



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Prisons

Office of the Director

Washington, DC 20534

April 10, 2020

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Unite States Senator
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

This is in response to your correspondence dated March 20, 2020, and April 6, 2020, in which you request we act expeditiously to make telephone use and video-visiting free for the inmate population during the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. You also urge a venue for confidential email communication for the inmates with their attorneys during the pandemic.

I hope some of your staff were able to call into the April 7, 2020, Senate Judiciary Committee staff briefing provided by my Deputy Director. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bureau has taken, and will continue to take, aggressive steps to protect the safety and security all staff and inmates, as well as visitors and members of the public.

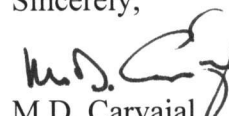
As part of our pandemic plan, on March 13, 2020, we instituted modified operations nationwide, which included suspended social visiting. We believe this is an important step to mitigate transmission of the virus into our prisons. We understand that visitation with family and friends is very important to the inmates and their loved ones, so we increased each inmate's monthly telephone time to 500 minutes per month to help compensate for the lack of visits on that same date. We also began to explore with our external telephone providers the potential for no cost telephone calls. Effective April 9, 2020, telephone calls were made free for the inmate population. Video-visiting, which is available to our female population, was also made free on that same date.

Also on March 13, 2020, as part of our modified operations to mitigate virus transmission, we suspended legal visits. Understanding that access to legal counsel is a paramount requirement, we allowed for confidential legal calls and for legal visits to be approved on a case-by-case basis. Our Trust Fund Limited Inmate Computer System (TRULINCS), which the inmates use to communicate via instant messaging, cannot be modified to create confidential communication, thus is not a viable option for inmates wishing to communicate confidentially with their attorneys. However, recognizing the need to protect the attorney-client privilege to the extent possible, a feature was added to the system to allow users to filter out specific messages when conducting a search of an inmate's message activity. The feature allows the BOP staff to filter out messages sent to and received from a specific contact. Therefore, it allows staff to

produce messages for law enforcement while specifically excluding specific message accounts belonging to attorneys from the requested search.

I trust this is responsive to your concerns. I am committed to the health and safety of the public, as well as my staff and the inmates at the Bureau's 122 prisons nationwide, and I appreciate your support during this challenging time.

Sincerely,


M.D. Carvajal
Director