



October 5, 2020

Dwayne Clark, Director Louisville Metro Department of Corrections
Steve Durham, Deputy Director, Metro Department of Corrections

Dear Director Clark and Deputy Director Durham,

Clear communications and public accountability from Louisville Metro Government concerning criminal justice must now become the standard of operations for our community.

In the spirit of transparency and accountability, Louisville Family Justice Advocates and community leaders in health, education and civil rights law call on Louisville Metro Department of Corrections to:

- 1) publish weekly reports on the number COVID-19 cases for people confined in the Main Jail Complex along with current summaries of protocols for treatment and prevention;
- 2) publish milestones and projected timeline for resuming video visiting, which has been suspended since March 13th;
- 3) provide every person confined in the Main Jail Complex with at least two free phone calls per week for access to families, loved ones, and service-providers as long as the visitors lobby is closed.

We request an email reply with your response to these calls to action by Tuesday, October 13th, which marks seven months since video visiting ceased.

These actions are necessary to affirm the humanity and address the safety and wellbeing of all people incarcerated in the Main Jail Complex and their families, friends, and connections. The actions are especially urgent now because systemic racism and economic injustices mean that incarceration and COVID-19 combine to inflict greater harm on Black, Brown and poor individuals and families in our community.

Free phone calls and resuming video visiting are crucial to maintaining social connections for incarcerated people and their families. Maintaining connections are

proven to increase successful re-entry after release. Maintaining connections are also important to the health of children with incarcerated parents and loved ones.

The Special Project, a core program of Louisville Family Justice Advocates, bears witness to the importance of these connections through weekly art activities in the Visitors Lobby for more than a decade. The project also worked with the Center for Health Equity to complete a health impact assessment of parental incarceration documenting how children's health is harmed and the disproportionate impacts on Black, Brown and poor children in Jefferson County.

We acknowledge the pain and distress now being felt throughout our community, including inside government institutions like LMDC. We sincerely believe that a timely and positive response from LMDC will help our community move forward to creating new solutions to the urgent health and safety concerns before us now.

Sincerely,

Judith Jennings, Ph.D.

Louisville Family Justice Advocates members, Anthony Newberry, Ph.D., Michelle Amos, M.A., Aaron Bentley, civil rights attorney, Annette Bridges, Ed.D, child care

Special Project Team: Mari Mujica, Shermeka Wallace, Aletia Robey

Community members: Brandy Kelly-Pryor, Ph.D, public health advocate, Leslie Clements, Louisville community member

Support letter also submitted by:

Julia Richerson, M.D.