



ILLINOIS CORRECTIONS LODGE # 263  
**FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE**  
4341 ACER GROVE, # B SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, 62711

1/1/2024

As we begin 2024 with all of our **Hopes, Dreams, and Ambitions** in full gear, let us take a moment to take a glimpse at 2023. I have been very busy across the state meeting with and talking to Legislators, on both sides, as well as Nationally, building awareness and support of Corrections and the issues we are faced with. The numbers don't lie!!!

- \*Increased Staff Assaults
- \*Synthetic Drug Exposures/Narcan
- \*Mental Health Issues (including suicides)
- \*Lack of Offender Accountability (Reduction in Restrictive Housing)
- \*Staff Shortages
- \*Mandates and Forced Overtime
- \*RETIREE LE Carry

This is what I have heard or read from the members who have reached out to me through various forms of communication. I have taken these messages to our Lodge 263 Executive Board and the Statewide Corrections Committee, and we have been tasked with how we can best combat these issues.

This is a TEAM of people who truly care about ALL of Corrections. We, your Lodge E-Board decided to attack these issues head on.

Some of this requires and will continue to require: time, and resources, including financial resources (to support lobbying efforts). Others will involve YOU the MEMBER to take some ACTION!

So, let's get started with Assaults...

Some of these outcomes possibly could have been avoided with something as simple as speaking to someone properly from the beginning.

Others it wouldn't matter what you did, they had it set in their mind that someone that day was going to get assaulted.

As we all know your facility I/A Department should be forwarding this up to your local States Attorney (not placing the blame on the I/A office, as they take direction). If this is not happening now, then with your help in doing it yourself we know it will be done and more attention needs to be brought forward regarding this issue.

[ILFOP263.COM](http://ILFOP263.COM)

I encourage each member who may be that unlucky Officer, who is assaulted/battered by an offender to go follow up with IA and ensure your criminal case is being filed with the local States Attorney. If in fact it is then follow up with the States Attorney office to ensure they are doing their part, follow through and offer any assistance or any additional information/testimony that may be needed to charge and get a conviction of the offender. They may decline perusing your case criminally, this is why the civil remedy may be the best option to go.

Attached in this envelope you will find a sample format on how to take the steps to properly charge/sue an offender who has assaulted you the Officer. The purpose is to show members the proper forms and format to file charges/sue an offender through your local States Attorneys' Office.

It is suggested that you start making a log of the date it was filed, along with all the supportive documentation you have on the case. It is our hope that they will take the case. If not then reach out yourself to them and ask why, then send us all of the info you have on the case, and we will attempt with our resources as well.

The hope is that they try your case and you win and the offenders start receiving some added time, as well as any monetary damages you may receive. At minimum it is believed that it will have the States Attorneys across the State asking questions surrounding why we have so many assaults occurring inside the jail/prison system, or why they are hearing about them by these means. Hopefully those inquiries will go to the Governor's office, Legislatures, and your Department/Agency.

Eventually the noise will become too loud to ignore, forcing some agencies to look at the current situation.

The situation shows a serious lack of concern for the Officers, and no accountability to offenders through reduced Segregation time and/or the watered down DR504/ disciplinary forced onto us by our Department. Their needs to be a serious look at policy change in regards to accountability, and it is hoped that this will help fast track change.

Synthetic Drugs... there is an alarming number of synthetic drugs that have infiltrated our Correctional Facilities.

As your FOP Lodge 263 President I have reached out to IDOC and the Governors' Office urging them both in writing and news media interviews to come to the table and find a solution to this growing cancerous issue.

Instead of being willing to come to the table and address the issue or taking any of the suggestions offered the Governor's office spokesperson responded by calling us racist, and that our problem was there's a female of color in charge of the Department.

The interesting fact is that, this very diverse E Board didn't know asking for paper mail to be scanned outside of the facility and sent in electronically for offenders to see and read was a racist statement. We are merely offering solutions for the sake of employees (and offenders).

**So, we have decided to take a bill to legislation, making it mandatory for all Correctional agencies across the State to utilize a THZ 3D Scanning machine.** Capable of detecting all drugs, including synthetic, and also other chemicals. This would be utilized on any type/form of paper mail being sent inside a Correctional Facility. This will combat the growing issue and make our workplaces safer.

Our plan is to get as many cosponsors as we can to help us fight this ongoing battle, and avoid the use of Narcan.

As many of you know who follow us on Social Media (which I urge you to do). ILFOP has a **GREAT Wellness Team** that is Nationally Certified. That Team includes several Lodge 263 Members. Because we have seen the changes in so many around us, it's clear we needed to help combat this issue.

Lodge 263 has had numerous suicides in the last few years, and if we can step up and be useful to someone, that's what this Lodge and Organization is all about. If you or your facility is in need, of any information regarding Mental Health reach out to Asst. Secretary Jennifer Ward @ [jenniferwardilfop263@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferwardilfop263@gmail.com) she is the Co-Chair for the Illinois FOP State Lodge, she will be happy to assist your needs. We also have an outstanding chaplaincy services with our Lodge as well Lodge 263 Secretary Ginny Campbell also serves in a dual role as our Lodge 263 chaplain, so if you are in need of any chaplaincy services please reach out to Ginny at [campbellginny4@gmail.com](mailto:campbellginny4@gmail.com) she has experience in this area and the ability to make great impact with those who she has contact with in this area.

**Staff Shortages...** seem to be all to common tone in any and all professions, especially Corrections/Law Enforcement.

This Lodge is working collaboratively with **"One Voice United"** an ALL Corrections Organization aimed at getting multiple Labor and Fraternal Organizations together across the Country to discuss/find a path that makes sense for our collective correctional issues. **They obtain funding from many large corporations, and have established research projects, to name one, the correlation between the Corrections Profession and Cardiac Issues. The research and project studies they are doing can be utilized to support legislative efforts and changes nation-wide that will benefit us, the Correctional Officer.**

Myself and VP McCluster attended a leadership working group that OVU hosted in Gettysburg PA, and it was a GREAT learning experience for everyone.

We had the opportunity to work on a project called "Next Generation" I brought back to Illinois, the complex format and tools that were taught for implementation in the Northern, Central, and Southern District Facilities.

The target was Officers with 1-5 years in the profession of Corrections and in a creative, thought provoking way it dissected their thoughts. What the profession is, why/how they chose it, and what would make them stay or go.

