



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of the Secretary

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June 11, 2018

Sonia Kumar, Staff Attorney
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
Foundation of Maryland
3600 Clipper Mill Rd
Suite 350
Baltimore, MD 21211
VIA EMAIL

RE: DPSCS Institutional Bulletin # 2018-02

Dear Ms. Kumar:

This letter is in response to your correspondence dated May 31, 2018 regarding Institutional Bulletin (IB) # 2018-02.

The safety and security of the thousands of dedicated men and women who serve as Correctional Officers – as well as the safety and security of our inmate population – is of paramount importance to the department.

The measures outlined by this memo were put in place not only to generally prevent the introduction of contraband, but also in relation to a specific ongoing investigation.

Unfortunately, books can contain much more than words in the correctional setting; they are also used as a vehicle for smuggling a drug that is nearly undetectable and extremely dangerous – SUBOXONE® film. What may appear to be a seemingly harmless novel could be concealing drugs and weapons used to fuel institutional violence and corruption.

Our investigators have found instances in which book vendors were corrupted and working with inmates to smuggle in contraband.

Since 2015, our records show 44 instances in which SUBOXONE® was found in books, amounting to 660 strips. This is an ongoing threat that we must not and cannot ignore. If abused, Suboxone can cause life-threatening respiratory illness, overdose and death.

After conducting a thorough review of the circumstances, this memo has been nullified. Therefore, effectively immediately, inmates will be allowed to receive

books from family and third parties in the mail. Additionally, there will not be a cap on the frequency by which inmates may order books from approved vendors.

Although thwarting corruption and preventing the introduction of contraband remain chief concerns, the Department recognizes the importance of enabling access to books. The Department strongly believes it can continue prioritizing the safety and security of its correctional facilities while fostering the rehabilitative component of corrections through literature.

The Department will make revisions to its policy to bolster the screening process for books received in the mail. Any attempts to smuggle contraband in books will not be tolerated and will be prosecuted to the furthest extent of the law.

It is important to note that the Administration has championed correctional reform that balances victim advocacy with the reformation of incarcerated offenders. Throughout its tenure, the Administration has dedicated over \$157,000 to books and instructional materials. Over 108,000 books in total are made available – free of charge – to the incarcerated population across the libraries housed within each correctional institution.

The Department will continue monitoring this issue closely and looks forward to continuing to work with the ACLU.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen T. Moyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a long horizontal stroke extending across the middle.

Stephen T. Moyer
Secretary

Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services