

Esteemed Colleagues of Cook County Jail,

Many of you are reading this while working multiple tiers alone, risking your life and safety, and questioning your decision to work as a correctional officer at Cook County Jail. Many of you are enduring multiple shifts against your will, mandated daily without regard for your mental or physical health by your brass or administration. I want to address you not just as a coworker, but as a fellow sentinel in our shared mission within these walls. My experiences since 2017 across Divisions 10, 9, RTU, 6, 5, and more have given me profound insight into our collective endurance and strength. We are more than mere officers – we are guardians of order, unrecognized protectors in a system often blind to our worth and humanity.

It is evident that this administration neither respects nor values us as individuals but they would have no choice but to respect us as a collective.

Our daily experiences, from disciplined roll call formations and managing multiple tiers without partners or backup to the relentless disrespect we encounter, are indicative of a larger problem – the erosion of our respect and autonomy. Teamsters 700, tasked with being our voice, seems to idly stand by, filled with excuses and lacking the will to fight. I am tired of hearing “There is nothing we can do” from a union whose primary claim to power is its history of fighting for workers' rights. Accepting a passive union is not an option for us.

Our critical role in maintaining the safety and security of Cook County Jail is undeniable. If Teamsters 700 fails to amplify our concerns, it is our duty to speak louder. Should we feel inadequately represented, we must reassess our union representation. Why continue funding an entity that fails to advocate for us?

The process to opt out of Teamsters Local 700 is straightforward. Visit this website <https://www.optouttoday.com/illinois/teamsters-local-700>, fill out the necessary form, and submit it.

This action is not merely about ceasing dues; it's a declaration that we demand effective representation. If Teamsters 700 has not effectively represented you and your interests, opting out is necessary.

If you are a probationary officer and Teamsters 700 has told you they cannot assist in employment and disciplinary matters, why pay them? How many of us have felt abandoned by our union's actions? How many of us feel disrespected by the administration and baffled by the contracts our union negotiated? How many of us question our union's fight against issues we've consistently raised about our treatment by the administration? How many of us are concerned about our pay, retirement, or how we will cope if injured on the job? How has our union allowed us to be violated in matters where we have been collectively dissatisfied for years,

while we pay them millions annually for protection and advocacy? How many officers feel that our union advocates more for the administration than they do for us? Should Teamsters continue to fall short in advocating for our cause, it is time we seek change with new union representation. United, we present a significant economic opportunity for any union. Our alliance with Teamsters is not a necessity; it is they who need us.

I call upon you to unite, not only in shared grievances, but in our collective pursuit of fair wages, a safe and respectful working environment, and significant influence in decisions impacting us.

We are the linchpins of this system, not mere cogs. Our role is irreplaceable, overshadowing directors, anyone in human resources, lieutenants, sergeants, and investigators. We are the heartbeat of this institution. We are the ones that are necessary. Our unity is our strength. It's time for Teamsters 700 to step up or step aside. Our collective dissatisfaction signals the need for a dramatic change in representation. We must establish a board or a team that prioritizes our collective interests and as a collective we must align with those decisions to create a better present and future.

We are the ones who uphold order and peace daily. Our work environment must reflect the respect and significance of our roles.

The dwindling officer numbers and the allure of alternative professions underscore the urgency for change. Cook County Jail must evolve into a bastion of pride and professional achievement.

Join me in this crusade for improved conditions, not just for our future, but for a dignified and respected present. Officers, let's unite as a formidable force, demanding the respect and outcomes we deserve.

We demand more than incremental improvements; we demand justice. The time for change is now.

Our demands are:

- 1. Increased Staffing: Enhancing safety and reducing our workload.**
- 2. Comprehensive Support: Counseling and mental health resources for our well-being.**
- 3. Reformed Discipline System: A system that empathizes with our challenges and supports us rather than penalizes us.**
- 4. Fair Pay for Extra Duties: Adequate compensation for our additional responsibilities. If you are to do two jobs, you are entitled to additional compensation.**
- 5. Regular Wage Reviews: Ensuring our pay reflects the demands of our job.**

- 6. Enhanced Safety Measures: Superior equipment and training for our safety.**
- 7. Respect in the Workplace: Cultivating a culture of respect for all staff at all levels.**
- 8. Active Participation in Contract Negotiations: Essential involvement in decisions impacting us, including better pay, retirement options, and protective measures.**
- Furthermore, we want individuals that we collectively select representing us in these negotiations.**
- 9. Open Communication Channels: A secure environment for honest communication without fear of retribution.**

We are the catalysts for this transformation. Together, let's reshape Cook County Jail into a beacon of justice, respect, and pride.

I am going to fight for us, ALL of us.

Talk about this message to everyone you know at work and if you're interested in joining me, you know how to reach me.

Don't be afraid,

Be brave.

In solidarity,

Officer Jabril Gushiniere

Sent to Kent Brouwer

Opting out of Teamsters Local 700 means you will no longer pay union dues, but the union will still represent you in workplace matters. The collective bargaining agreement and all its terms, including wages and benefits, will continue to apply to you. However, you will lose certain union membership privileges, such as attending union meetings, voting for union officers, and accessing "members only" benefits. Things that 99% of us are not doing anyway.

Sent to multiple people

Teamsters Local 700 has not lived up to its promise in addressing our unique needs as officers. It's time we consider forming our own group that truly understands and advocates for our specific concerns. You might believe that Teamsters has been effective, but this perspective may be clouded by incomplete information. To illustrate, let's compare our situation with officers in Kendall, Dupage, and Lake County, who earn significantly more.

I will include their salary information in this email for your reference. One must ask, why hasn't Teamsters secured similar contracts for us, especially considering our role in the nation's largest single-site jail and the high risks we encounter, including frequent assaults?

Many of our colleagues feel overlooked and undervalued, dealing with challenging situations like assaults in RTU without any back up, unfair disciplinary actions when people refuse to cross watch because they feel unsafe, and the pressure to return to work before fully recovering from IOD, all while trying to manage their entire lives on reduced earnings. This lack of respect has led to a profound dissatisfaction with their roles.

I assure you, these insights come from thorough research and a deep understanding of our situation.

Opting out of Teamsters Local 700 means you stop paying dues, yet they continue to represent you. Your salary and benefits remain the same, but you'll lose some union privileges like attending meetings or voting in union elections – activities that, in reality, many of us rarely participate in.

I have engaged in discussions with leaders of other unions, including those in law enforcement unions, who are eager to offer us the robust representation we seek.

Our demands are clear: better pay, improved retirement plans, stronger protection, greater respect, and a meaningful voice in matters affecting us.

It's time for us to unite and present our demands to Teamsters. If they fail to meet our needs, we should collectively opt out and seek a union that will truly advocate for us.

Considering the millions we contribute in union dues, finding a new, more committed union is not only possible but necessary. This is a call for change, rooted in a deep understanding of our worth and rights.

I concur wholeheartedly. This topic was also a point of considerable discussion in conversations with various law enforcement unions, who expressed profound surprise at the conditions to which we have acquiesced. The prevailing narrative propagated by the union, which suggests that our remuneration exceeds that of other correctional facilities, is, upon closer examination, rather misleading. Moreover, the assertion that the exodus from our ranks is attributable to the general state of national affairs does not hold up to scrutiny. The reality is that departures are primarily motivated by the pursuit of more attractive opportunities elsewhere – opportunities that offer superior compensation, more favorable retirement benefits, and a more conducive organizational culture.

Yvonne, I strongly suggest revisiting the link in my initial email about opting out of Teamsters. It contains comprehensive details answering your queries and corroborates what I've previously mentioned regarding representation post-opt-out. For those feeling marginalized and undervalued by Teamsters, opting out is a viable option. This also applies to PCOs who are informed of lacking representation. If you are content with your current situation, like reaching a base salary of 88k after 20 years, in contrast to Dupage COs who achieve this in 6 years, then perhaps this message isn't for you. However, the time will come when we'll need collective action to transition to a more effective union, and I've provided ample evidence to support this move. The information on pay rates, issues with cross watching, staff assaults, and retirement benefits are all there. Seeing the day-to-day realities at work should be enough to realize that our union isn't adequately representing our collective interests.

The strategy now is to unify and speak with one strong voice. By doing this, we can harness our collective strength to negotiate for what benefits us all: better pay, improved retirement, more favorable sick time policies, and greater respect in the workplace.

I have already been in discussions with a highly regarded union in the law enforcement sector, known for securing advantageous contracts. To reach this point of negotiation, we first need to align our voices and stand together, ensuring the best possible outcomes for everyone

To John Black

The core message of my email is to mobilize our officers and unite us with a common purpose. Once we gather a majority or a substantial group, we can use our numbers to put pressure on the union. We'll insist that they forward our demands to the administration. If they don't comply, we'll have the option of a mass opt-out. This would effectively end our association with Teamsters, allowing us to choose a new union, one that aligns with our goals and is ready to use our collective strength to our advantage.

A key part of our plan is to establish an officers-only board. Any union we work with will need to consult this board first before making any decisions about our welfare. So, to directly address your question, the quicker officers join this movement, the faster we can approach Teamsters and enact the changes we need, together.

To Colleen Mulcahy

The three counties are Dupage County, Lake County and Kendall County. I've had meetings with all of their unions and several other law enforcement unions. All are more than willing to represent us AND report to and work for a Officer formed board before making any decisions that directly effect officers. All we have to do is unite our voices. If we unite our

voices we can then go to teamsters and tell them our demands and if they don't acquiesce, we opt out. We can opt out and teamsters will be forced to renounce representing us or we can start a process of decertification by which we'd be not need 30% of us to petition for.

To Herman King

The Teamsters, alongside the administration, have long been tainted by corruption. The version of the Teamsters at the CCDOC seems to operate more for their benefit than for ours, leading to the evident disrespect and neglect towards officers. They've effectively neutralized any opposition from within. This is precisely why conventional methods will not suffice to dislodge them. Our path forward is unity and collective action - to withhold our financial support and compel them to step down. True change begins with our concerted effort.

If we can get a large portion of officers to opt out, we will have the means to decertify them. If you can, forward my email to Officer Evans in ex ops and have him contact me. We could use every single officer available and i'm more than willing to work with him towards a common goal.

To Multiple Officers

Officers,

For those who prefer not to receive these communications, it is advisable to simply disregard them. I intend to continue distributing this message across all divisions and shifts for as long as I am able to do so.

It is imperative to observe those among us who choose not to engage in our collective efforts. Their reluctance plays a significant role in the challenges we currently face. Collectively, we have permitted the administration to impose conditions requiring us to work extensive overtime—five times a week—to maintain a decent standard of living. We have acquiesced to policies that necessitate over 33 years of service for pension eligibility and have tolerated reductions in our compensation when injured in the line of duty, receiving less than our full wage. This status quo has been accepted not only from the administration but also from our union. It will persist until we assert our collective authority to initiate change.

I am perplexed as to why any officer would oppose initiatives aimed at benefiting us all. It is a question that, perhaps, we should all contemplate and address.

As previously communicated with unequivocal clarity, removal from these email distributions is not an option. These messages are directed to every officer across all divisions. My efforts to unify our voices into a collective, powerful entity will continue until there is a substantial increase in job satisfaction among officers and improved performance from our union.

For those uninterested in the empowerment of themselves and their colleagues, the choice to ignore these emails remains. It is a common practice to overlook numerous emails daily. It is noteworthy that the option to disregard emails, a routine exercise, has now become a point of contention for some.

I recognize that there are individuals among us who are content with their current employment conditions and the representation provided by our union. However, it is important to note that this sentiment is not universally shared. A significant portion of our colleagues express dissatisfaction, and it is on their behalf that I am speaking. If you find yourself indifferent or opposed to these discussions, I encourage you to exercise the option of disengaging and directing your attention elsewhere.

To LT Tegge

Lieutenant,

Apologies for the inadvertent inclusion of your email address in a recent correspondence intended solely for fellow officers. This was not an intentional act, as it appears that your contact details were inadvertently grouped with those of the officers. Therefore, I kindly request that you disregard the previous emails. Due to technical constraints, it is not feasible to retract emails from an established chain.

In alignment with the provisions of the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act, I am engaged in lawful communications with my peers to address matters of collective interest, such as workplace conditions and compensation. This Act affords me and my colleagues certain protections against adverse actions as a result of these activities. Your understanding and adherence to the principles of this Act in respect to non-interference with such protected activities are appreciated.

Respectfully.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES

FROM THE ILLINOIS LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

Case No. L-CA

The Illinois Labor Relations Board, Local Panel, has found that you have violated the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act and has notified you that the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act (Act) gives you the right:

- To engage in self-organization
- To form, join or assist unions
- To bargain collectively through a representative of your choice
- To act together with other employees to bargain collectively
- To refrain from these activities

Accordingly, we assure you that:

To Karen Gaudie specifically and multiple officers

It strikes me as profoundly intriguing, the way some of you officers seem to resist my endeavors, despite my singular focus on enhancing our working conditions. Is it not baffling that you are seemingly hardwired to oppose initiatives aimed at securing better compensation, superior retirement benefits, and enhanced resources for your own benefit?

If this isn't a glaring testament to the corruption that has infiltrated our ranks, particularly among those who have been part of these farcical negotiations since their inception, then I'm at a loss to understand what would qualify.

And yes, Karen, I am indeed stationed in the visitation unit. My assignment there is not a mark of idleness but a consequence of my active duty within the jail. I was injured in a 3-on-1 altercation in RTU, where I have spent the majority of my career. Instead of receiving empathy and solidarity in supporting a fallen officer – a concept utterly foreign to many of you – I find myself subjected to mockery and derogatory insinuations.

I assure you, none of you would desire to encounter me in a context that strays from professional boundaries.

Nevertheless, it is the likes of you Frank and you KAREN that I hold responsible for perpetuating this deplorable workplace culture. You have not only tolerated it but actively vilified and opposed those of us striving for reform.

You have all these questions for me, a person trying to help you and yet you have no questions for your administration and your union?

Your actions are reprehensible, marked by laziness, misinformation, and misery. Tragically, you lack the acumen to recognize when someone is championing your cause.

Hence, you would do well to heed my advice. Prior to my arrival, none of you possessed the courage to voice your discontent. It is I who have incited this newfound audacity in you. Now, it's time to advocate for all who are discontented, underpaid, and underrepresented.

And should anyone take issue with my stance, rest assured, I am not difficult to locate.

I have conveyed all the necessary information.

The responsibility to effect change now lies with the officers.

Those who are inclined to unite and forge a more formidable collective voice are welcome to contact me.

This email thread has fulfilled its intended purpose. Its continuation is primarily driven by those who express grievances about it.