



**SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS**

**CHAMBERS OF  
CHIEF JUSTICE ANNE M. BURKE**

**160 NORTH LASALLE STREET  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60601  
(312) 793-5470  
FAX: (312) 793-8224**

April 27, 2020

Elizabeth Clarke  
President  
Juvenile Justice Initiative  
518 Davis, #211  
Evanston, IL 60201

Dear Ms. Clarke:

On behalf of the Supreme Court of Illinois, I want to thank you for your April 15, 2020, letter on behalf of juvenile justice organizations and legislators. Your letter requests action from the Supreme Court to address safety concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic for juveniles involved in the Illinois justice system. The important issues raised in the letter have been given consideration, and I would like to take this opportunity to update you on how these matters are being addressed by court orders and local jurisdictions.

The Supreme Court's MR Order 30370 (filed March 17, 2020) sets forth the Court's directive to the local courts during the COVID-19 crisis. In response to that order, each local court has implemented modified operations, including many of the recommendations contained in your letter. The Administrative Office of the Illinois Court (AOIC) Probation Services Division has a copy of each modified local plan with respect to probation and detention. Further, AOIC staff continue to participate in twice weekly calls with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) and the detention superintendents to address COVID-19 related matters. Detention centers in Illinois have adopted the same practices as IDJJ (restricting outside visits to videoconference, increased cleaning and disinfecting, meeting with juveniles to educate them on COVID-19, increased used of personal protective equipment, quarantining juveniles with symptoms and restricting them from the general population until medically cleared, etc.).

One recommendation that detention centers are not able to adopt is to stop new admissions to detention facilities. IDJJ has stopped intakes but then directed local detention centers to keep those juveniles until IDJJ resumes intakes. As a result, local detention centers are holding juveniles they normally would not house as a result of IDJJ's suspended operations.

In short, probation departments and detention centers across the state have been very proactive in addressing many of the issues you raised. Probation departments are working hard to give all due consideration to the health and safety of juveniles involved in the justice system, as well as those working in detention centers and juvenile probation, while still addressing public safety concerns.

Please know the Court is fully committed to providing guidance to court personnel and the public, and to ensuring the safety of youth and families during this emergency. Thank you for keeping the Court apprised of these important matters as we navigate through these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anne M. Burke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anne M. Burke  
Chief Justice, Illinois Supreme Court