contract with GTL/ViaPath. This complex pricing structure is one of the many problems with "bundled contracts," which give one company control over multiple services in a prison, allowing them to evade oversight and develop new hidden ways to sap money from incarcerated people.

Waiving commissions, unsurprisingly, leads to lower prices

Through years of abusive practices by prison and jail phone companies, many correctional systems developed an unhealthy reliance on "site commissions," or kickbacks, to make money off incarcerated people and their families. These commissions have, unfortunately, spilled over into other services, like electronic messaging.

It may be distasteful, but it is not surprising that companies like Securus and GTL seek to profit off of incarcerated people and their families — like it or not, it is the type of behavior we've come to expect from corporations and why strong regulatory oversight is needed in this space. Our expectations of government are different, however. Governments should be in the business of serving people, not profiting off of their suffering. This is why these kickbacks are such a problem. They unnecessarily drain money from incarcerated people and their families without providing any added benefit.

Unsurprisingly, among states that charge incarcerated people to send e-messages,

prison systems that say they do not receive site-commission revenue have some of the lowest prices. For example, the Illinois Department of Corrections only charges 15¢ per message, and the New York Department of Corrections & Community Supervision charges 15¢-20¢, depending on volume.

As state and federal officials debate how much people in prisons and their loved ones are charged for sending e-messages, they should remember that any price that includes kickbacks for the government is higher than it needs to be.

Little is known about how companies use the data they collect

The quantity and sensitivity of information captured in e-messaging systems — from people on both sides of the prison walls — is staggering. They hold two main types of data, personal information — such as names, addresses, and payment card information — and the contents of the messages. However, the technology providers have done little to explain how users' data is stored, protected, and used. For example, JPay states in its privacy policy that users' data may be shared "with law enforcement personnel and/or correctional facilities and certain third parties for use in connection with and in support of law enforcement activities." This vague language gives wide latitude to the companies but few answers to users. By using the product, customers (whether they're the person in prison or the person on the outside) are handing over their data without knowing who can see it, how they can use it, or what protections are in place to ensure it isn't improperly accessed.

Other providers, though, are not simply vague about how they handle data. They make data harvesting part of their sales pitch. GTL/ViaPath, the second-largest provider of e-messaging services, advertises to correctional facilities by bragging about its "Data IQ" product, a data-mining technology

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that the company claims “was designed to handle large volumes of data coming from multiple, disparate sources” to “enable correctional facilities to easily review and analyze the networks, relationships, and connections associated with their inmate population.” The company makes clear it is pumping e-messaging data into its analytics system and using it as yet another surveillance tool that targets people based on nothing more than their contact with an incarcerated person.

While incarcerated people may not have the same privacy rights as those outside the prison walls, they — and the people they exchange messages with — still have a right to know how their data will be handled, and they are entitled to more robust privacy protections than they currently receive. There should be clear guidelines, procedures, disclosure requirements, and protections whenever e-messaging data is accessed by anyone other than an employee of the correctional facility that issued the governing contract.

Making electronic messaging work for incarcerated people, their families, and even prisons

E-messaging can help incarcerated people and their loved ones maintain stronger connections, despite long distances and metal bars. Thus far, though, companies have prioritized profits over functionality.

The service doesn’t have to be expensive, cumbersome, and lacking essential features. There are five things correctional administrators, legislators, and regulators can do to realize its full benefits:

Make the service free.

Electronic messaging has the potential to benefit correctional facilities, incarcerated people, and family members. But to be a win-win-win, the service must be free for end-users. And because correctional facilities stand to reap cost-savings from e-messaging, they should foot the bill.

Traditional physical mail should always remain an accessible option for people to send and receive messages, cards, and other correspondence to and from loved ones on the outside. Unfortunately, citing the costs associated with mail processing, some prisons have waged a virtual war on physical mail by scanning or photocopying incoming mail and distributing digital images or reprints to the recipient (while destroying the original handwritten card or letter). This eliminates the essential human connection of cards and letters and dramatically increases the time between when someone on the outside sends a letter and when their incarcerated loved one receives it. Predictably and for good reason, this has been met with fierce resistance from people on both sides of prison walls.

E-messaging offers a better path that protects physical mail, promotes communication between incarcerated people and the outside world, and addresses the concerns of prison officials about the challenges of processing mail without using harmful scanning technology. By making the service free, incarcerated people and their families will be more likely to use e-messaging for their daily written communications while preserving physical mail as an option. This will likely reduce the amount of mail a facility has to process and deliver considerable cost savings.

Provide better and more useful features

Traditional email is far from perfect, but it offers a model for what e-messaging can be. Prisons should demand that e-messaging providers add features that:

1. Allow users on the inside to send traditional emails to anyone with an email address.
2. Support documents, government forms, copies of news stories, and other attachments. Highly sensitive computer systems (like those run by courts and tax agencies) have figured out safe ways to do this. E-messaging companies should get on board and allow users to create, attach, send, and receive simple files like PDFs, website screenshots, and word-processing documents.
3. Eliminate character limits; they’re restrictive, arbitrary, and technologically unnecessary.
4. Give users clear ownership over the content of their messages and a simple and free way to export their data to another program, like Outlook.
5. Allow non-English characters.

Eliminate site commissions.

Even if a prison system doesn’t offer e-messaging for free, at the very least, it should eliminate site commissions on the service. This will lower the per-message cost to users and likely produce savings for the prison. Regardless of whether facilities receive commission revenue from other communications services, they should categorically forgo commissions on electronic messaging.

Allow competition.

Any correctional facility that deploys e-messaging on personal tablets has the technical capability to allow competing providers to add their apps to the tablet. If people have a choice between two or more providers, market forces are likely to drive prices down and improve functionality. The tablet vendor will undoubtedly complain, but facilities have the upper

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hand. Allowing other apps onto tablets should become a standard requirement of procurement requests.

Define users' privacy rights.

At a minimum, all correctional facilities should require that e-messaging providers' privacy policies tell users information is stored, how long it is stored, how it is protected, who has access to it, and what happens if that data is inappropriately breached.

Methodology

To gather information on messaging availability, service providers, rates, character limits, and features, we relied on five main sources of information about messaging availability, service providers, rates, character limits, and features:

1. State Department of Corrections

websites

2. Service provider websites
3. Documents in our Correctional Contracts Library
4. Creating our own accounts with e-messaging providers
5. News reports or other anecdotal reporting

These sources are listed in priority order. For example, if a DOC website listed pricing for messaging different from the service provider's website, we treated the DOC website as the accurate source. In conducting this analysis, we routinely came across data that was contradictory, confusing, or outdated. While it is tempting to assume that this was the result of sloppy website upkeep, history suggests differently. Early in the struggle to bring down phone rates in prisons and jails, we saw similar patterns in the

information that was publicly available, suggesting that it may be a deliberate strategy to evade accountability. Ultimately, this problem was resolved when the Federal Communications Commission and other state and federal regulatory bodies demanded more transparent information — including pricing details — from companies that provided these services. Our experience gathering this information indicates that similar interventions are necessary for this and other emerging technologies.

If we at the Prison Policy Initiative, as people who dedicate our professional lives to understanding and researching these issues, had such difficulty, what chance does a person interacting with the criminal legal system for the first time have at finding clear answers about how to maintain contact with their loved one behind bars and how much it will cost?



Save the Date

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Interview with Sharon Leon, Executive Director of the Union County Housing Authority

Sharon Leon is the Executive Director of the Union County Housing Authority and the Union County Redevelopment Authority. She has worked in the field of social services for 23 years, starting her career in adult and family literacy, and continuing work in the areas of workforce education

and housing, with a focus on affordable housing. Currently, she serves on the PAHRA (PA Housing & Redevelopment Association) Board, as well as various other boards, including the Union Snyder Area Agency on Aging, the Snyder County Coalition for Kids and the Criminal Justice Advisory Board.

1. Please describe the Justice Bridge Housing Program and the benefits that it provides to people.

The Justice Bridge Housing Program (JBHP) is an innovative tenant-based rental assistance model for housing non-violent inmates who are about to complete the minimum length of their jail sentence or otherwise are to be discharged from jail or prison, are at a high risk for recidivism, and lack a viable housing plan. JBHP provides short term rental assistance to enable individuals to “bridge” the period until they can transition to permanent housing.

Operated by the Union County Housing Authority (UCHA), the program demonstrates how public housing authorities across the nation can be a critical component of a justice-involved individual's reentry strategy. UCHA utilizes its expertise with the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, Section 8, as the core of JBHP. Non-HUD financial resources are used to provide rental assistance as a temporary bridge between discharge from incarceration and obtaining permanent housing, which in Union County is 6-8 months. At the end of this bridge period participants may transfer in place into the HCV program, or, if they become financially self-sufficient, they may transition, also in place, into an unsubsidized lease. Along with the provision of safe, affordable housing, JBHP includes an array of support services. While in JBHP, in addition to services provided through the criminal justice system (Probation and Parole, Drug Treatment Court), mental health treatment, substance use disorder recovery, and life skills including budgeting and

tenant responsibilities are routinely offered to participants.

In addition to the rental assistance, JBHP is supported by a cross-sector collaboration consisting of representatives from the county criminal justice and human service systems (including personnel from mental health and social services provider organizations) along with the UCHA executive director and JBHP Manager. This collaborative group, called the JBHP Coordination Panel, meets monthly and serves the following functions:

- selects participants
- monitors their progress.....
- provides parole, probation, and support services
- assists the program in on-going decision making
- Members of the JBHP Panel are also part of Union County's Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB).

The program is cost-effective, reducing County jail costs by substituting time spent incarcerated with the lower-cost alternative of housing in the community during parole. JBHP reduces future County criminal justice costs as well, since participants are much less likely to re-offend and return to jail. For the participants, the program helps create a living situation in which participants have the opportunity to connect to community, build positive relationships, and have access to employment and education.

2. What interests and experiences in your life led you to focus on helping people improve their living situation and find housing?

Working in the social services field for many years, a common thread seen throughout the administration of various programs, is the lack of safe, secure, affordable housing. Having the security of stable housing creates a living situation in which other needs can be met and there is an opportunity for positive social interactions and the sense of belonging to a community. Not having that security can be detrimental to an adult, but is especially harmful to their children, who tend to struggle in school and in social environments. That can, in the long-term, affect where they end up. JBHP participants often share their family history and a majority have grown up in an unstable housing environment. My hope is that programs like JBHP can

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provide a second chance to the participant and a better future for their children.

3. What demographic categories would you like the Justice Bridge Housing Program to reach?

The Justice Bridge Housing Program has been operating since 2012 in Union County. During that time, the average age of a JBHP participant referral was 35 years (youngest 22, oldest 63). 56% of the referrals were male and 44% were female and most referrals were unemployed (57%) and had a high school/GED equivalency (54%). The program is a tool for any individual with a criminal background to secure housing and gain employment, and complete education if so desired on a path to self-sufficiency and success.

4. How can more State and County governments create similar programs that are aimed at helping people gain housing and other essential necessities?

Creating a program like JBHP starts with state, county and local partners working in collaboration to provide opportunities to justice involved individuals. Initially, this should include housing authorities and other housing providers, county and state probation and local judicial representatives. By investing in a Justice Bridge Housing Program local government will see a significant savings in jail costs. In Union County, the average cost of housing an individual in jail is \$75/day, while JBHP has an average cost per day of \$15-20/day; most being covered by subsidized housing funds. The Union County Housing Authority has created a Justice Bridge Housing Program Replication Toolkit, that can assist in creating a successful program, and is available upon request to assist in the implementation.

5. How does your office market the program within the community so that people know it is available?

JBHP plays an active role in the Criminal Justice Advisory

Board, which consists of various community partners, social service providers, law enforcement, probation, commissioners, judges, and attorneys. Program updates, reports and data is shared often in efforts to reach individuals in need of housing. All referrals to the program must come from a probation officer, who will work collaboratively with JBHP for the benefit of the participant. Additionally, landlord engagement events are held 2-3 times a year to inform landlords of the program, the selection and screening process of all participants, requiring all individuals have ties to the county and are nonviolent, and the supervision component of the program in efforts to meet goals and assist participants in being good tenants.

6. Where would you like to see the Justice Bridge Housing Program grow in the next ten years?

The Justice Bridge Housing Program demonstrates how public housing authorities across the nation can be a critical component of a justice involved individual's reentry strategy, while being a large cost savings to the counties. Having a criminal record makes it much harder for an individual to access housing, especially safe, secure, affordable housing. JBHP provides opportunity to those individuals, and our hope is that similar programs will be created and funded to support justice involved individuals and prevent homelessness and recidivism. Union County has recently expanded their program to implement a Justice Bridge Housing Program in neighboring Snyder County, and within the two counties, are assisting 30-35 individuals each year. As we share data to show the impact JBHP makes in reducing recidivism, we would like to see additional counties offering JBHP and on the state level, more funding allocated to providing the gap funds needed in the interim of release from jail to an affordable housing unit. Financial support of this program could provide incentive for more counties to take steps to implement programming, and in turn, they benefit from the cost savings of incarceration. Most importantly, offering stable housing is a critical need for offenders at reentry and an urgent need for offenders returning to rural communities. Investing in programs like this is providing a foundation for life changes.



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