

# Restore Justice Foundation

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

**<https://restorejustice.org/governor-pritzker-idoc-correct-to-continue-temporary-moratorium-of-transfers-between-jails-prisons/>**

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Corrections are correct to continue their freeze on transfers between county jails and Illinois prisons. As our state enters Phase 3 of the Restore Illinois plan, it is clear congregate settings continue to be at highest risk. We need fewer people in our prisons to prevent further unnecessary illness and loss of life, and we need to continue to limit movement between congregate care settings. Unfortunately, the Illinois Sheriffs Association has filed a lawsuit against the Governor to force a resumption of transfers.

COVID-19 is an unprecedented threat to those who are incarcerated, prison and jail staff, and the communities near prisons. Before the pandemic, a federal court established prisons in Illinois provide inadequate health care. Since the crisis began, prisons have been low on the states priority list for testing, which is a key aspect of the strategy to restore movement. If a prison experiences a virus outbreak, as happened at Stateville Correctional Center, those who are incarcerated will need to use community hospitals. Many of these hospitals have minimal ICU capacity.

Its essential to limit movement in and out of the facilities until we have adequate testing and/or a treatment for this virus. People at county jails throughout Illinois have tested positive for COVID-19. This is a time for creative solutions. County and state officials can and should work together to create alternatives to resuming transfers.

Prison staff go to work and then home to their families, neighbors, and stores. At work, they care for an aging population in what public health experts consider the highest of high-risk settings. Governor Pritzkers executive order protects prison staff, people who are incarcerated, and everyone living in prison communities.

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