



DOCCS Announces New Tablet Initiative

As DOCCS continues to leverage technology to make our prisons safer, it will also use technology to improve operations and interactions with family and friends by expanding services to our population. These new tools will improve connections with families and better prepare those individuals who will be reentering the community. The belief is the tablets will also reduce the number of hours of idle time of inmates thus making the facilities safer and less violent.

These tablets, which do not have internet capabilities, will be provided free of cost through a contract with the company JPay. The cost of the contract is \$0.

A dollar figure referenced on the website of the Office of the State Comptroller reflects the required estimate of the potential value of the contract's terms which, in this case, are based upon optional content and services that individuals will be able to purchase in addition to the content and services being provided free of charge.

The tablets, preloaded with educational material, will also make additional services for inmates available such as Prison Rape Elimination Act reporting, Grievance filing, and the potential for placing commissary orders. Additionally, inmates will have the option to purchase approved music, e-books, videos, and other media, as well as the use of a secure e-mail system to communicate with family and friends as approved by the Department.

In addition, there is a separate contract with the new vendor providing Inmate Phone Services that will allow the Department to transition a current tablet pilot program, which is operational at Special Housing Units (SHU) at three facilities under the historic SHU settlement agreement with the New York Civil Liberties Union, into a permanent program.

DOCCS only oversees New York State Prisons and parolees on Community Supervision and therefore cannot comment on secure initiatives for other state agencies or entities.

Facts about the program

- The tablets do not have internet capabilities and will not have WIFI access.
- There will not be hard wire network lines run to housing units, inmates will take the tablet to the kiosk to send emails for a fee.
- Emails will be sent via a secure connection network through a kiosk in each facility.
- JPay will pay for the installation of kiosks.

- The tablets are NOT made of glass and are shatterproof. Only one PILOT tablet has been damaged due to being wet.
- No state funds are used to secure the contract with JPay nor are state funds used to provide tablets.
- Neither the State of New York nor DOCCS will take a commission on any inmate purchases or phone calls.
- Tablets are already being used as a PILOT in three correctional facilities and have been well received by staff and inmates.
- The rates under the new phone contract will be lower dropping from .047 per minute to .043 per minute, saving inmate families an estimated \$1.25 million per year and keeping NYS' rates among the lowest in the country.
- An individual email will cost less than a stamp at \$.35, and will provide the ability to purchase bundles for additional discounts.