

# **STATEVILLE & LOGAN CORRECTIONAL CENTERS**

**IDOC's Closure Plans:**

## **The Wrong Course for Illinois**

May 2024



# **IDOC's Closure Plans: The Wrong Course for Illinois**

## **Executive Summary**

**AFSCME Council 31 supports building a new women's correctional facility, but strongly opposes the relocation of Logan Correctional Center.**

Likewise, **AFSCME supports building a new facility at Stateville Correctional Center, but strongly opposes closing the current facility before the new one is built** and opened. (IDOC has implied the current facility could be closed as soon as September—a rushed timeline that should be slowed to ensure sound answers to the many questions raised here and elsewhere.)

**The current IDOC proposal would threaten layoffs with disparate harm to employees of color, worsen staffing shortages, cause upheaval in the lives of correctional employees and individuals in custody, disrupt correctional operations and destabilize other facilities.**

Specific to Stateville, although IDOC has cited its consultant CGL's report as the rationale for the closure and reconstruction proposal, department COGFA filings omit major parts of that report which contradict its plan.

## **THREAT OF LAYOFFS & DISPARATE IMPACT**

**IDOC does not identify a sufficient number of vacant positions at nearby facilities for the nearly 500 Stateville CC employees whose jobs are threatened**

**by closure.** There are just **44 vacancies at the Joliet Treatment Center** (10 miles away) and **24 vacancies at Sheridan CC** (30 miles). IDOC fails to disclose how many if any vacancies are available at the Northern Reception & Classification (NRC) center on Stateville's grounds.

**Closing Stateville would disproportionately harm Black, Latino, and women workers.** Region 1 where Stateville is located has:

- More employees of color than all other regions combined;
- 68 percent of the department's Black employees;
- Its largest proportion of women (41 percent); and
- Its largest Latino workforce (11 percent).

Similarly, **the two correctional facilities near Logan CC (Lincoln and Decatur CCs) have just 54 vacant positions between them.** The next two closest (Jacksonville and Taylorville CCs) are 60 miles away and have just 25 vacancies combined. In total that's **fewer than 80 jobs available in nearby IDOC facilities for Logan CC's 454 employees.**

The economic impact study submitted to COGFA by IDOC indicates that **closing and relocating Logan CC could result in the loss of \$68.5 million in economic activity** in local communities.

## **WORSEN STAFFING SHORTAGES**

Logan CC now has just 66 percent of its authorized headcount and 85 percent of its budgeted headcount.

Closing and moving Logan CC will, over the three-to-five-year anticipated timeline, **exacerbate this shortage as employees seek to transfer to other facilities or state agencies** in order to remain employed in the local area.

Because of the lack of viable alternatives for Stateville employees, closure **will likely result in the loss of experienced IDOC employees** who retire or resign rather than face significant travel or relocation.

## **UPHEAVAL FOR INDIVIDUALS IN CUSTODY**

Because **71% of Stateville CC's 435 individuals in custody are from the seven-county Cook-and-collars region**, relocation elsewhere in the state will **undoubtedly lengthen the time and distance their families and others must travel to visit.**

Meanwhile, **just 40% of the 1,039 women housed at Logan CC are from the Cook-and-collars region.** There is no evidence for IDOC's claim that relocating them to a new facility in Will County would improve access to families and social supports.

Because the only other facility for women—**Decatur CC—is a minimum-security facility inappropriate for Logan's population**, there would be no option for offenders from central and southern Illinois to remain near these supports.

Stateville CC operates a medical facility with an ER, triage center, dialysis, imaging, lab, in-patient and long-term beds, a dental clinic and specialists including mental health treatment, physical therapy, podiatry, optometry and more. Some **60 percent of the Stateville population is on "medical hold" and requires frequent care.** IDOC's filing to COGFA is silent on how the medical needs of individuals in custody will be met if Stateville is closed.

## **DISRUPT CORRECTIONAL OPERATIONS**

IDOC data already indicates a steady **rise in staff assaults** and incidents among individuals in custody, and in disciplinary transfers for dangerous or disruptive behavior—**especially at the maximum- and medium-security facilities likely to receive individuals from Stateville CC** if it is closed. Receiving facilities will be unable to ensure safety for their staff and current population.

Closing Stateville during reconstruction and relocating Logan CC to Will County will **increase the amount of time spent transporting individuals in custody to court writs.**

It will **end or require the rebuilding from scratch of Stateville's and Logan's robust academic, career & technical education, industries, volunteer services, and treatment programs.**

Closing Stateville for up to five years will **eliminate its ancillary services such as administrative and security operations, visitor facilities, mail processing, its law library for individuals in custody**, and other services that the NRC and the minimum-security unit on its grounds depend on (importantly, including the medical services described above).

## **OMISSIONS FROM IDOC FILINGS**

IDOC does not accurately reflect that its consultant CGL rated much of Stateville as functional, including Cell House B, the administrative building, law library/school, vocational school and dining complex.

Further, IDOC neglects to point out that CGL found that “**Stateville has significant space within its secure perimeter to accommodate new structures**” and “there are several vacated buildings within the perimeter that could be demolished to provide additional options.”

The **department does not mention that recent investments have addressed roofing repairs and other deferred maintenance projects recently completed or already underway**, including to the commissary roof, dining complex, main gate, gym, south sallyport, electrical work, asbestos remediation, an extensive project to replace water heaters and the installation of a new fire alarm system.

While IDOC’s COGFA filing does cite a report from another consultant, HTA, it omits that the HTA report concludes that all areas of immediate concern could be repaired for just \$12 million.

# **IDOC's Closure Plans: The Wrong Course for Illinois**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Illinois Department of Corrections' initiative to build a new multi-level men's correctional facility and a new women's maximum/medium security facility could--and should—represent important progress for a correctional system too long marked by deteriorating infrastructure.

Unfortunately, the path that the department has laid out to reach those goals is misguided in the extreme and is likely to have serious adverse consequences, including: jeopardizing the safety of IDOC employees and of incarcerated individuals; intensifying the system's already severe staffing shortages; undermining important rehabilitative programming; making family visits more difficult; and creating disruption at facilities throughout the system.

The IDOC recommendation to the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (COGFA) would close down Stateville Correctional Center within approximately 180 days—moving all of the incarcerated individuals to other facilities throughout the state and laying off hundreds of employees. The facility would remain closed for 3-5 years while a new facility is being built on the Stateville grounds. The Northern Reception and Reclassification Center (NRC) and the Minimum Security Unit (MSU) would remain open on the Stateville grounds.

In the case of Logan Correctional Center, the facility would remain open during the construction process (again 3-5 years), but the new facility would not be built on or near the Logan grounds, but rather on or near the Stateville grounds in northern Illinois.

AFSCME is strongly opposed to the facility closure plan presented by IDOC. While AFSCME supports rebuilding Stateville and supports building a new facility on or near Logan's current location, our union believes that the IDOC's proposed course of action would needlessly and drastically disrupt the lives of the department's employees, the lives of individuals who are currently incarcerated, their families, and the economic well-being of several communities. In fact, we believe that the harmful consequences of closing Stateville during construction, and replacing Logan with a facility in Northern Illinois, are far clearer than any argument in favor of the department's plan.

Moreover, the department's recommendations and related arguments lack substance or supporting evidence. Merely stating that a potentially harmful impact of the proposed closures will be addressed, as the recommendations frequently do, is not an acceptable substitute for actually providing answers as to how such impacts will be mitigated. Harm to employees, individuals in custody, and families is minimized in the department's submission to COGFA without explanation. Safety issues, as well as other negative impacts on the operations of the department, are barely acknowledged at all, and certainly not meaningfully addressed. This report will examine the very real costs of the IDOC proposal for each facility and argue that there is a better course.

## STATEVILLE CORRECTIONAL CENTER

**ARGUMENT: “AFSCME Council 31 supports building a new facility at Stateville Correctional Center, but strongly opposes closing the current facility before a new facility has been built. Closing now would cause extreme disruption in the lives of the individuals in custody and the correctional staff.”**

### **Rash Closure Discussions**

Not one document, report, or review of the facilities at Stateville Correctional Center included in the IDOC’s COGFA filings and recommendation for closure, called for the immediate closure of the facility or support that position. In fact, the CGL report, which is heavily cited and relied upon by the department in its recommendation, found that “Stateville has significant space within its secure perimeter to accommodate new structures. Additionally, there are several vacated buildings within the perimeter that could be demolished to provide additional options.” The CGL makes this claim not once, but twice: “Stateville has significant space within its perimeter, especially if vacant buildings are demolished. We suggest the [housing] unit be sited near program/vocational space. If the IDOC proceeds with CGL’s recommendation regarding redeveloping the vacant correctional industries space as a vocational village, then the new housing should be adjacent.”

Moreover, the recommendation filed by the department indicates its rebuilding strategy may focus on utilizing and developing state-owned land adjacent to Stateville. If the plan entails rebuilding outside the current location, then this raises even more questions as to why the department is seeking an expedited closure/demolition of the facility.

The only details presented about the IDOC’s plans for Stateville are as follows: (1) Stateville will be closed approximately 180 days from March 17, 2024; (2) it will take 3-5 years to re-build a new facility; and (3) the cost will be \$450 million. Of note, the CGL report indicates the cost to construct housing for 700 new beds at Stateville would be approximately \$72.4 million and the cost to build vocational and training spaces would be \$32.6 million. Outside of this cost estimate, there are no details on the number of beds being built, the timeline for construction, or the timeline for reopening. There are no guarantees when, where or even IF a new facility will be built. In other words, there is no solid basis for embarking now on a path that is very likely to cause harm to so many.

### **Impact of Closure on Stateville Security and Non-Security Staff**

#### ***Employee Dislocation/Job Loss***

In the IDOC’s filings with COGFA recommending the closure of Stateville, the department claims that “unless an employee voluntarily chooses to be placed in a layoff status, the department does not expect that any employee will lose state employment as a part of this process.”

However, there is no clear plan for alternative employment within DOC for the nearly 500 employees who work at Stateville CC. The IDOC’s COGFA filings claim that there are



approximately 1,000 available positions at the four correctional facilities (including the NRC) which are within 65 miles of Stateville, which would provide relocation options for impacted employees when Stateville is closed. There are several reasons to doubt the department's figures, however.

First, the lack of information about vacancies within the NRC is extremely problematic. The IDOC's failure to provide this basic information could be an indication that a closure would be more disruptive than the department is suggesting publicly. Or it could be a sign that the department doesn't have any viable job opportunities for employees outside of correctional officer titles e.g., administrative employees, educational staff, library employees.

Second, the IDOC's own staffing data contradicts the claim that there are 1,000 departmental vacancies within a 65-mile radius of Stateville. Below are the differentials between current headcount and budgeted positions for correctional facilities within the radius identified by the department:

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Security Vacancies</b>	<b>Non-Security Vacancies</b>
NRC	N/A	?	?
Joliet Treatment Center	10 miles	30	14
Pontiac Correctional Center	63 miles	114	85
Sheridan Correctional Center	30 miles	9	15
<b>Total</b>	-	153 + NRC(?)	114 + NRC(?)

It's important to note that Pontiac CC and Sheridan CC are not viable employment alternatives for many Stateville employees who live in the Chicago area and would have to commute as much as 1.5 hours each way every day.

In the department's COGFA recommendations it claims that, with a budgeted staffing level of over 12,000 employees statewide, there are more than sufficient opportunities for Stateville employees to find employment with the IDOC. However, it is plainly evident that most of those opportunities would require relocation, disrupting the lives of Stateville employees and their families – and potentially undermining the IDOC's own plan to reopen a new facility on the grounds of Stateville.

One argument that the department has made in defense of its recommendation to close Stateville and build a new facility on its grounds, is that demographic factors and proximity to Chicago, Cook County, and the collar counties will make it easier to meet the new facility's operational needs after construction. However, this closure and the extreme disruption it will cause will most likely result in the loss of experienced IDOC employees. Given the IDOC's persistent difficulty in hiring, we believe that this proposal sorely underestimates the negative, long-term staffing ramifications if current Stateville workers retire, resign, or relocate due to the closure.

## ***Demographics***

Stateville Correctional Center and its nearby satellite facilities – the NRC and the MSU – employ “a total of 939 staff, categorized as 676 security personnel and 263 non-security employees.”

According to the IDOC’s “Fiscal Year 2024 Affirmative Action Report,” Stateville is located in Region 1 of the Illinois Department of Human Rights’ (DHR) geographical regions. According to the IDOC’s workforce analysis, Region 1:

- Has more employees of color than all other regions combined (i.e., 1,145 employees in Region 1 vs. 1,953 departmentwide),
- Is where approximately 68% of the IDOC’s Black employees work,
- Is the only region where the majority of employees (53.68%) are Black and where most of the workers (52.64%) in protective service titles are Black,
- Is the region with the largest Latino workforce overall (11.14%) and in protective service positions (13.34%), and
- Has the largest percentage of female employees (41.13%), including women in protective service titles (28.85%).

In other words, closing Stateville would disproportionately impact the IDOC’s employees of color broadly, and would harm Black, Latino, and female workers in particular.

## **Impact on Stateville’s Incarcerated Population**

### ***Location***

There are approximately 435 incarcerated individuals currently housed at Stateville Correctional Center. (This does not include the individuals in the MSU or the NRC). According to the most recent Prisoner Population Data Set, which is available on the IDOC’s website, 71% of the individuals whose “Parent Institution” is identified as Stateville Correctional Center were sentenced from the following counties: Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will. Given the proximity of Stateville to the sentencing counties of its population, relocation to facilities elsewhere in the state will undoubtedly lengthen the distance and travel time for writs and visitors.

DOC’s filings imply that immediate closure is needed because Stateville’s housing units have small cells, lack dayroom and programming space within the housing unit, and require maintenance. The department has, however, provided no guarantee that individuals won’t be worse off in terms of facilities and programming, before even considering distance created by the relocation, in its plan to transfer out Stateville’s population. Given that, it’s doubly difficult to understand the department’s push to shutter buildings, disrupt lives, and move individuals in custody to locations far from their families.

### ***Medical Treatment***

According to medical center staff, of the current Stateville population of 435, approximately 60 percent are on a medical hold and routinely receive care at the medical center and at one of the nearby hospitals in Chicago. All individuals returning from any medical writ must be seen by the medical provider within 5 days, making the Stateville medical center an integral component of the department's overall care of the incarcerated population at Stateville.

Stateville's medical center includes an emergency room and triage center, dialysis chairs, imaging facilities, a physical therapy center, a multi-chair dentist's office, an eye doctor, a laboratory, a podiatrist and other specialists, 32 in-patient/long term beds, and a number of watch/observation beds. Fourteen individuals at Stateville are on dialysis and receive all treatment within the facility by a medical provider, and the long term beds available at Stateville are crucial to providing secure, 24-hour medical assistance for geriatric and hospice care, as well as care for individuals that have schizophrenia, require assistance with chemotherapy, or have other chronic health conditions.

With its current population, a high volume of medical care occurs within Stateville because of the medical facilities available. In the month of April, there were: 3700 prescriptions filled, 340 physical therapy sessions conducted, 715 lab and imaging tests performed, 964 nurse sick call visits with 392 referrals issued to be seen by an in-house provider, 261 onsite doctor consults, 140 dental appointments, and hundreds more appointments at the various clinics available that target TB, diabetes, asthma, and hypertension. In addition, mental health providers saw 252 individuals and behavioral health providers saw 50 individuals.

Other IDOC facilities lack the capacity and some of the specialized medical services that Stateville has. The IDOC's COGFA filing does not address or discuss the medical needs of Stateville's current population, which are significant. If Stateville is closed and the individuals currently receiving care at the medical center – or in Chicago – are transferred to other locations, will they continue to have access to the same quality of care available at Stateville or Chicago's hospitals? Will individuals be able to withstand longer transport to see their physicians given their medical condition? If individuals are forced to switch doctors, how will the department ensure continuity of care? How will new medical writs impact the operations of receiving facilities?

This last question is of particular concern given the experience of the individuals from Stateville who were transferred to Sheridan Correctional Center in 2021. Given limited equipment and staffing, Sheridan is operationally able to conduct just four writs per day total. This means that if there are more than four medical and court writs combined on any day, medical appointments must be cancelled if alternative arrangements cannot be made with the court, such as zoom hearings. As such, staff at Sheridan attest to hundreds of medical appointments cancelled and care delayed because writs to Chicago area providers were not operationally possible.

Moreover, nowhere does the IDOC address how the department will ensure continuity and access to care for the individuals at the MSU and NRC, who also rely on the medical center on Stateville's grounds.

## ***Educational/Programming***

As part of the department's effort to implement an incentive-based population management strategy in 2020, Stateville Correctional Center has been re-configured into a multi-level facility with a focus on re-entry. According to the department's website, Stateville has more classes and educational programming than any other correctional facility in Illinois. Programming for incarcerated individuals within the correctional center and MSU include:

1. Academic (Adult Basic Education, Advanced Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education)
2. Career and Technical Education (Barbering)
3. Industries (Soap, Recycling)
4. Volunteer Services (Creative Art, Choir, Religious Bible Studies)
5. Post Secondary Education (Northwestern University through collaboration with Oakton Community College, DePaul University, North Park Theological Seminary, PNAP – non-degree, Behavior Modification, College Think Tanks, Creative Writing, Houses of Healing, Further Learning, Communication Skills, Math Skills, Finance Skills, Grief Group, Twelve Step Program )
6. Other (Library, Life Skills, Anger Management, Substance Abuse, Lifestyle Redirection, Religious Programming, Veterans Group, Community Work Crews, Counseling)
7. Music Studio (donated by Common and built in 2021)

The programming and educational opportunities at Stateville are popular. As of April 2024, approximately 120 incarcerated individuals are participating in educational and vocational programming. Stateville's programs are also sought after by individuals throughout Illinois' prison system. Several Stateville employees affirmed the existence of a wait list of incarcerated individuals seeking transfers to Stateville specifically to access the facility's programs and educational opportunities.

Per department rules, an individual in educational programming that is transferred may take the next available spot when it becomes open at the new facility so long as it is a continuation of their current educational classes. If the institution to which the individual is transferred does not have that educational course or if the individual is not currently in an educational program, then they are not given any priority and are subject to the new facility's procedures.

Thus, any closure of Stateville will all too likely significantly disrupt the rehabilitative path that incarcerated individuals at the facility are currently on– and delay or even curtail their educational opportunities and avenues for self-improvement. Again, the experience of incarcerated individuals that were transferred from Stateville to Sheridan is illustrative of this point. Eligibility for Sheridan's educational programming requires the individual to be within 7-9 months of their MSR, leaving the large majority of the 400 individuals that were transferred in 2021 without educational programming to date because their time remaining excludes them from such programming at their new institution.

Moreover, closing Stateville will eliminate educational and vocational opportunities for individuals at the MSU, which is on the NRC's grounds. Lastly, closing Stateville disrupts the strategic plan implemented by the department to reduce recidivism through programming and family reunification by establishing a multi-level and re-entry facility in northern Illinois.

### **Impact on the Northern Reception and Classification Center and IDOC Operations**

Stateville Correctional Center supports a number of satellite facilities which are heavily reliant on it, particularly the NRC and the MSU. Those facilities depend on the correctional center for their administrative functioning and security operations. The department's recommendation to close Stateville CC pays insufficient attention to the way these facilities interact and support one another.

Visits to individuals housed at the NRC occur at the correctional center because the NRC does not have secure rooms within its building to accommodate visitations. All mail and packages addressed to the NRC and MSU are processed in the correctional center's administration building because of space and equipment limitations at the NRC. The NRC has a small medical clinic and relies on the correctional center's medical center for more significant medical needs, in addition to the medical center serving as the main pharmacy, physical therapy center, eye examination center and main dental unit for the NRC. Without access to the immediate medical care the correctional center's medical center provides, the reception and classification process will slow as medical appointments will need to be conducted with providers outside the facility. To respect and fulfill their constitutional rights, incarcerated individuals at the NRC and MSU are able to utilize Stateville's extensive law library, which is housed at the correctional center. While individuals at the NRC can get items from a commissary, most goods available at the NRC are warehoused and transferred from the correctional center's grounds.

The administrative functioning of the correctional center and the NRC are intertwined to such an extent that closing the correctional center's office buildings – and transferring or laying off the non-security personnel working in those offices – would incapacitate the functioning of the NRC. Given the services these same offices and employees provide for the department, disruptions would likely be substantial, not just in the region, but systemwide. Thus, it is of particular concern that the department's recommendation provides so little information on this aspect of a closure.

### **Impact on Staff and Incarcerated Individuals at other IDOC facilities**

IDOC data indicates a steady uptick in both staff assaults and altercations among individuals in custody. As such, IDOC employees have earnest concerns that closing Stateville will be disruptive statewide and exacerbate an already problematic situation within the department.

IDOC data shows that there has been a significant increase in the number of disciplinary transfers within the system. (A disciplinary transfer may occur when an incarcerated individual assaults staff, attempts escape, engages in conspiracy to cause disruption/harm, or similar types of behavior). This attests to a growing issue with disruptive and dangerous behavior within the incarcerated population. This uptick is particularly prevalent in medium-security facilities, which are likely to receive individuals from Stateville. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, and with a

higher incarcerated population, there were 725 disciplinary transfers amongst the medium-security facilities in FY'20. In FY'23 there were 935 disciplinary transfers, despite a smaller IDOC population. It seems likely that disciplinary transfers will exceed 1,000 by June 30 of this year, meaning that FY'24 is on track to exceed FY'23's already high numbers of disciplinary transfers.

This disruptive behavior's impact on safety and security in IDOC facilities is shown in other data available through the department. One key indicator is the steady rise in the number of staff injuries and assaults. Considering the IDOC's decreasing incarcerated population, the provable increase in assaults is even more striking. There has been over a 50% increase in the staff assault and injury rate within the past five years.

Breaking down the staff assault data by facility level, there has been a steep increase in staff assaults in both medium and maximum-security facilities compared to FY'22. Specifically, there has been a 51% increase in staff assaults in medium-security facilities and a 35% increase at maximum facilities. The first eight months of FY'24 indicate a continued and alarming increase in staff assaults in medium-security facilities, where staff assaults are projected to reach 550 by the end of June. By comparison, there were 415 staff assaults in medium-security facilities in FY'23, 275 staff assaults in FY'22 and 297 staff assaults in FY'21.

The number of assaults among the incarcerated population is also growing. In FY'22 there were 1,437 violent altercations involving offenders. In FY'23 there were 1,986 such altercations. In the current fiscal year, such incidents are tracking higher when compared to FY'23. As such, projected conflicts among the incarcerated population could reach over 2,300 by the end of June.

In 2021 when the department abruptly moved some 400 incarcerated individuals from Stateville Correctional Center to Sheridan Correctional Center, the health and safety of both staff and the incarcerated population at Sheridan were endangered. The lack of programming and work opportunities for the transferred population led to significant agitation amongst the transferred group and more hostile behaviors. The frequency at which contraband is discovered-- most commonly synthetic marijuana, fentanyl and heroin-- has exploded at Sheridan since the transfers, an alarming outcome given that Sheridan is a program facility with a highly regarded drug treatment program to facilitate community re-entry.

Short staffing is a related, but discrete concern for employees at receiving facilities. Absent significant staffing improvements, if the IDOC closes Stateville and transfers its current population to its other correctional centers, those receiving facilities will not be able to ensure safety for their staff or their current population.

### **No Justification for Closure**

The IDOC's COGFA filings, which make numerous references to the physical condition of the facility, largely depend on a number of outdated studies. In many cases, the publication dates of these studies overstate their newness.

The CGL study, which is the main exhibit supporting the department's filings, was issued in May 2023. However, the information used to write the report was based on site visits to the facility conducted in August 2022. The report's datedness is responsible for some, but not all, of the issues with its findings and the state's recommendations. For example, the CGL study

overestimates the amount of deferred maintenance required to maintain current operations at Stateville because it includes deferred maintenance costs for buildings which have been shuttered and are not in use at this time.

The CGL report also focuses much of its attention on conditions at the B Unit/Quarterhouse. However, Cell House B is given a BCI rating of 70 in the report, meaning it has moderate degradation requiring corrective repair. Many of the other buildings currently being used, including the Administrative Building, are also rated in the 60-70 range, indicating that they remain functional and could continue to be used reliably throughout the rebuilding process:

- The B Unit (Quarterhouse) is rated 70
- The Administrative Building is rated 78
- The Law Library/School is rated 70
- The Vocational School is rated 67
- The Dining Complex is rated 67

In addition to the CGL study, the IDOC's COGFA filings include an assessment of the Quarterhouse written by HTA based on a visit that occurred in November of 2021. The department uses this report to support its argument for closure during the rebuilding process. But, in point of fact, the HTA report concludes that all of the areas of immediate concern (e.g., showers, exterior masonry, window issues) could be repaired for approximately \$12 million.

The newest report included in the IDOC's COGFA filings is a cost estimate to update Stateville's kitchens. That report estimated it would cost \$15.4 million to completely renovate Stateville's kitchen facilities. However, such a total renovation is not necessary. At the time of writing, the NRC is preparing for an extensive kitchen renovation, which provides a model Stateville could replicate to avoid any kitchen-related issues during construction. Specifically, the NRC is planning to use on-campus trailers for meal preparation while the IDOC is constructing a new kitchen and dining facility in that complex.

The IDOC's position that it doesn't want to put any more money into Stateville to fix or maintain its buildings is not only short sighted, it is also the most extreme, disruptive, and wasteful position to take given the fact that most of the buildings used by staff and incarcerated individuals are completely functional. Further, it willfully ignores the significant recent investments made to address roofing and other deferred maintenance issues on the grounds, as well as other capital projects currently underway. For example, in Cell House B, all lential repairs were recently completed earlier this year, in addition to roof repairs that occurred in 2021 and 2022. Other examples of deferred maintenance projects that have been completed include roof repairs of the commissary, dining, main gate and gym as well as repair and replacement of the south sallyport gates, electrical work and asbestos remediation. An extensive project to replace water heaters occurred in 2021 and the installment of a new fire alarm system is currently under contract.

Given the fact that most Stateville buildings are currently usable, none of the IDOC's arguments in its COGFA recommendations justify closure throughout construction. They merely justify constructing a new facility.

### **Cost of Closure for FY2025**

In its recommendation for closure, IDOC anticipates that the costs to transition individuals from Stateville to other correctional centers will total around \$7 million. These transition costs include the relocation of individuals in custody (\$76,200), Staff Redeployment (\$603,800), legal costs (\$402,500), and Operational Adjustments at Receiving Facilities (\$5.75 million).

It is not clear how the department arrived at these figures, but they seem low and do not account for other potential costs, like medical costs, programming, or travel. Moreover, it seems likely that costs to receiving facilities would not be one-time costs but would continue for the duration of Stateville's closure and rebuild, which suggests that the total expenditures of this kind could well exceed \$30 million over a five-year period.

When compared to the deferred maintenance costs identified in the IDOC's COGFA filings (i.e., for the housing unit and the dietary), these costs are hard to justify. Particularly when one considers that some of the maintenance issues identified in the IDOC's filings have been addressed. Moreover, the CGL report indicates that the BCI scores for the housing units actually in use show that, although corrective repairs are or were needed, immediate replacement or closure is not necessary. In other words, the department's filings support continued use of these buildings during construction.

Comparing the cost of maintaining Stateville operations during the rebuild to the cost and disruption of closing Stateville, maintaining operation throughout the construction of a new facility is the most reasonable and rationale approach.

Moving forward with the lack of a viable plan as the department seeks to do is extremely problematic in a correctional system that shows signs of distress. Without having consulted with architects and design teams, and without even presenting limited details as to the scale and the scope of the project, it is reckless for the state to be pushing for a closure at this time. Instead, Stateville Correctional Center should remain open while IDOC takes the significant steps necessary to site, design and construct a new facility on or near its grounds.

### **LOGAN CORRECTIONAL CENTER**

**ARGUMENT: AFSCME Council 31 supports the building of a new women's correctional facility, but strongly opposes the relocation of Logan Correctional Center. Moving forward with a plan that does not involve building the new facility on or near its current location will cause extreme disruption in the lives of the individuals in custody and correctional staff, as well as jeopardizing the department's ability to hire essential staff during the construction period.**

### **Staffing Concerns**

The department's submission to COGFA strongly suggests that a new women's facility would be built on or near the grounds of Stateville Correctional Center, with certain facilities/programs (e.g. education) sharing buildings to be constructed. This plan would be extremely detrimental to the current Logan Correctional Center workforce.



The current headcount of IDOC employees working at Logan Correctional Center is 454 staff, categorized as 358 security personnel and 96 non-security personnel.

Logan Correctional Center is understaffed in its operations compared to both budgeted and authorized positions:

	Current Head Count	Budgeted Head Count	Authorized Head Count
Security Personnel	358	413	557
Non-Security Personnel	96	119	131
Total Logan Correctional Facility	454	532	688

Moving forward with a plan to close and move Logan will exacerbate current staffing shortages. If a decision to move Logan is made, one can easily imagine the disruptions in staffing that will occur as staff look to leave Logan for vacancies at other nearby IDOC facilities as opportunities arise -- or look to leave the department altogether once training and experience are gained. It will be extremely difficult to retain current staff and bring in new cadets and personnel with the threat of closure and layoffs looming in the next 5 years.

**Staff Impact**

Staffing data provided by the department indicates there exist very limited opportunities within reasonable proximity for Logan employees to find employment within the Department of Corrections if the facility is closed and moved.

The department identifies two correctional facilities within close proximity to Logan--Lincoln Correctional Center (next door) and Decatur Correctional Center-- that could serve as institutions to which current staff could reposition in the event of layoffs. The below differentials between current and budgeted headcount at these correctional facilities is a strong indication that there may be extremely limited vacancy opportunities for staff at these facilities:

	Distance	Security Vacancies	Non-Security Vacancies
Decatur Correctional Center	36 miles	13	11
Lincoln Correctional Center	N/A	15	15
Total		28	26

Taylorville and Jacksonville correctional centers are also identified by the department as being within a 60-mile radius of Logan. Like Decatur and Lincoln, the current headcount at these institutions is very near budgeted levels, again indicating there may be very limited positions to which the employees at Logan could move in relative proximity to their current work location in the event of a layoff, also understanding that a 60 mile commute one way is likely untenable for many staff given the stressful work performed.

	Distance	Security Vacancies	Non-Security Vacancies
Jacksonville Correctional Center	59 miles	0	8
Taylorville Correctional Center	57 miles	5	12
Total		5	20

If the facility is closed down and eventually moved to another area of the state, many staff at Logan will only have the option of taking positions that would force them to relocate, causing significant disruption to their lives and their families.

**Impact on Incarcerated Individuals at Logan**

The incarcerated population at Logan stands at 1,039 individuals. Logan houses over two-thirds of the female population in custody within the IDOC, which was 1,541 as of April 15.

The department claims that moving the women’s facility to Will County will establish a regionalized approach, which will enhance programs and improve incarcerated individuals’ access to their families and other social supports. Available data from the department does not support these claims.

***Regionalization***

In its COGFA filings, the IDOC argues that it is “focused on creating a regionalized approach for the women’s facilities to include the centrally located facility in Decatur and possibly a new Logan facility in Crest Hill.” According to the IDOC, this regionalized approach will allow all women in the IDOC’s custody access to “families, social supports, vocational opportunities, and community resources which helps to further ensure women’s success upon release, thus reducing recidivism.” There are a number of problems with the assumptions guiding this framework.

First, most of the individuals incarcerated at Logan are not from the northern region of the state. Only 40% of the people incarcerated at Logan have a sentencing county in the greater Chicagoland area or the counties of Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry or Will. From a logistical and demographic perspective, the department does not have a compelling argument to move the women’s facility to northern Illinois.

Second, if Logan is closed and another facility is not opened on or near the current Logan campus, there is no suitable location available to provide women from central or southern Illinois with access to “families, social supports, vocational opportunities, and community resources”.

Decatur Correctional Center – the only other correctional center for women in Illinois – is a minimum-security facility. Due to its minimum-security structural elements (i.e., dorm-style, one building), its nursery operations, and other conditions of importance to its current population and programming, Decatur could not house any significant number of the incarcerated population from Logan without grave safety and security concerns. In other words, Decatur is incapable of becoming a regional facility for women from central and southern Illinois, who are medium and maximum-security offenders, and the IDOC’s filings offer no details as to the extensive construction needed and associated cost for that facility to be made suitable for such a purpose.

### ***Access to Family***

According to the union’s calculation, if the women’s correctional institution is moved to Will County, there will be more incarcerated individuals whose families and court writs will have longer commute times compared to the number of individuals whose court writs and family commutes will be shortened.

Being the only facility in the state to house multi-level incarcerated women, the importance of the central location of Logan can be seen in how average statewide travel times are increased if the facility is moved to northern Illinois. If the correctional center were moved to Will County, families residing in 79 counties statewide would have an increased commute for visitations. The average travel time for family visitation and writs would increase significantly, from 2 hours and 8 minutes to 3 hours and 6 minutes. With a location in northern Illinois, travel from 28 counties would exceed 4 hours. Currently there are only two counties from which travel to Logan exceeds four hours. With an incarcerated population that is spread relatively evenly across the state, a central location means all individuals have similar distances for writs, and family commutes for visits are comparable.

### ***Access to Programs***

Logan currently has a robust offering of academic, career training, and other programming available, as identified on the department’s website.

- Academic: Adult Basic Education, Advanced Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, Lake Land College- Associates Degree in Liberal Arts, Cosmetology, North Park University: Masters in Arts in Christian Ministry and Restorative Arts, and Northwestern University: Bachelors of Arts in Social Science
- Career and Technical Education: Construction, Horticulture, Culinary Arts Program
- Industries: Recycle Shop, Helping Paws Program
- Volunteer Services: Religious Services, Women and Family Services
- Other: Westcare Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program, Westcare Dual Diagnosis, Substance Abuse Education Program, Women of Hope Unit, Anger Management, Sexual Assault/Abuse Group, Mental Health Services, Leisure Time

Services, Re-entry Summit, Seeking Safety, Money Smarts, Moving On, Start Now, Aim Higher

Moreover, some 800 women at Logan Correctional Center are diagnosed as seriously mentally ill (SMI). Logan has a well-developed infrastructure of mental health treatment programming with trained and experienced staff that have worked with this population for many years -- making this support system nearly impossible to replicate at a northern Illinois location.

The department forwards a flimsy argument that moving Logan is needed to expand educational programming for the incarcerated women. There are 14 higher education institutions within 90 miles of Logan Correctional Center, including 5 community colleges and 3 public universities. Ample opportunities for collaboration and expansion of programming at Logan using institutions in central Illinois exist if the department had the willingness to seek such partnerships.

### **Co-Correctional Campus**

The CGL report contained in the department's recommendation notes the problematic nature of establishing a co-correctional setting based on the department's prior experience trying to do so. The report notes: *During recent decades, attempts to accommodate the growing female population included adding housing females in coed settings at Dixon Correctional Center and Logan Correctional Center. These efforts were problematic. Managing a male and female prison population in one facility is extremely complex and creates supervision and separation issues. While staff may be responsible for interacting with both male and female population, the type of interaction, the type of programming and the treatment needs of incarcerated males and females is very different.*

When Illinois made the decision to no longer have co-correctional prisons back in 2000, the IDOC Director noted that managing men and women at the same prison "makes a difficult job even more difficult". <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2000/08/25/all-male-prison-changing-to-womens-facility/>

While the COGFA submission does not suggest that the male and female population would actually be in the same facility, there is clearly an intent to share certain facilities located on the same grounds. In line with the concerns raised by CGL, a review of literature on co-correctional facilities indicates a number of drawbacks including illicit offender relationships, supervisory and disciplinary problems, staff security coverage, development of "separate but equal" programming, and staff attitudes. Moreover, the limited research on co-correctional institutions is written with the focus on the impact on incarcerated males. There is very little research on the impact of co-correctional institutions on incarcerated women.

Lastly, co-correctional state prisons are rare. A survey of correctional institution across the county indicates there are only 17 co-correctional state prisons across the United States. The majority of correctional-type coed institutions tend to be medical/mental health treatment centers, federal prisons, private correctional facilities, jails, or labeled community-based facilities.

The limited research and past experience of Illinois strongly indicate that the department's proposed plan to move a women's facility to the Stateville campus would be very ill-advised.

## **Economic Impact**

Undoubtedly the local community will experience a significant economic impact if Logan Correctional Center is relocated out of the area. The department's recommendations minimally address the cost of eliminating 451 jobs from the community, and brush over the impact of removing these quality public sector positions from the local job market.

Of note, the IDOC's own economic impact study wraps up its assessment on the closure of Logan by stating that, "at this time, there is not enough information to be able to make a thorough assessment of the outcomes." Where the report speculates on best-case scenarios, however, those scenarios seem highly improbable. For example, the IDOC's economic impact study notes that the "the magnitude of the impact of the closure of Logan can be reduced if current employees are able to secure positions elsewhere within the system while retaining their existing residences. In this case, the disruption is likely to be short-term." Because the IDOC's own staffing data indicates that there are very limited opportunities within a reasonable proximity for Logan employees to find continued employment with the IDOC, it is highly unlikely that impacted employees will be able to "secure positions elsewhere within the system while retaining their existing residences."

Moreover, the economic impact study fails to mention the recent economic challenges that Logan County has experienced over the last several years, including the closure of Lincoln College and Lincoln Christian University. To move the women's correctional facility out of Logan County only intensifies local concern regarding the economic impact on the community.

## **Conclusion**

In sum, there is no sound basis for relocating the state's only medium/maximum correctional center for incarcerated women and considerable potential for harm. The current location offers the potential for a new facility that can maintain continuity of programming, mental health treatment, family connections, and experienced staff. That is the path for which the department should develop an actual plan that can be fully and effectively implemented.