

Amanda Masters, Executive Director
Julio Medina, Acting Chair
New York City Board of Correction
1 Centre St., Room 2213
New York, NY 1007
Sent via email

Re: DOC request for variances regarding mail and packages

Dear Ms. Masters, Acting Chair Medina, and members of the Board,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the variance request submitted by the Department of Correction regarding the Board Minimum Standards § 1-12(a) and § 1-11(e)(1)(i) regarding packages and mail. As a librarian, I recognize the importance of receiving mail from family, friends, and loved ones. This connection helps sustain someone while they are separated from loved ones and other community members. Any kind of communication is invaluable and aids in the person's journey while they are inside the correctional system. Maintaining connections to the outside world is essential to lower recidivism.

Removing physical mail and limiting packages to vendors will create more barriers to connection during incarceration. People inside do not even have reliable access to tablets on which to read their mail. Though it may seem ineffective and outdated, snail-mail is actually the more reliable form of communication. We must be considered with reliability and ease of communication.

I urge the Board to deny the Department's variance request.

Sincerely,
Rachel