

ACLU Ohio

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/press-releases/ohio-prison-youth-facilities-now-providing-daily-updates-re-covid-19-following>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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COLUMBUS Amid public pressure for enhanced transparency, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) and the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS), complied with advocacy groups request for daily, public report-outs on the COVID-19 situation in Ohios prisons and youth facilities.

On Tuesday, March 24, the ACLU of Ohio and other advocacy groups sent a letter to Governor DeWine, ODRC Director Chambers-Smith, and DYS Director Gies with three sets of pointed questions, and the following day received comprehensive status updates about the number of people tested, the facilities in which people have been tested, and the number of people in isolation/quarantine. The ACLU of Ohio also launched a Twitter Storm during Governor DeWines Tuesday press conference to elevate the importance and urgency of these issues.

We thank Governor DeWine, Director Chambers-Smith, and Director Gies for their swift action to publicly release information about COVID-19s impact on Ohios incarcerated population. This effort should serve as a national model on how government transparency should function during a public health crisis, noted Gary Daniels, Chief Lobbyist for the ACLU of Ohio.

The ACLU of Ohio will continue to monitor intake via the hotline covid19@acluohio.org so that people with a loved one behind bars can report concerns about COVID-19 in prisons, jails and youth facilities. The organization will also monitor the daily reports from ODRC and DYS to examine trends and work to find solutions to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in these facilities.

The [ODRC report](#) and the [DYS report](#) are available.

Stay informed

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