

Legal mail & multi-factor authentication.

1. *General.* Please provide an update on the Department's implementation timeline and plans for multi-factor authentication, and anything that has changed about the system between now and the beginning of 2026.

Since January, the Department has been continuing the implementation of the rule by meeting with mailroom staff, meeting with privileged mail senders such as PRB and rape crisis centers providing services to our facilities and working with DoIT on further builds within the system.

The Department will have the MFA system fully implemented by July 1, 2026; per the administrative rule. Additional processes have been built into the system, to allow for non-legal registration and the bulk-legal mail authentication. With these additions being completed, the Department is now scheduling additional training sessions with legal privileged mail senders and non-legal privileged mail senders. These training sessions will take place during the months of April and May, with additional ones being scheduled in June if needed.

2. *Engagement with stakeholders.* On January 9, 2026, DOC entered into a Further Agreement with JCAR requiring it to "ensure that no privileged mail sender or recipient faces an undue administrative burden due to the implementation of multi-factor authentication" and "continue to work with stakeholders to modify and improve its multi-factor authentication system". Please provide an overview of DOC's engagement with these stakeholders so far. What groups have been met with and how many times, what changes have been made to the MFA system, and do the relevant stakeholders believe that the MFA system is now workable?

The Department met with many advocacy groups during the first and second notice period of the rule making process. The key takeaway from those meetings was to provide a modified confirmation process for bulk-legal mail. During rule making many options were discussed and the Department was committed to exploring an option that met the needs of bulk-legal mail, while providing for the necessary security of the system.

Further, the Department has discussed the topic of non-privileged and privileged mail processing during regularly scheduled advisory board meetings. The Department hosted an advocate engagement meeting on 3/23/26, to discuss mail implementation.

The modified confirmation process for bulk-legal mail build was just recently completed, and additional outreach is planned.

3. *Bulk mail.* 20 Ill. Adm. Code 525.145 requires that DOC provide a "modified confirmation of identity" for entities sending bulk legal mail so that bulk mailings may be completed "without producing an individual authorization for each recipient." How will the modified confirmation of identity work and under what circumstances will a sender be eligible to use it?

The Department has partnered with DoIT to create a modified confirmation of identity process, that will provide a single authorization number for a bulk piece of legal mail. This process is available to assist the legal entities who are seeking to send a single piece of legal privileged mail to a large number of individuals in custody, such as notice related to a class action.

4. *Batching.* DOC has frequently stated that it is working on expanding the batching system so that larger and more varied batches may be produced. How does the batching system currently work?

A MFA system user is able to request up to 10 authorization numbers at a time, for a single individual in custody.

5. *Improper scanning of privileged mail.* Two advocacy groups have independently represented to JCAR staff that their clients have had privileged mail improperly scanned and uploaded to their tablet. How many times has this happened?

In CY26 there have been six grievances filed, related to privileged mail being scanned. That does not mean privileged mail was indeed scanned each of those times. While conducting follow-up, it was found on multiple occurrences non-legal privileged mail were not labeled correctly, which resulted in it being scanned.

6. *Registration and implementation.* What is DOC's current plan to roll out MFA to privileged mail senders? What trainings does DOC plan to offer, and to whom? When and how does DOC plan to open MFA registration to privileged mail senders that do not hold an ARDC number, such as the John Howard Association or State legislators?

The MFA system currently allows non-legal privileged mail senders to enroll. The Department intends to hold a series of training events, targeted to different types of users (legal, legislative, and "other"). The training invites will be sent to the contact listings we have filed for identified MFA users and information will also be posted on our website. In an attempt to be exhaustive, the Department will provide general training sessions where those intending to send privileged mail can register to attend.

Mail scanning.

1. *General.* Is implementation of mail scanning generally successful so far? Are there delays or backlogs in the system, or is it running smoothly? We would also like an update regarding the third-party vendor that DOC stated it would outsource scanning to.

The Department mailroom staff have adjusted extremely well to the new process. Delays are minimal at vast majority of our facilities. A few facilities are reporting delays; however, these are partly due to the mail being delivered to the facilities. The Department is working closely with all facilities to proactively monitor their mail processing.

2. *Turnaround time.* Please be prepared to provide data regarding the typical turnaround time for a piece of mail between when it arrives at the facility and when it is digitally available on a tablet. We would be happy with a random sample from a variety of facilities or some similar method if DOC does not track this information in the aggregate.

In aggregate, mail is processed and provided to the tablets within 48 hours of receipt. There have been reported issues with pieces of mail; however, they are resolved quickly. Our facilities are in rural areas and many post offices do not deliver mail daily (often times once/week). This results in some delays from the time the family/friend may have sent the mail. We work with post offices to deliver more frequently and even send department staff to pick up mail if necessary.

Mail printing.

1. *General.* Is mail printing generally successful so far? Are there delays and backlogs in processing and fulfilling print requests?

Yes overall, the print request processing is successful. While there were some early delays, all facilities now have a dedicated Xerox scanner/printer, that allows for colored prints. The print quality is high and has resulted in the IGA with DHS to be infrequently used. Being able to process requests onsite results in majority of requests to be completed the same day or very close to the request date.

2. *Turnaround time.* Please be prepared to provide data regarding how long it takes for a typical print request to be fulfilled. We would be satisfied with a random sample of fulfilled print requests that show the date they were received and the date they were closed, or something similar.

Reviewing the facility print requests, it was found majority of facilities print the request on the same day it is requested. The delivery of that printed piece of mail is then completed within one day. For individuals that do not have access to a tablet, the mail is printed and delivered immediately. Some facilities receive higher numbers of requests, and those facilities are reporting a one (1) week turnaround time for processing and delivery of requests.

3. *Restrictive housing.* An advocacy group has represented to JCAR staff that some individuals in restrictive housing at Menard have been unable to access their mail at all. Please explain the situation.

The mailroom staff at Menard receive a daily list of individuals in custody that do not have tablets. These individuals have their mail printed and delivered, rather than electronically delivered. The Department is currently unaware of any individual not receiving their mail at all.

Miscellaneous.

1. *Litigation.* Is DOC involved in any litigation regarding the contents of this rule?

The Department is not currently subject to any litigation related to the rule.

2. *Efficacy.* Please be prepared to provide data comparing rates of drug exposure or detection incidents during the months prior to mail scan implementation to the months after mail scan implementation.

Reviewing data collected six months prior to mail scanning and approximately six months since implementation, there has been a reduction in total alleged drug exposures and the utilization of Narcan across the Department.

Key Takeaways from data collected before (i.e., April 1, 2025, through September 30, 2025, six months before mail scanning) and after (i.e., October 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026, six months after mail scanning).

- **Incidents**

- *Individual in Custody Incidents*
 - *Before – 133; Narcan used – 107*
 - *After – 128; Narcan used – 93*

- **Discoveries**

- *Total Incidents*
 - *Before – 392*
 - *After – 414*
- *In Cell*
 - *Before – 207*
 - *After – 246*
- *On Person*
 - *Before – 91*
 - *After – 93*
- *Other (common areas)*
 - *Before – 22*
 - *After – 12*
- *ALL MAIL*
 - *Before – 72*
 - *After – 63*
 - *Regular Mail*
 - *Before – 59*
 - *After – 28*
 - *Privilege Mail*
 - *Before – 0*

- *After – 2*
- *Legal Mail*
 - *Before – 12*
 - *After – 33*

3. *Administrative Directives.* What administrative directives have been updated as a result of this rule? Please provide a copy of the updated AD 05.02.152.

In accordance with the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act, [1 Ill. Adm. Code 100], 20 Ill. Adm. Code 525, Rights and Privileges was amended at 50 Illinois Register 1047, made effective on January 9, 2026, and published on January 23, 2026. The related Department Rule (20-525) was revised to align with the newly adopted IAC. On January 26, 2026, notification was sent to all staff along with links for the Department Rule and the Illinois Register, and a copy of the Notice of Adopted Amendment with specific revisions.

04.01.108, Publication Review – Extension revision was made throughout to comply with and reflect procedural guidelines highlighted in the newly adopted 20 Ill. Adm. Code 525. The Administrative Directive was updated and made effective on April 1, 2026. The DOC 0212, Publication Review Determination and Course of Action, form was also revised updated to align with guidelines established in the newly adopted IAC. The DOC 0212 was made effective on April 1, 2026.

05.02.152, Suspicious Package/Substance Emergency Procedures – was updated to align with procedural guidelines highlighted in the newly adopted 20 Ill. Adm. Code 525 and agreements made during rulemaking between the IDOC and JCAR. The Administrative Directive was made effective on April 1, 2026. Revisions included updates to definitions (Incoming Privileged Mail, Outgoing Privileged Mail, Legal Mail) and agreed upon changes to reflect that a physical indicator of suspicious mail shall be mail “Excessively” marked Personal or Confidential.

05.02.151, Mail Procedures for Individuals in Custody – revision of the Administrative Directive is currently in progress however, the agency has proactively implemented operational practices to comply with and reflect procedural guidelines highlighted in the newly adopted 20 Ill. Adm. Code 525. It is likely that the updated Administrative Directive will be made effective on May 1, 2026. The DOC 0790, Notification of Unauthorized Mail, form was revised to reflect guidelines in the newly adopted rule. The DOC 0790 was made effective on April 1, 2026.