

ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. APRIL N.M. BASKIN
CHAIR OF THE LEGISLATURE
2ND DISTRICT LEGISLATOR



November 24, 2020

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Hon. Stefan I. Mychajliw
Erie County Comptroller
95 Franklin Street, 11th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

☐ *Legislative Assistant*
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Re: COVID-19 Outbreak in the Erie County Correctional Facility

Dear Comptroller Mychajliw:

I have learned that 27 prisoners in the Erie County Correctional Facility have tested positive for COVID-19, apparently infected by a single guard. I also understand that an additional 12 prisoners were deemed to be in close contact to the affected guard. This means that 39 out of 372 inmates at the Correctional Facility, or more than 10%, have Coronavirus.

Since the outbreak began, we have been assured that the Sheriff's Office maintains proper COVID protocols for protecting inmates and staff alike from exposure to the Coronavirus. Today's announcement raises questions and concerns about the protocols been utilized to protect the inhabitants of the Jail Management Division, as well as staff.

Since the COVID outbreak began, you have been vocal in sending communications and letters concerning Coronavirus protocols and alleged issues, and advocating on COVID matters involving County employees and the public.

I am requesting that your Division of Audit and Control commence an investigation into the situation in the Correctional Facility and the protocols and procedures employed by the Sheriff Office to help prevent and then address COVID-19 if an outbreak occurred. It is critical to gain an independent understanding and evaluation of the procedures used to protect persons who are restricted to a County jail and under the custody of the County.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

April N.M. Baskin, Chair
Erie County Legislature