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**Survey Report**



# 2022 Online Commissary Survey

June 2022

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# Executive Summary

*“This facility is experiencing increasing food items and basic essential hygiene products being unavailable to us through commissary rendering us incapable of sustaining a healthy and regular diet and proper practices conducive to good health.”*

– Pinckneyville, February 2022

*“The commissary no longer sells vitamin C or D which has been shown to increase immunity to COVID-19. There are also no longer any healthy choices at commissary, no sugar free candy, no nuts, no sensitive toothpaste, no bottled water or diet sodas, to name a few.”*

– Lawrence, February 2022

For the better part of a year, the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) has been experiencing a commissary disruption connected to contracting and procurement issues that began in 2021. One example: John Howard Association (JHA) monitoring visitors to Menard in September 2021 noted empty commissary shelves, detailed in the [2021 Menard Monitoring Report](#). Additionally, JHA has received many letters from incarcerated people at various prisons reporting that the frequency with which they were able to go to commissary and amount of merchandise that they were allowed to purchase per trip had been cut and that essential items were unavailable. We have also received contact from other individuals regarding these issues, including concerned loved ones and IDOC staff. Some excerpts from these communications in early 2022 are included in this report to provide more first-hand context to our online survey results. JHA has been tracking the situation and pushing for improvements, publishing updates in [December 2021](#) and [February 2022](#).

As JHA has previously noted in reports and statements, items obtained through commissary are not luxury items. Many items are necessities related to health and well-being, such as over the counter medication, hygiene items, and additional clothing or linens to accommodate varying seasons and weather changes. One survey respondent wrote regarding their commissary concerns at Menard, *“These are basic items for basic human needs - hygiene and warmth.”* People wrote regarding commissary hardship for people at Hill, *“Most often he is hungry and cold”* and *“He is unable to keep himself clean and he cannot communicate with his family.”* Another described the lack of commissary items being *“demoralizing and frustrating.”* Someone else summed up the hardship of the situation simply stating, *“No underwear!”* How people are

treated while they are incarcerated matters. People in prison deserve to be treated with basic human dignity. One survey respondent wrote, *“Not having food, or soap, or deodorant can really mess with a person's mental state. It's already horrible in prison, lowering morale and self-esteem is a great hardship.”* Conditions of incarceration also impact people's chances of success after release and have ripple effects in their home communities. As a survey respondent noted, the commissary hardship, *“does not allow individuals to maintain well-being while incarcerated, which directly impacts their well-being when released.”*

JHA remains concerned about the availability of commissary items for people in IDOC, as well as whether the State is providing all that it must and should to people in its custody. People being unable to purchase items through commissary has exacerbated lack of state-issued items. This raises issues of respect for human and constitutional rights, as well concerns around the financial hardship for people in custody whose earnings are meager and the hardship it places on people who are often already struggling to make ends meet before providing money for their incarcerated loved one.

The detrimental costs of incarceration are many. Commissary can be a positive or small comfort for those with funds and shopping privileges when items are available. However, it can create an assumption that incarcerated people will supplement their food with products from commissary or purchase higher quality hygiene products if they are not satisfied with what they are provided. This puts the onus on family members to financially support their incarcerated loved ones, many of whom are unable to get jobs within

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A survey respondent commented: *“My son wants you to know, that the state issues \$10 a month to men. If a man [doesn't have] family that can afford to help supply monetary funds, those men are HUNGRY. And that causes different issues. How can a person be themselves when they are constantly hungry and do not have even enough of the barest personal essentials? And if one's cellmate is indigent because of no family support and \$10 only per month from the state, it causes issues in the relationship with the cellmate who has funds. And this is a disturbance that could be avoided if the State would meet the basic needs of each prisoner or provide more than \$10 per month! Even a job gets a man \$20 per month. My son says to fulfill his nutritional needs and personal care takes \$100 a month.”*

prisons, and disadvantages indigent incarcerated people, who are not able to buy things. This negatively impacts many inside and out of prison.

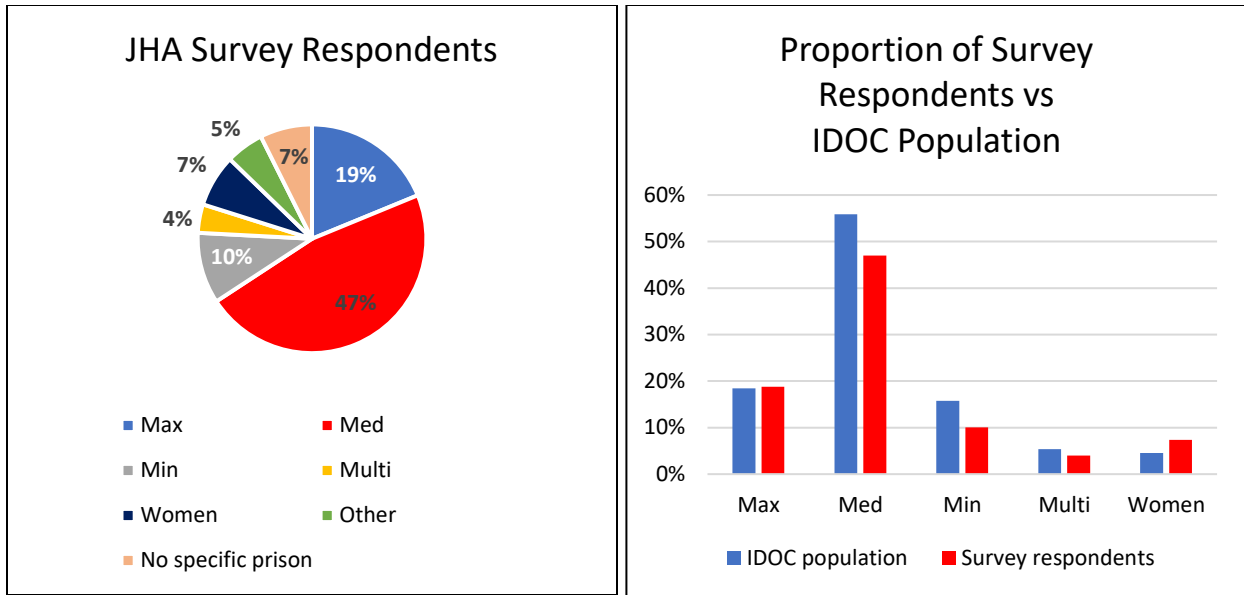
In order to continue monitoring the commissary situation in IDOC during a time period when JHA's in-person monitoring visits were not occurring due to an uptick in COVID cases, JHA ran an online survey. This survey sought information about availability of products through commissary as well as state-issued items in IDOC prisons. It was made available from February 23<sup>rd</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022. As people who are incarcerated in IDOC do not have access to the internet, this survey was primarily completed by incarcerated people's outside supports or other interested stakeholders, although a few people indicated that they printed and mailed the survey to someone incarcerated in IDOC for their direct input. Over the eight weeks the survey was online, JHA received 169 responses from formerly incarcerated people, loved ones of incarcerated people, and IDOC staff. As survey responses came in, we used information from them to communicate ongoing concerns with administrators. When JHA prison monitoring visits again resumed in early April 2022, we were again able to see and hear from people at some prisons first-hand what had improved and where there were still deficits. Communications to JHA continue to raise issues about lack of access to necessary food, clothing, and cleaning supplies but generally we are receiving fewer reports regarding lack of commissary access and supply in mid-2022 than earlier in the year.

Over the course of JHA's online survey, of the 169 responses, **92% reported that there had been issues with either purchasing items from commissary or receiving state-issued items.**<sup>1</sup> Prior to March 10, 2022, everyone who answered the relevant survey question reported that there had been problems with commissary purchasing or receiving state-issued items, compared to 93% of the 108 people who took the survey for the first time on or after March 10. A majority of respondents answered that there were issues with purchasing from commissary or receiving state issued items, regardless of whether their knowledge of the situation came from an incarcerated person, from staff, or from somewhere else. As noted above, JHA was able to observe improvements to supply of some items at some prisons when we resumed prison monitoring visits in April 2022; however, the future of commissary provision remains uncertain as new contracts for procurement are still required. JHA will continue to monitor and push for improved commissary decision-making and procurement efforts going forward and hopes that lessons will be learned from this unfortunate period and from the people most impacted.

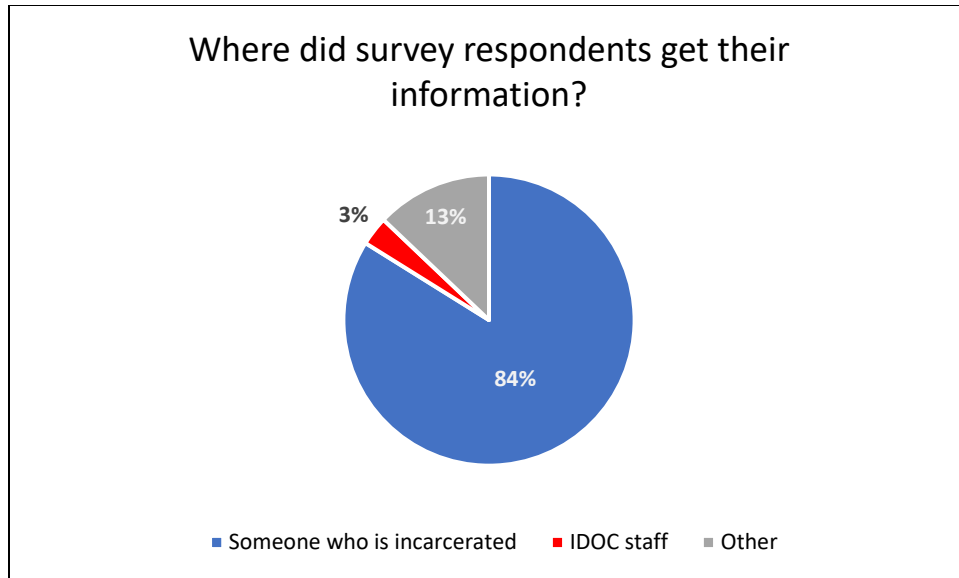
# Online Survey Respondents

JHA received information about 22 different IDOC prisons, representing about three quarters of the State prisons.<sup>2</sup> JHA encouraged individuals to answer questions with respect to how the commissary situation had been from February 1, 2022 to the date of their survey participation and to retake the survey over a period of time so we could try to register and gauge any changes. We received responses from 155 unique respondents, with 14 responses indicating they were taking the survey again.<sup>3</sup> There were 28 responses about maximum-security men's prisons, 70 about medium-security men's prisons, 15 about minimum-security men's prisons, 6 about a multilevel-security men's prison, and 11 about the women's prisons. 11 respondents indicated that they were not taking the survey with information about any particular prison, and eight indicated their responses were about "Other" settings.<sup>4</sup> Men's medium and minimum-security prisons were slightly underrepresented compared to their proportion of the IDOC population: 56% and 16% respectively.





JHA asked respondents to identify the source of their information as prison staff, an incarcerated person, or someone/something else. 130 answered that they were getting their information from an incarcerated person, 5 answered that they were getting their information from prison staff, and 20 answered that their information came from somewhere else. Some people reported that they received information from multiple sources, such as a respondent who reported they heard from both staff and people who were incarcerated and someone who indicated that they received information from several incarcerated pen pals. A large majority of the survey takers who selected “Other” for the source of the information identified that source as friends or family members of incarcerated people and four people identified themselves as formerly incarcerated, although it was unclear how recently. Two of these four people also reported that they had also received information from currently incarcerated people. One respondent who selected “Other” reported that their information came from former law enforcement.



## Being Informed by IDOC

Most people (62.3%) completing JHA’s online survey indicated they did not have access to enough information about the current commissary or supply situation from IDOC to address their concerns; however, 37.7% reported that they did. Some people indicated that they had been in communication with IDOC’s constituent services regarding concerns.<sup>5</sup> Several people commented similarly that they are just told by IDOC staff that *“they are aware and working on it.”* One person noted, *“They posted one bulletin. Still do not understand about the changes to the past commissary process.”* Another wrote, *“Blaming these shortages on inability to get products, giving 1 “goodie bag” and 1 “special meal” do not adequately address the situation.”*

Others commented that they felt IDOC did not communicate, e.g., *“The state never informs relatives of anything.”* Someone wrote, *“I only know what [my loved one] tells me, there is nothing on [IDOC’s] website to give me that information.”* Another commented, *“Information is limited, denial with issues is great.”* A respondent made a reasonable request writing simply, *“I wish family would be allowed to see the commissary lists for their incarcerated relative.”* Another constructive suggestion was for communication of in stock inventory to people prior to them having to fill out commissary slips with orders; someone wrote *“Inmates have to fill out their list of what they want before going to commissary but they aren’t notified what the commissary has. There is a commissary app on their tablets but it isn’t hooked up. And they don’t send a list of inventory items to the living units. Inmates have to guess and they can’t add to their lists once*

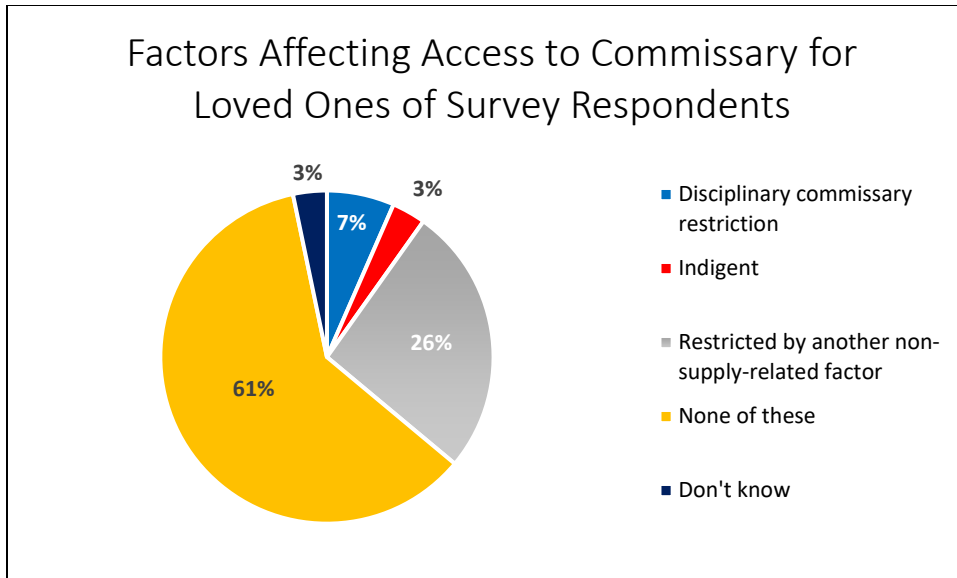


*they get to commissary.*” Staff with experience running commissary have also stated to JHA that they think incarcerated people should be provided with some notice about when they will be able to shop, even if this schedule is varying due to supply issues and needs to be updated.

Some survey respondents expressed distrust of IDOC officials, and some believed their loved one’s communications were censored or that incarcerated people would be retaliated against for sharing information that was interpreted in some way as critical of IDOC. Someone commented, *“IDOC does not often tell the truth about situations. If they did, it might make those in prison more receptive to a problem they are trying to fix.”* Another respondent noted *“Mostly the inmates are kept in the dark about what is going on concerning commissary or anything else.”* Likewise, another wrote, *“the inmates are given zero information about the commissary issues- there is a lack of transparency, and they rely on rumors.”* Staff also noted concerns about lack of communication; one wrote about supply issues also affecting staff commissary and dietary, *“No one has answers and do not seem interested to care.”* **JHA again stresses the importance of transparency and communication.**

## **Non-Supply Barriers to Commissary**

Respondents who reported that their knowledge of the situation came from an incarcerated individual were asked about any non-supply related factors that might restrict that individual’s ability to purchase from commissary. People in IDOC can have disciplinary or privilege grade restrictions that limit their commissary shopping; additionally, people typically have some purchasing restrictions during intake and 60 days prior to being released. A respondent wrote about this barrier at Lincoln in their survey response, *“60 days before they are out they cannot buy food, only hygiene products. 30 days before they’re released they can’t buy food or hygiene, only clothes.”* 78 survey respondents reported that the individual was not restricted in their ability to purchase from commissary for any reasons other than supply issues, 8 reported that the individual was on a disciplinary commissary restriction, 4 reported that the individual was indigent, 34 reported that the individual was restricted for another reason, and 6 answered that they did not know.



Of the 26% who reported another issue impeding the individual’s ability to order from commissary, the most commonly cited reasons were not being taken to shop because of prison lockdowns, COVID restrictions, or staff improperly denying people. For example, reports of staff improperly affecting commissary access included reports regarding Hill that if staff *“likes you, you can go, if not, then you sometimes go 2 months with no store;”* regarding Stateville *“C.O.s not allowing inmates to get commissary for the simple reason of not liking an inmate or racial issues from black C.O.s against white inmates;”* regarding Robinson, *“They don’t give equally. It’s who you know, I guess;”* and regarding Big Muddy, staff *“will not let them get commissary as a means of punishment.”* Someone wrote regarding Taylorville that there is *“lack of transparency and basic information - inmates are frustrated that CO’s give them various responses which may or may not be true. The CO’s lack professionalism and run the place through their personal likes and dislikes.”* Some people in survey responses reported perceived impermissible disparate treatment based on race, sexual orientation, mental health, disability, etc. Lack of communication from IDOC to incarcerated people regarding supply issues may have also fueled concerns that individuals were being treated disparately, but it is a frequently reported issue.

Another reported commissary barrier was *“lack of money and family support.”* Multiple people also commented on costs. For example, someone wrote, *“items inside were priced double to triple outside prices. It’s price gouging, because they can, inmates have no other options.”* Someone else commented regarding restitution being a barrier, *“The state keeps taking his*

*money and he can't even buy a calling card or soap and toothpaste.”* Several people commented on their loved one being housed in solitary confinement and this impacting the items they could access. One person wrote that it was a barrier for disabled individuals to be able to receive and store commissary by themselves at Danville, suggesting that an accommodation was needed to ensure equal access and so that people did not have to rely on other individuals in custody for assistance. Those respondents who reported receiving their information from prison staff were likewise asked about issues unrelated to supply and disciplinary status that affect incarcerated people’s access to commissary with multiple people identifying lack of staffing as an impediment.

## Shopping Frequency

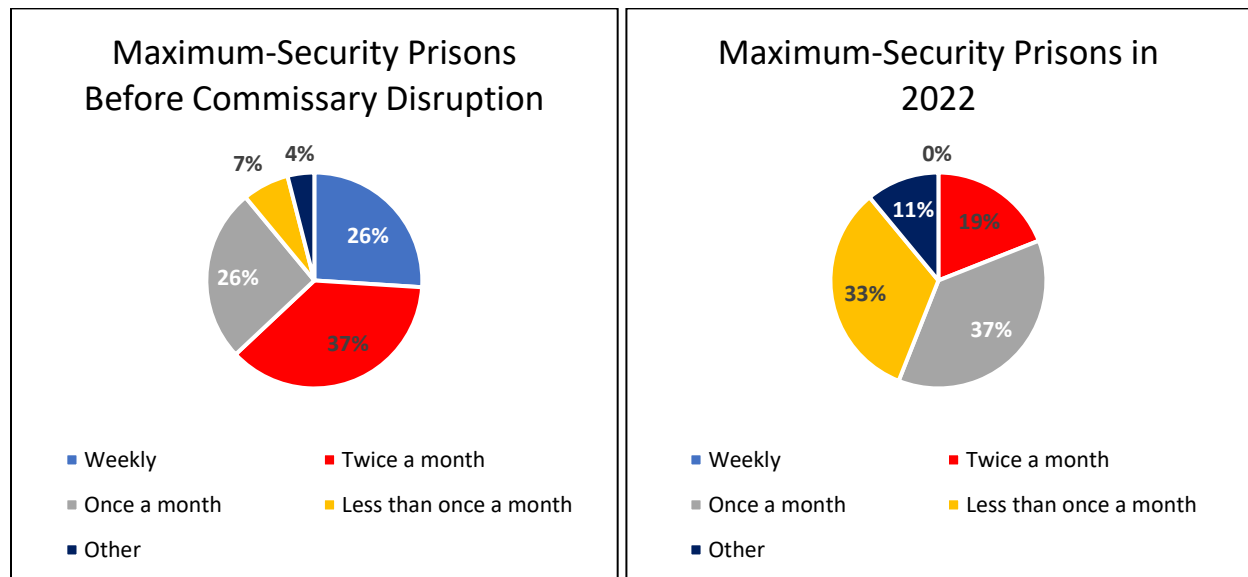
*“We have not been to commissary in 7 weeks. IDOC has not issued inmates nothing during this time. No laundry detergent, no soap, no toothbrushes, nothing.”* – Dixon, February 2022

*“We are being told commissary is a privilege! We keep asking, when did we do anything wrong to violate that privilege.”* – Graham, February 2022

JHA asked online survey takers how often incarcerated people were able to shop through commissary. While respondents agreed that the incarcerated people they know are not able to shop as frequently as they could prior to the disruption, the specifics of how often incarcerated people were shopping unsurprisingly varied depending on the security level of the prison. Many people commented about unpredictability. One person commented regarding Shawnee, *“Commissary has not been given on a regular schedule. There is no rhyme nor reason when he will be taken to commissary.”* Someone wrote regarding Logan, *“nothing is consistent.”* Another person wrote regarding Danville, *“he told me that his section probably was not going [to commissary] because there was nothing there.”*

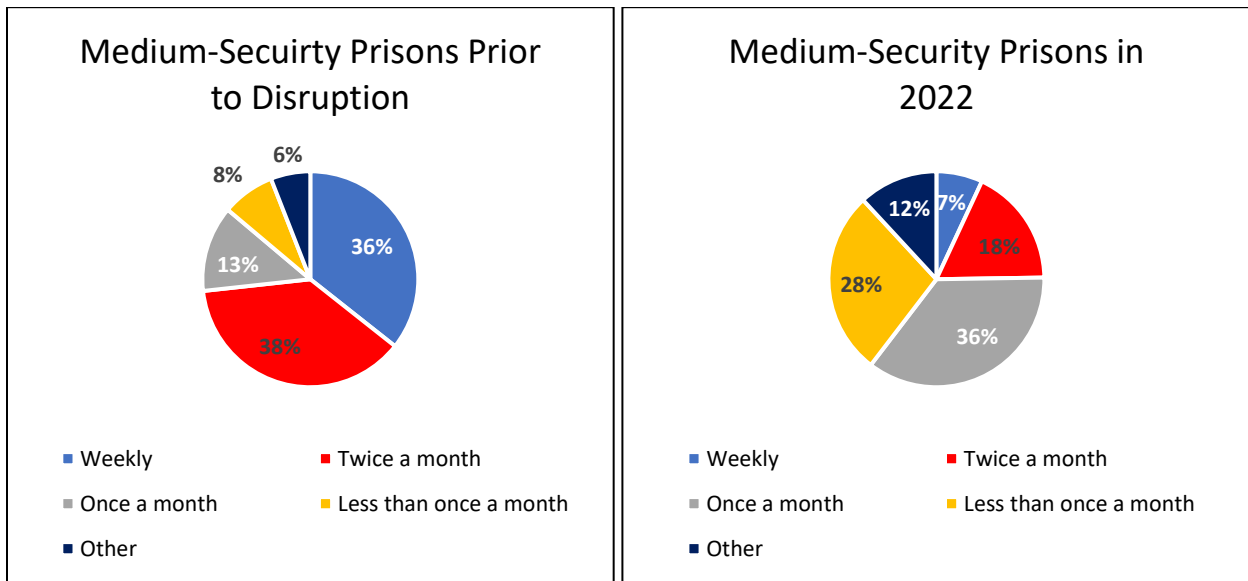
63% of the 28 respondents with knowledge of a maximum-security prison reported that prior to the disruption, those incarcerated in the prison had been able to shop at least twice per month, which would be in accordance with the IDOC commissary standardization plan.<sup>6</sup> However, 70% reported that since the disruption, the incarcerated person(s) they knew had the opportunity to shop once a month or even less frequently.

IDOC in 2021 attempted to implement a commissary standardization initiative whereby people across different prisons by security level or who were in the same status in different prisons would be permitted the same shopping privileges and allowed to shop a uniform number of times for the same set dollar limit, e.g., generally in all men’s maximum-security prisons people who were not otherwise restricted from shopping would shop two times a month for \$100 (excluding certain types of items), while those in men’s medium- and minimum-security prisons who were not restricted would shop weekly with a higher spending limit. Given the commissary disruptions, there is clear evidence that this plan has not been in effect.

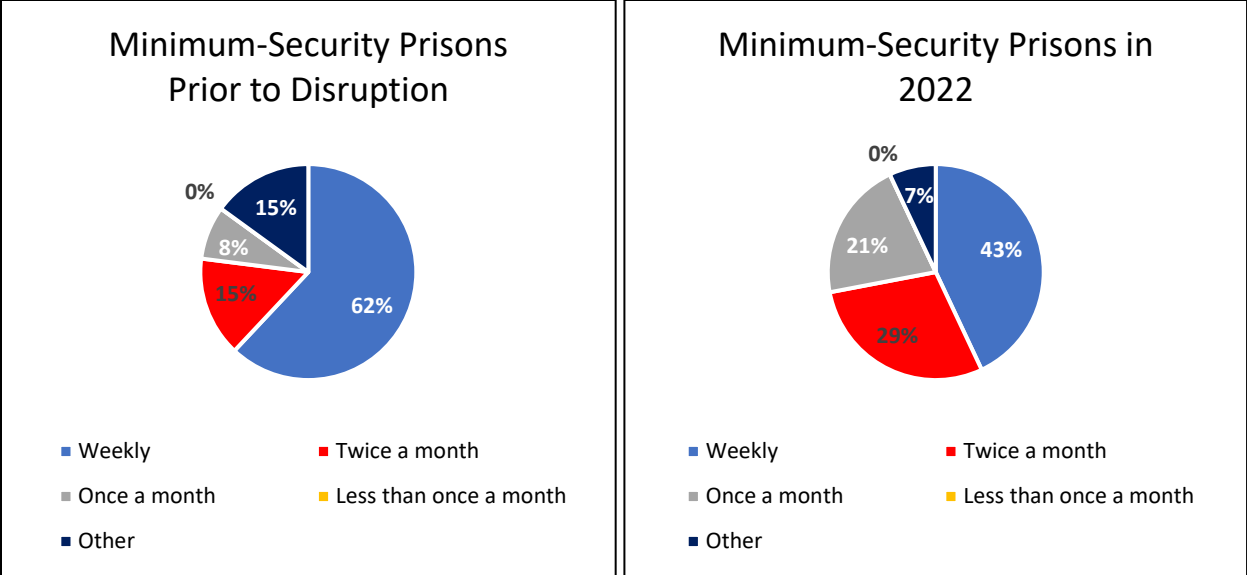


74% of the 70 respondents with knowledge of a medium-security men’s prison reported that prior to the commissary disruption, the incarcerated person(s) they knew shopped at least twice a month. In 2022, that number shrunk to 25%. A plurality of both maximum-security and medium-security related survey takers agreed that incarcerated people used to be able to shop twice a month and were, at the time of the survey, only shopping once a month. While it appears from that survey responses that those in medium-security prisons were more likely to have the opportunity to shop weekly and less likely to have the opportunity to shop only once a month than those incarcerated in maximum-security prisons prior to the disruption, the

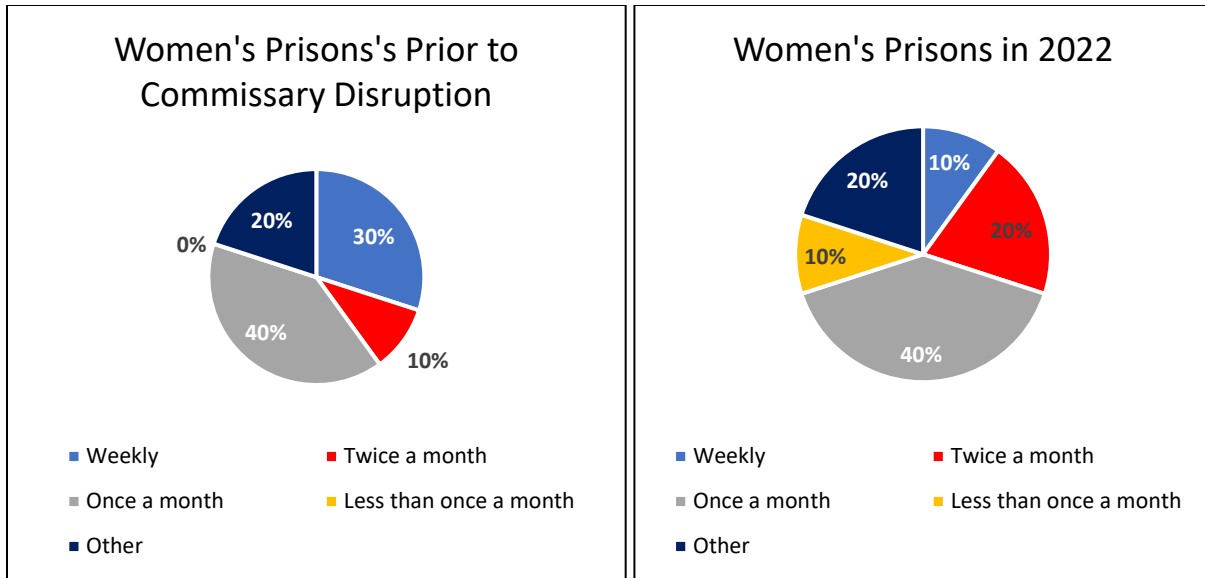
breakdown in 2022 is remarkably similar. This is unsurprising given the widespread and acknowledged lack of available items.



The situation in men’s minimum-security prisons appeared better. 43% of the 15 respondents who indicated they had information about a minimum-security prison reported that the incarcerated person(s) they were in contact with shopped once a week, compared to 62% prior to the commissary disruption. No one with knowledge about a minimum-security prison indicated that they knew anyone who had the opportunity to shop less often than once a month. However, the proportion of survey takers who knew someone in a men’s minimum-security prison who was able to shop only once a month more than doubled, from 8% prior to the disruption to 21% in 2022.



Prior to the disruption, 30% of the 11 survey takers with information about a women’s prison indicated that incarcerated people had the opportunity to shop once a week. By 2022, only 10% of responses regarding a women’s prison reported people were able to shop once a week. While the number of responses regarding women being able to shop once a week fell, the number of responses reporting women being able to shop twice a week doubled, and the proportion of responses that women had opportunity to shop less than once per month increased from 0% to 10%. This suggests that women who were previously able to shop weekly, likely those with lower security levels, may have the opportunity to shop just once or twice a month, while some of the women who previously shopped once or twice monthly may have been shopping even less frequently. Someone commented in the survey regarding Logan, *“50 dollar shop limits once a month. This includes food and hygienic items.”*



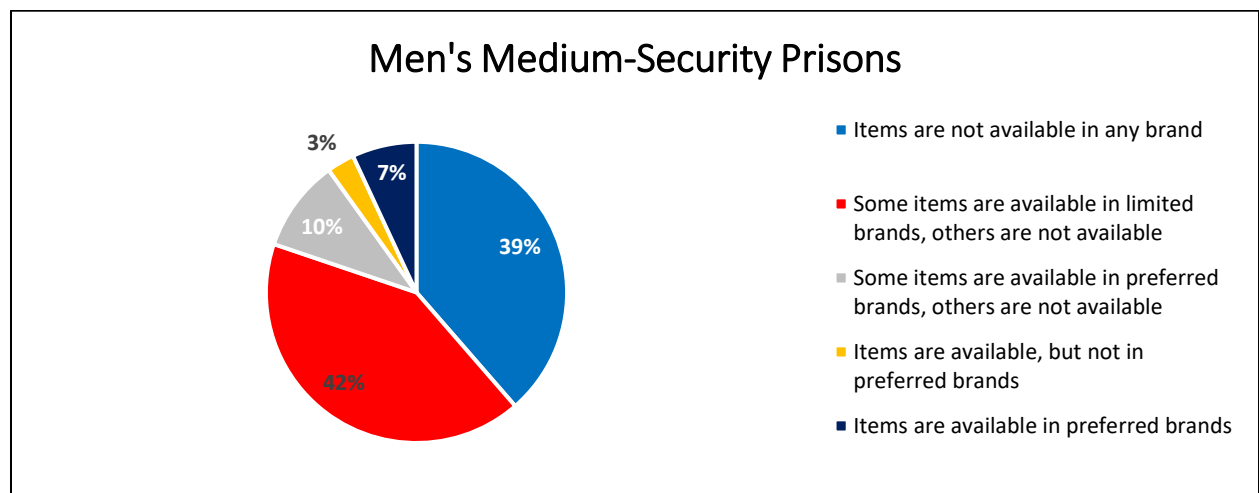
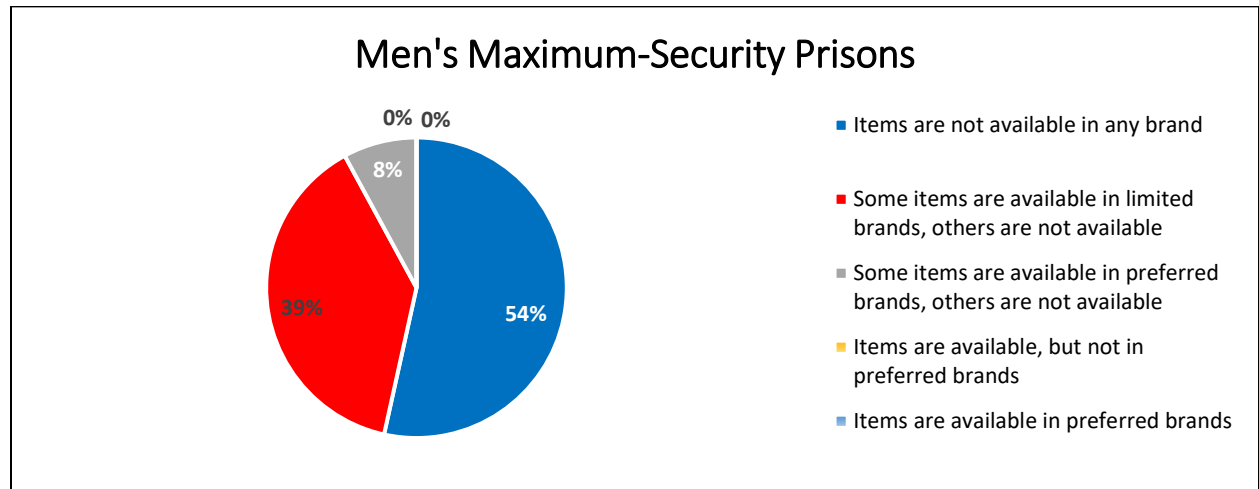
## Brand Availability

In response to some IDOC administrators stating that commissary items were available but just not in preferred brands, JHA asked respondents to describe commissary selection. 41% of respondents reported items were not available in any brand, 41% said some items were available in limited brands and other items were not available, 11% reported some items were available in preferred brands and some items were not available, 4% said items were available but preferred brands were not, and 3% said preferred brands were available. Some people commented that they believed they were being charged on commissary for items that were state-issued brands or items that should be provided by IDOC.

### **93% of respondents agreed that at least some commissary items were not available at all.**

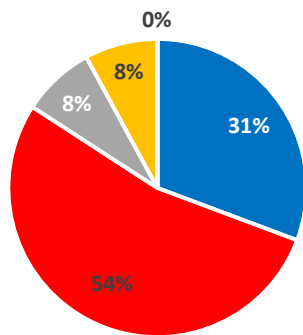
This number remained relatively consistent between those who took the survey in late February through early March and those who took it in late March through early April. This number was above 80% for all types of IDOC prisons—men’s maximum-, medium-, minimum-, and multilevel-security prisons, and women’s prisons. 54% of respondents with information from a men’s maximum-security prison reported that items were not available in any brand. Across all other types of correctional centers, a plurality of survey takers reported that some items were available in limited brands while other items were not available at all. 100% of responses about men’s maximum-security prisons agreed that at least some items were completely unavailable, as did 100% of respondents with information about a women’s prison. None of the survey

respondents reported that all items were available in preferred brands at men’s maximum, minimum or women’s prisons, while just 7% of responses about men’s medium-security prisons said that some items were were—this represented only 3% of survey respondents overall. Only 16% of respondents reported that any items were available in preferred brands.



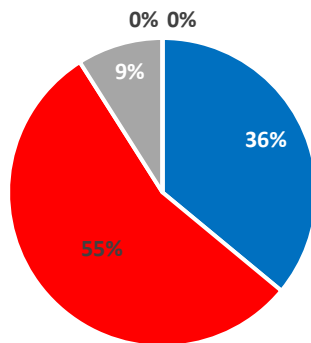


### Men's Minimum-Security Prisons



- Items are not available in any brand
- Some items are available in limited brands, others are not available
- Some items are available in preferred brands, others are not available
- Items are available, but not in preferred brands
- Items are available in preferred brands

### Women's Prisons



- Items are not available in any brand
- Some items are available in limited brands, others are not available
- Some items are available in preferred brands, others are not available
- Items are available, but not in preferred brands
- Items are available in preferred brands

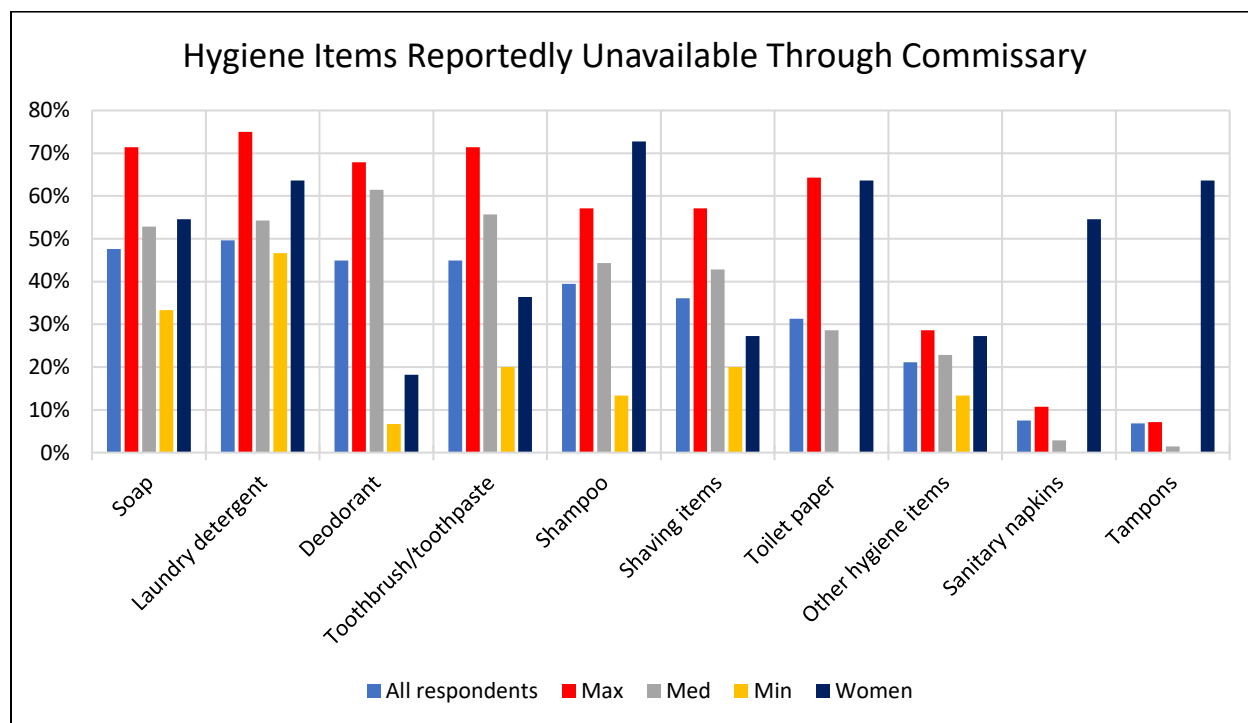
## Hygiene Products from Commissary

*“At our last commissary shop, we were sold Fresh Scent roll on deodorant which you know is the state deodorant. I am not indigent. I have money so why can’t I purchase real deodorant? Why am I being sold items that are being provided by the state?” – Menard, February 2022*

*“We can’t get any hygiene products of any kind but one bar of soap a week. We can’t get any cleaning supplies. We can’t even get any laundry soap.” – Pinckneyville, January 2022*

To try to gather more information about what hygiene items continued to be unavailable, JHA asked survey respondents to provide details by type of item. **85% of respondents to JHA’s**

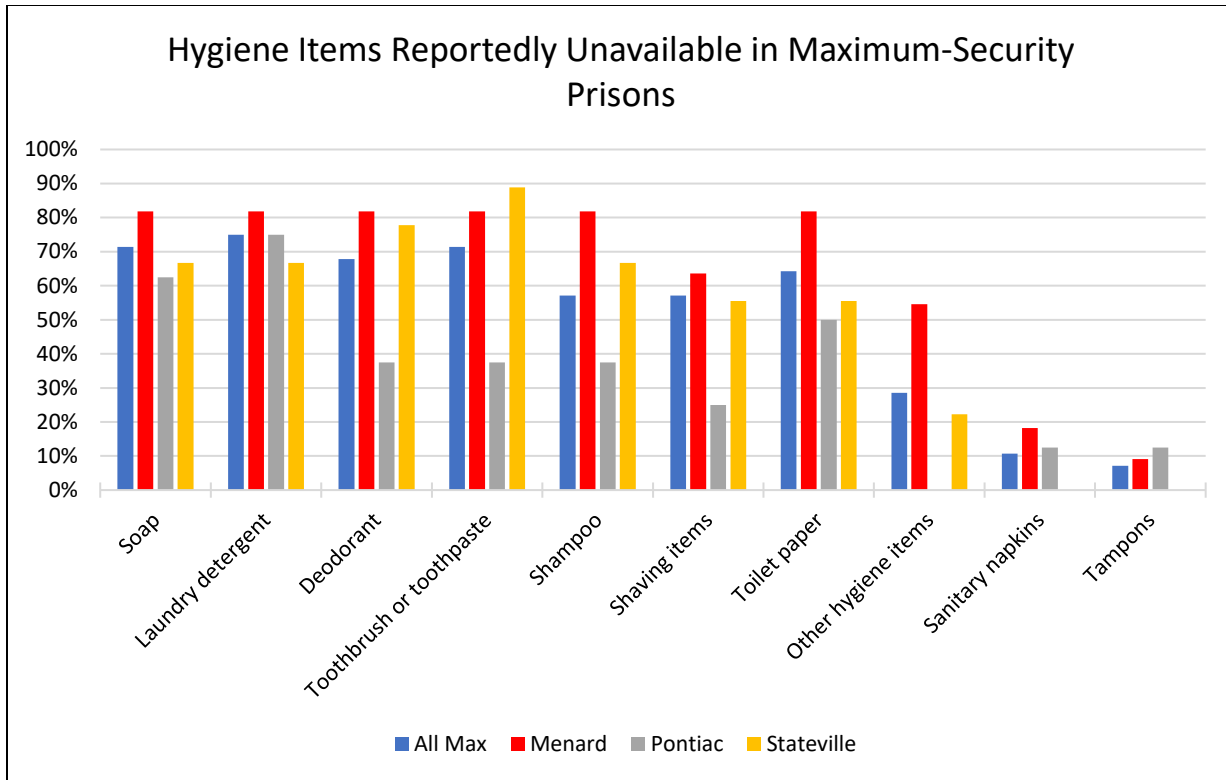
**online survey reported that at least one hygiene product had been unavailable from commissary since February 1, 2022. 73% indicated that more than one hygiene product had been unavailable. Half of respondents taking the survey for the first time reported that laundry detergent had been unavailable through commissary. More than a quarter reported that soap, deodorant, toothbrushes or toothpaste, shampoo, shaving items, and toilet paper had been unavailable for purchase. Someone commented regarding Danville, “*lack of personal hygiene items is the biggest problem. Many items which are available are restricted, for example. It is only allowed to purchase 4 oz of laundry detergent at a time, which isn’t enough, especially for those working in the kitchen who need to wash their clothes daily. Only one roll of toilet paper allowed per week. The meager selection of items in commissary are often sold out after the first house or two has the opportunity to shop.*”**



Those taking the survey with information about a men’s maximum-security prison were significantly more likely to report unavailability of most hygiene items. In particular, 75% of maximum-security responses reported an inability to purchase laundry detergent, compared to 50% of others. Maximum-security responses were also significantly more likely to report an inability to purchase toothbrushes or toothpaste and toilet paper. Someone wrote regarding

Menard that her loved one, *“is not receiving any hygiene products to sustain his hygiene due to inhumane living conditions inside solitary confinement.”*

JHA’s survey results also indicated differences between male maximum-security prison commissaries. More respondents for Menard reported inability to purchase hygiene items than from Pontiac or Stateville. Nine of 11 respondents for Menard reported that shampoo was unavailable, compared to six of nine for Stateville and three of eight for Pontiac. Similarly, nine of 11 respondents from Menard reported that toilet paper was unavailable, compared to five of nine for Stateville and four of eight for Pontiac. Meanwhile, fewer respondents taking the survey with information about Pontiac reported that hygiene items were unavailable than for either Menard or Stateville. Only three of eight respondents for Pontiac reported that deodorant, toothbrushes or toothpaste, and shampoo were unavailable compared to a majority of respondents for both Menard and Stateville for all three items. Two of eight Pontiac respondents reported that shaving items were unavailable compared to five of nine for Stateville and seven of eleven for Pontiac. Worth noting is that while respondents for Menard were much more likely than respondents from Stateville or Pontiac to indicate that their information was coming from someone on a disciplinary commissary restriction, those on restriction should still be able to purchase personal hygiene products.



Those taking the survey with knowledge from a medium- or minimum-security men’s prison were more likely than average to report ability to purchase some of the listed hygiene items. However, more than half of medium-security responses reported an inability to purchase deodorant, toothbrushes or toothpaste, laundry detergent, and soap. For example, someone wrote regarding Sheridan, *“He has had to use the same toothbrush through past illness because he is unable to obtain a replacement.”* The hygiene product that was most commonly reported to be unavailable in responses regarding minimum-security prisons was laundry detergent.

Those taking the survey with information about a women’s prison were less likely to report that deodorant was unavailable to purchase through commissary, with only two of the eleven responses regarding women’s prisons reporting that it was unavailable through commissary. However, a majority of people responding about women’s prisons reported an inability to purchase some hygiene items: eight of the eleven reported an inability to purchase shampoo, seven reported an inability to purchase toilet paper, seven an inability of purchase tampons, and six an inability to purchase sanitary napkins. Most responses regarding both Logan (the large multi-level women’s prison) and Decatur (the smaller minimum-security women’s prison)

reported that shampoo, soap, tampons, and sanitary napkins were not available for purchase, and most responses for Logan additionally reported that laundry detergent and toilet paper were unavailable. Someone commented about Logan, *“Inmates are receiving 1 roll of TP a week, this is not adequate for a female during her period.”*

JHA received six responses about multilevel men’s prison, Dixon, with responses that reported that those incarcerated there were unable to purchase soap, deodorant, shampoo, shaving supplies, and toilet paper, as well as other unspecified hygiene items.

21% of first-time respondents overall reported that additional hygiene items not specified on the survey were unavailable for purchase. JHA invited those who selected this option to write in additional products that were unavailable. Lotion, conditioner, panty liners, and dental adhesive were the most commonly cited products. Some people commented on needing sensitive skin formulated products. One person noted, *“The soap, toothpaste, laundry soap & deodorant are very cheap generic kinds, with no choices like in the past.”* Some mentioned inability to floss teeth, shave or cut hair as hardships.

## State-Issued Hygiene Items

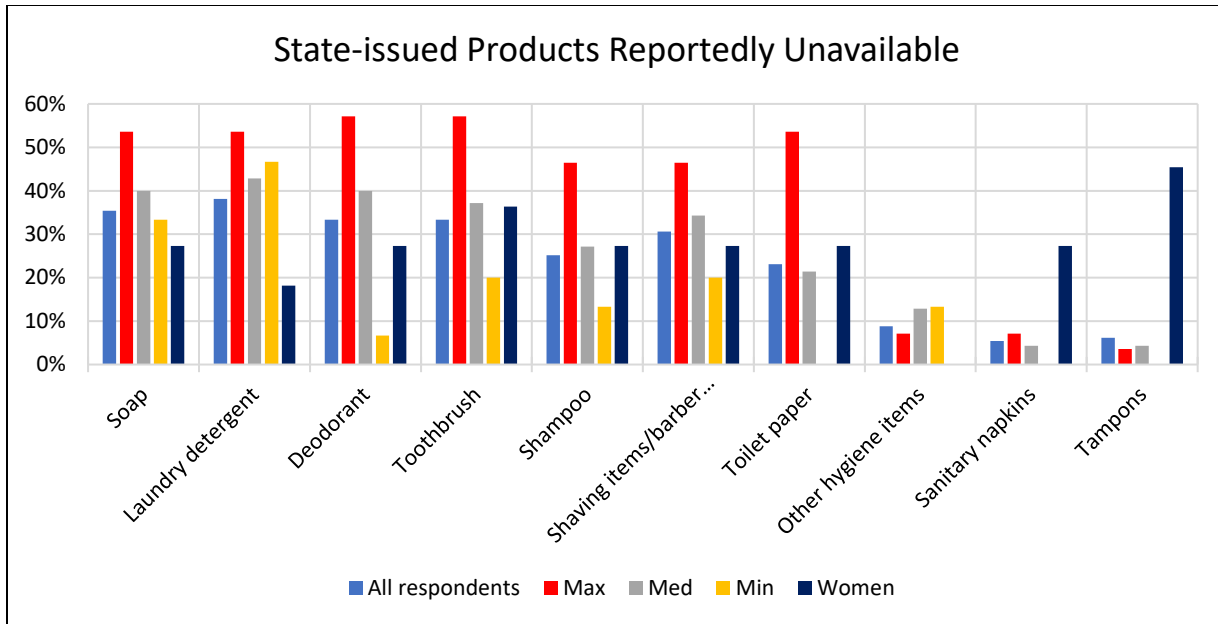
While some hygiene and other items are available to be purchased through commissary, IDOC is supposed to provide certain items to people who are incarcerated at state expense, referred to as “state-issued items.” According to a December 10, 2021 IDOC memo, incarcerated people should receive weekly free of charge the following: two bars of soap, a roll of toilet paper, two two-ounce bottles of shampoo, and an eight-ounce bottle of laundry detergent. According to this memo, incarcerated people should also receive conditioner, deodorant, shaving cream, menstrual products, denture care supplies, lotion, and a toothbrush and toothpaste free of charge upon request and as needed, and razors and nail clippers should be available on an exchange basis, meaning that individuals are required to turn in their old one to receive a new one.

JHA asked in this online survey whether items that were supposed to be state-issued were simultaneously unavailable while people were unable to purchase things from commissary for

the purpose of comparing available state-issued items to those available through commissary and of better understanding IDOC's performance around provision of basic necessities.

While respondents reported fewer problems accessing state-issued items than accessing items through commissary, more than 50% of responses regarding maximum-security prisons reported being unable to access state-issued deodorant, toothbrushes, soap, laundry detergent, and toilet paper. Access to toilet paper in particular seemed to be a much more salient issue in maximum-security men's prisons than anywhere else. 54% of maximum-security related responses reported being unable to access state-issued toilet paper compared to 23% of all responses. Someone wrote regarding Menard, *"No supply and lack of access to soap and cleaning supplies and even clean water to drink and bathe."* Another person wrote regarding Lawrence that *"toilet paper is all you get."* Many people commented that cleaning supplies were not made available. Someone noted regarding Hill, *"With the unavailability to purchase items from commissary, if and when state issued items are distributed, they do not last because of the small quantity. The individuals are left to with no other choice but to neglect their hygiene."* Someone else commented that inability to maintain hygiene *"causes a lot of self-esteem loss and [is] degrading."*

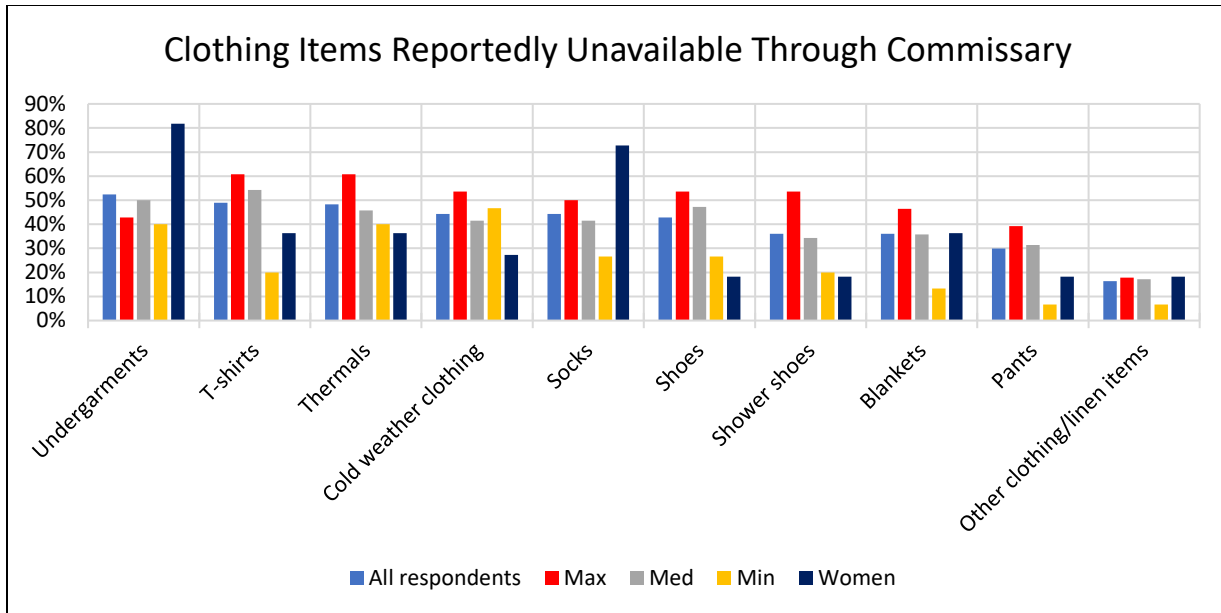
More than half of respondents with information about men's prisons reported that state-issued laundry detergent was unavailable. Nearly half (five of the eleven) responses for women's prisons reported that state-issued tampons had been inaccessible and three reported that state-issued sanitary napkins had been inaccessible.



## Clothing and Linens from Commissary

*“They are out of clothing (socks, panties, bra, sweatpants, sweatshirts, shorts, t-shirts, coats, etc.). – Logan, March 2022*

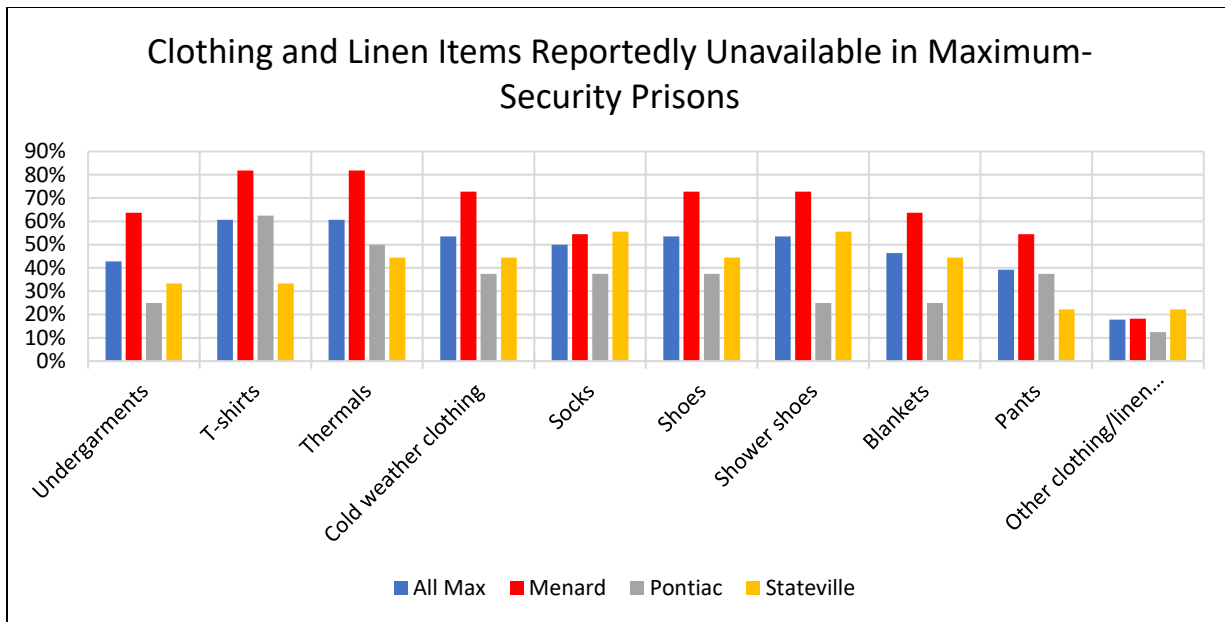
Some minimal clothing and linen items are typically state issued with supplemental items are available through commissary. **80% of JHA’s online survey responses indicated that at least one clothing or linen item had been unavailable through commissary** since February 1, 2022, and 67% indicated that more than one such item had been unavailable. More than half of first-time survey takers reported that undergarments had not been available for purchase, and just under half reported that t-shirts, thermals, cold weather clothing, socks, and shoes were unavailable. Several people commented on lack of appropriate sizes. One respondent wrote, *“My loved one has been deprived of basic hygiene items, appropriate warm weather clothing, a pillow, and items in his size.”* Someone wrote regarding Graham, *“A lot of things are out of stock; tennis shoes have only been available in one size.”* Another person wrote regarding Pontiac, *“They only have sizes that don’t fit anyone – the clothes go from having small then 5x.”*



Differences between responses regarding men’s maximum-security prisons and responses regarding other prisons were less pronounced for clothing and linen items than they were for hygiene items. However, maximum-security related responses were still more likely to report that most clothing and linen items had been unavailable through commissary and were particularly more likely to report that t-shirts, thermals, shoes, and shower shoes had not been available for purchase. Unavailability of undergarments was less frequently reported regarding men’s maximum-security prisons than for women’s prisons and men’s medium-security prisons.

Responses regarding Menard once again reported unavailability of clothing and linen items at higher rates than responses from Pontiac or Stateville. Nine of the eleven people who took the survey with information about Menard reported that t-shirts and thermals were unavailable. With respect to Stateville, three of nine respondents reported that t-shirts were unavailable and four reported that thermals were unavailable. With respect to Pontiac, five of eight respondents reported that t-shirts were unavailable and four reported that thermals were unavailable. Similarly, seven Menard survey-takers reported that undergarments were unavailable, compared to two for Pontiac and three for Stateville.





Respondents with knowledge from a medium-security prison reported that t-shirts, shoes, blankets, and pants were unavailable for purchase through commissary at a higher rate than survey takers in general and at a higher rate than those with information from men’s maximum-security prisons, in contrast with issues with hygiene unavailability. This could be interpreted as perhaps indicating that the shortage of clothing items was not felt as harshly at maximum-security prisons as the shortage of hygiene items, or that it was a more serious concern at medium-security prisons where people have more movement or time outdoors. However, because the vast majority of those who took our survey received their information second-hand from incarcerated friends and relatives, it is possible that fewer people with information from maximum-security prisons indicated an inability to purchase clothing items not because clothing items were in greater supply but because their incarcerated loved one’s concerns about not being able to purchase toilet paper and soap overshadowed their concerns about t-shirts and socks in their communications with family members.

Fewer survey takers with information from a women’s prisons reported that incarcerated people lacked access to clothing and linen items through commissary, with the important exceptions of socks and undergarments. Nine of the eleven respondents for women’s prisons reported an inability to purchase undergarments through commissary compared to 52% of survey takers in general, and eight of eleven reported an inability to purchase socks compared to 44% of survey takers in general. Decatur responses also noted inability to purchase blankets and pants.

16% of respondents reported that other clothing and linens were also unavailable from commissary. The additional items that were reported unavailable most frequently were sheets and pillows.

Reports about the unavailability of undergarments, thermals, socks, shower shoes, and blankets remained relatively stable throughout the online survey period and nearly half of later survey takers still indicated that t-shirts, cold weather clothing, and shoes were not available to purchase through commissary. Someone wrote regarding Taylorville, *“My son has been without socks since last August, because the commissary has not had any to buy and the ones he is wearing have big holes in them. He has been trying to buy warm clothing and the commissary has none, it is cold in there and they need warm clothes. His shoes are old and he can’t buy them either because there is none.”* In the later part of the survey period, someone noted regarding Robinson, *“They freeze outside waiting for food and medication.”*

## State-Issued Clothing and Linens

*“I arrived here in October 2021. On my arrival I was issued a bedroll, 2 sheets, and a blanket only. I never received a pillow, boxers, socks, nor a care package. The only items of clothing they provided me was 1 pair of pants and 1 blue shirt.”* – Shawnee, January 2022

According to the abovementioned memo issued by IDOC, incarcerated people should receive a blanket, a set of sheets, a pair of shoes, a pair of shower shoes, three pairs of socks, and a towel on intake. Men should additionally receive three pairs of underwear and two undershirts, and women should receive four pairs of underwear and two bras. IDOC should additionally provide new shower shoes semi-annually and people should receive a pair of shoes free of charge upon request and as needed.

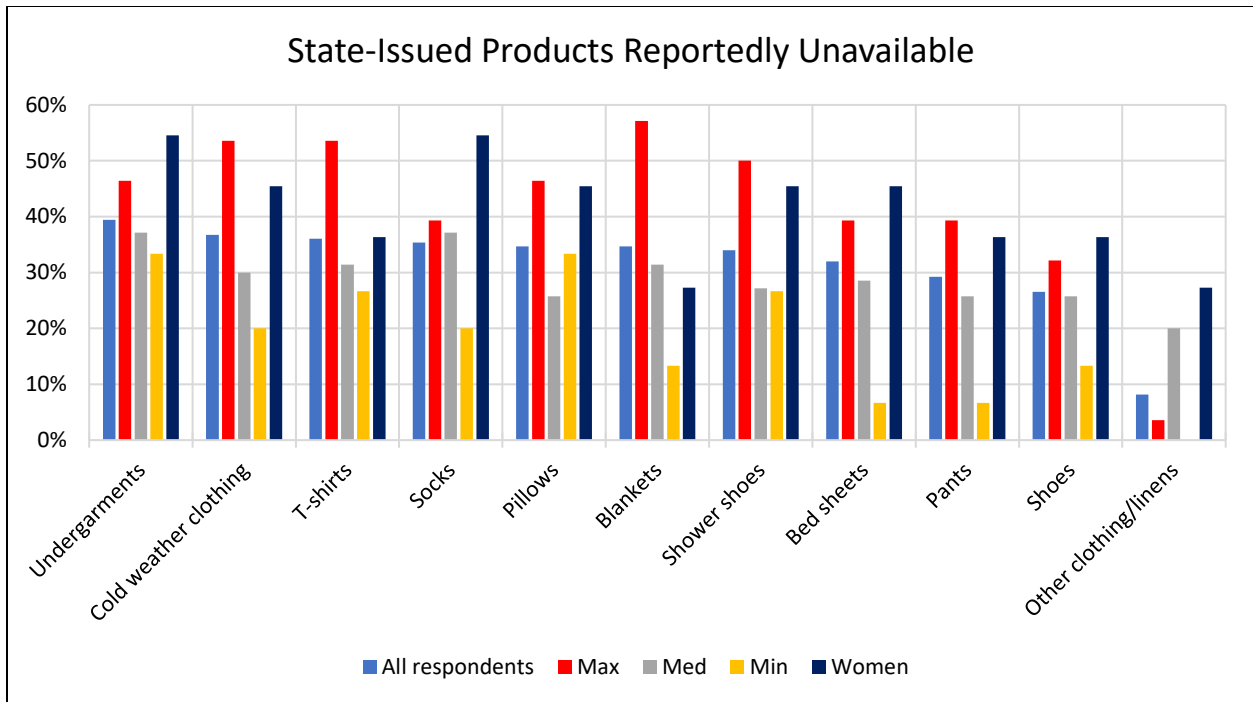
A majority of survey respondents reported that state-issued undergarments, cold weather clothing, t-shirts, socks, pillows, blankets, and shower shoes were likewise unavailable. A respondent wrote regarding Menard, *“To get an item you have to turn in the same item that you have. So, you have to turn in a pair of socks to get a pair of socks, etc. As there are not any available to purchase, you could only have one pair of socks.”* Regarding Danville, a mother

wrote that her son *“has needed socks and shoes since last summer and has not gotten them because they don't have them,”* Regarding intake, someone noted regarding Graham, *“for the new inmates, there has been nothing for them, other inmates have been giving away what they can spare.”*

More than half of respondents with information from women’s prisons again indicated that they were not receiving undergarments or socks. Someone commented, *“Logan claims that they do not have the funds to purchase the [Illinois Correctional Industries] manufactured pants, smocks, panties, bras, coats, etc. that are to be issued to all incoming persons in custody along with those on grounds. So no one is being issued proper clothing items... The ladies at Logan are wearing pants that have holes in them and/or have been repaired so many times that they are thinning and falling apart. To be blunt, the crotches are literally gone and they are wearing shorts under them if they have shorts. Their smocks are years old, they are torn, stained up, and again falling apart and the clothing room is issuing them out like that and making the ladies wear them like that. Commissary does not have polos for them to purchase so the ladies are trying to share their clothes with each other and all of us are doing the "hand me downs" just so we can have something to wear.”*

Survey-takers with information from men’s maximum-security prisons overwhelmingly reported that state-issued blankets were not accessible. Most maximum-security responses also indicated that cold weather clothing, t-shirts, and shower shoes were not being provided. Someone wrote regarding Pontiac, *“No warm clothing and he is always cold cause they open the window,”* and another response regarding Pontiac stated *“My husband froze in his cell that was dripping water in his bed, no heat, no warm showers, with one blanket. Was not able to purchase anything to keep him warm.”*

Respondents with information from men’s medium-security prisons indicated that state-issued shoes and socks were not accessible at a high rate, while survey takers with information from a men’s minimum-security prison were most likely to point to undergarments or pillows as unavailable. A third of minimum-security respondents reported that each of these products were not being provided. One survey taker commented regarding Big Muddy, *“They don’t issue anything except maybe when you first come (underwear, socks, coat). No pillow except when you first come in... a thin pillow and 1 thin blanket.”* Another wrote regarding Lawrence, *“all you get is 2 old sheets, a flat mattress, and a beat-up blanket.”*



## Food Products from Commissary

*“When I got here we could buy lots of food, now not much at all. About 2 months ago I ordered approximately \$60 of commissary, about \$40 in food. They gave me \$17 in food, so now we will have to do with what we get.” – Joliet Treatment Center, April 2022*

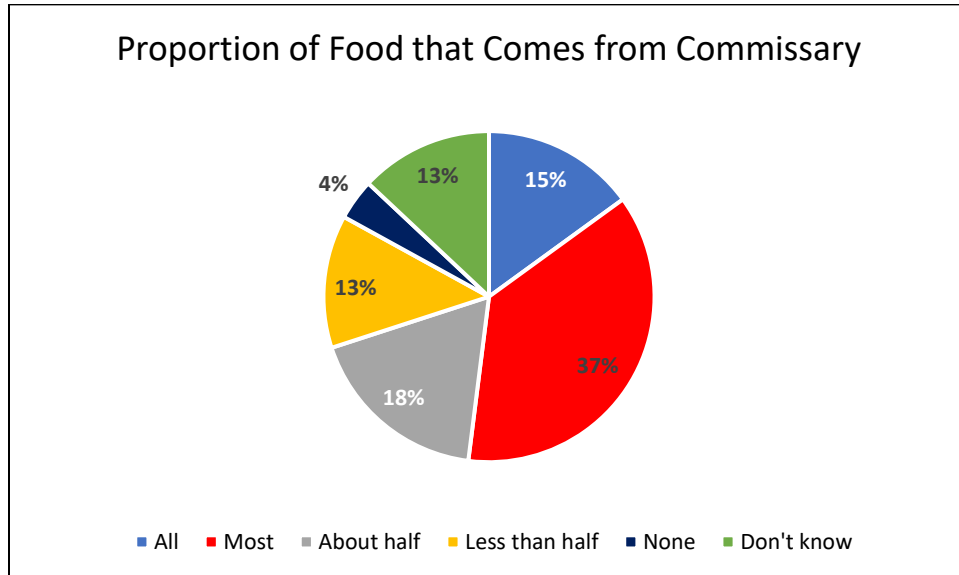
*“Commissary is non-existent for most of us . . . If we are lucky enough to get food (the list is too long to list what they are out of here) they are then out of bowl, cups, jugs, sporks. This makes it very difficult to eat. If we improvise it’s contraband!” – Logan, March 2022*

**80% of survey respondents indicated that food products had been unavailable from commissary.** This statistic was relatively consistent across the board, ranging from 79% among men’s minimum-security responses to 85% among maximum-security. This statistic also remained steady between those who took the survey in late February through early March and those who took the survey between late March and early April. Someone wrote that this is a hardship because incarcerated people *“have been unable to supplement the meals provided by the state [and] feel more “human” by obtaining food they could get on the outside.”*

The sheer variety of food products that were offered in commissaries across Illinois made asking about specific products in the same way JHA did for hygiene items and clothing and linens impractical, but JHA did allow survey takers to write in food products that were unavailable. Multiple people commented to the effect that *“basically everything”* was unavailable for food products. Another wrote selection was *“random and different each time, VERY limited all categories.”* Some of the most commonly cited items that were unavailable were staples such as canned and packaged meats, noodles, rice, peanut butter, potato chips, coffee, and soda. For example, someone wrote regarding Logan, *“there are little to no meat pack items available, and if they are they are sold to the first few houses and commissary inmate workers before they can reach the entire grounds. Cheese products are difficult for grounds to all receive. Cereals are not available to the entire grounds. There are no crackers or tortilla shells to make meals with, nor are their Ramen/Cup of Soups available for the entire grounds.”* Some prisons also limited the number of items people could purchase during limited frequency and limited spending cap shopping to try to have more things available to different people; someone commented regarding this at Graham *“limits are crazy, only one tuna allowed, one noodle, limited and prices are high! no coffee!!!”*

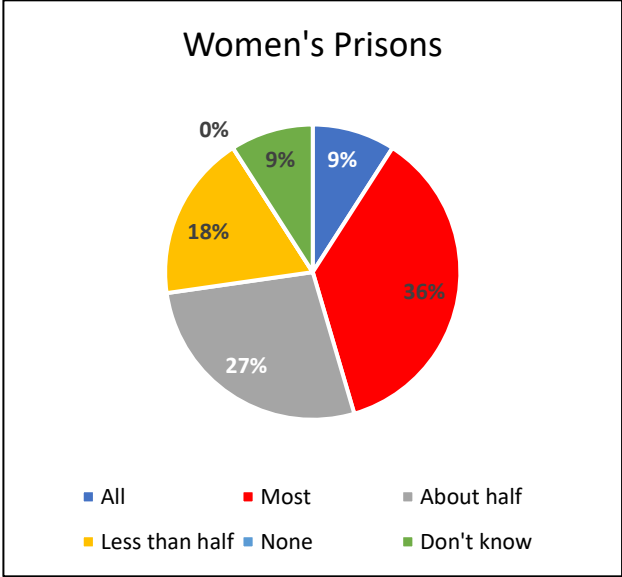
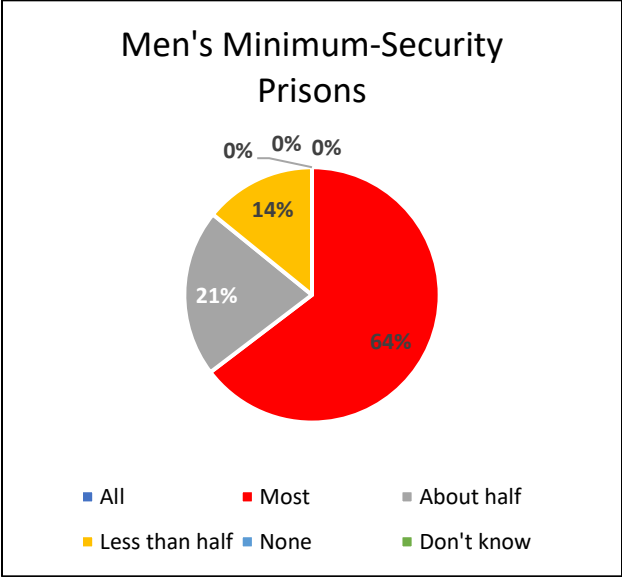
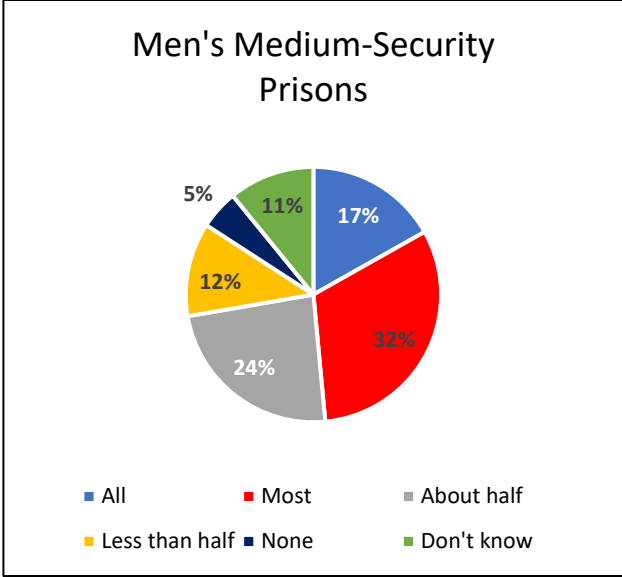
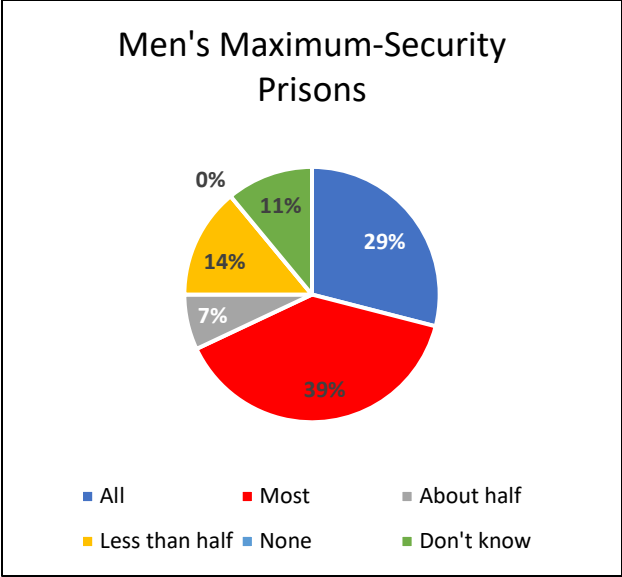
Someone reported that vegan foods in particular were not available for purchase through commissary, and a second reported that kosher and halal foods were unavailable. According to one respondent regarding Robinson, *“They’ve had some [food] but not as much to choose from now. Used to have a nice selection of stuff. You’re lucky to get any soda. Now you get whatever kind of generic soda they decide to offer. And only 2 bottles when you do get to shop.”* Several people commented on the lack of products for purchase needed to maintain a healthy, nutritionally balanced or even medically necessary diet, such as items for people with diabetes or with protein (e.g., fish, beans, peanut butter) and fiber, or fresh produce. Multiple people reported bottled water and coffee were unavailable. Regarding Stateville, a respondent wrote, *“No bottled water... Can’t drink the tap water it’s brown. Can’t buy new cups or bottles. Can’t clean the ones they have properly. No detergent.”* Someone wrote regarding Taylorville, *“coffee is available but offered only to certain houses - it seems to be a reward punishment system using the commissary access to reward or punish inmates.”* Several respondents who represent the perspectives of incarcerated people’s outside supports and visitors also commented regarding food issues for visits at various prisons, including lack of vending machine products and poor selection.

JHA also asked survey takers how much incarcerated people relied on commissary for food. **70% of respondents indicated that the incarcerated person(s) they knew relied on commissary for at least half of their food.**



Maximum-security respondents were the most likely to report that incarcerated people relied on commissary for most or all of their food. Across all types of correctional centers, at least a third of respondents indicated that incarcerated people relied on commissary for most or all of their food. In men’s maximum-security prisons, that number was 68%, in men’s medium-security prisons, 49%, in men’s minimum-security prisons, 64%, and in women’s prisons, 45%.

Someone commented *“No one likes the food in prison. Some of these people, have been locked up for 20 years or more. They never eat the state food.”*



# Dietary

*“They won’t allow us to purchase food at commissary and the trays that they serve don’t meet the basic requirements of 2,200 calories a day. People, myself included, have lost at least 10 pounds.” – Western, March 2022*

*“They still continue to feed us like children with small portions when we are grown men. We need larger portions.” – Pinckneyville, January 2022*

Given people's reported reliance on commissary to supplement food needs in prison, it was unsurprising that several respondents also specifically reported that without the ability to supplement state meals through commissary, their incarcerated loved ones were not getting enough to eat or adequate nutrition through the prison's regular state-provided dietary meals. People wrote regarding Centralia, *"They only get to shop every 3 ½ weeks! If they shopped more it would be as big of deal! His main complaint is he is hungry because the trays there are unbelievable. The food is spoiled and they put random foods on the tray like rice and mashed potatoes with a spoiled apple. It's not a healthy tray by no means. But their menu says they are serving totally different food;"* and someone else wrote that COVID lockdowns were causing *"less food given due to inconsiderate officers preparing food"* instead of incarcerated workers.

Someone stated about Robinson, *"No food on commissary so my husband is always starving."* Another wrote about an unspecified prison, *"No food to eat, many days he goes without eating much."* Another person noted at Taylorville, *"The food supply in the commissary is completely gone by the time he gets to go and last time they just handed him some crackers and little sausages and said that is all they had left. These are grown men and that need more food than they are getting, the food they get from the chow line at the prison is just about what you when feed a 2-year-old. This is a disgrace that they don't even have enough food to feed these men. And then they won't let people even send in donations or care packages to our loved ones."* Someone wrote regarding Hill, *"My brother has indicated the food portions on the food trays have gotten much smaller and he and others have commented they are still hungry. This is heartbreaking to hear. Food coming directly off the chow line is oftentimes cold."* JHA has received letters from incarcerated people stating the same concerns regarding getting less or poor-nutritional food. Several people in the survey and other communications also commented that at times dietary food is served cold or unpalatable for various reasons. Additionally, JHA received several reports regarding meal repeats that were similar to a survey comment regarding Danville stating, *"Sometimes the same chicken dish is served in the kitchen 4 times in one week."* Some people commented also on lack of time to eat in dining halls, e.g., regarding Graham, *"They are supposed to get 12 minutes to eat most time they get is 3 to maybe 5 minutes."*

Several survey respondents additionally commented specifically on the link between diet and health, e.g., one noted *"He is educated and knows what a balanced diet needs to be for grown*



men. He HAD to buy extra protein. He says more FRESH food should be able to be purchased. Apples and Bananas and carrots and peppers last a long time. Why can they be sold. In the long run the state pays for these men's ill health from years of a neglected diet. Make things cheaper and make more real food available and give indigent men what they really need;" Another wrote "meal quantity consistently less than published. Guys are consistently asking for more food. Also, if the prison really cared about the health of inmates, they would serve better healthier food, including more fresh food."

Specific health concerns effected by diet were also noted, e.g., "All they serve them on the inside is mostly carbs, which my son is diabetic, so he would buy the meat and other stuff from the commissary and has not been able to because they have none;" "My loved one doesn't eat and takes his cancer medicine on an empty stomach. Not good for sick prisoners;" and "My loved one has been hungry and feeling like he is not getting good enough nutrition. The high sodium and preservatives have caused his cholesterol to be elevated as well has him recently being diagnosed with high blood pressure. These are both concerning issues because that puts his health at jeopardy and he is not being seen regularly by a physician to ensure his health and safety." Someone else responded to the survey stating, "they are forced to eat unhealthy food that they are being served on a daily basis. Nurse or the doctor tell you that you have hypertension [or] high cholesterol, that you need to eat better, how can you eat better and you all are serving me the bad food."

Prison staff also noted issues with food availability in the survey, with one commenting, "No one seems to care that food is not available, or a cup of coffee. Staff are limited to what they can bring in and if you work overtime, you are without.... If staff cannot purchase food for themselves, then the quality of the dietary food must improve. Stopping food into trays sends everyone the message they are no more important than an animal." It seems this comment should hold true for not just staff but for everyone in prisons.

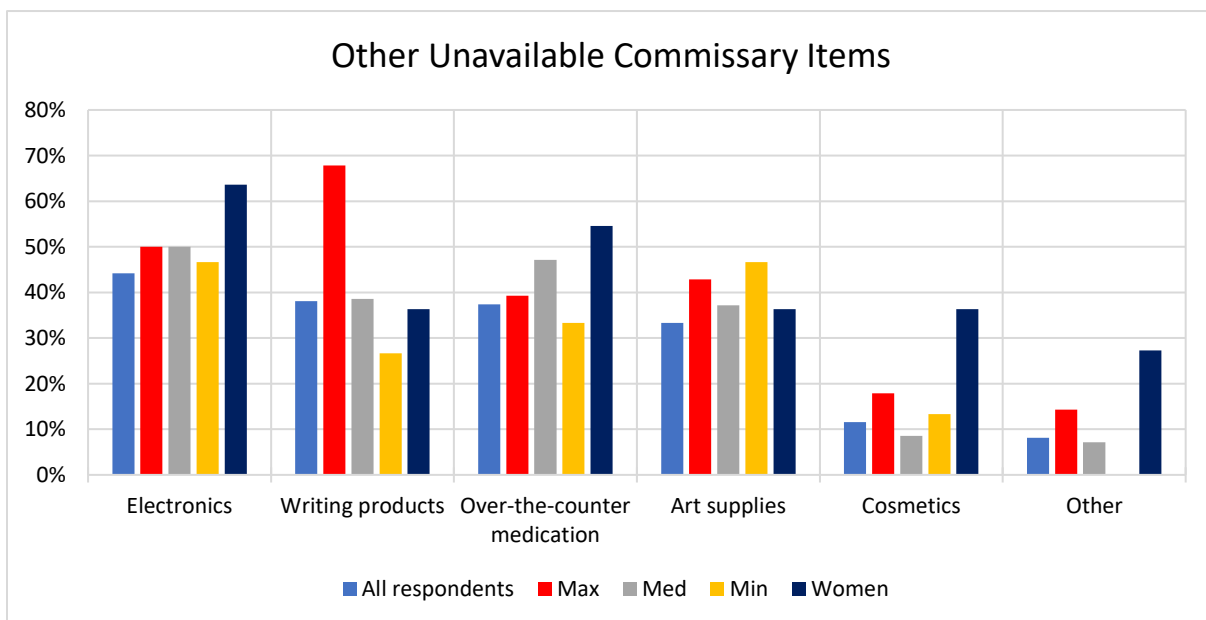
64% of online survey respondents indicated that JHA should conduct a future online survey about dietary.

# Other Types of Commissary Products

*“The Logan commissary sells GTL’s Inspire tablets for \$125 with a charger included. But when the charger breaks, they expect us to buy another tablet for \$125. They do not sell chargers for \$10 like they did a year ago.” – Logan, March 2022*

*“I’m denied writing items, any clothing items, as well as no pain medication because these items are not available to us in commissary nor given to us by the state.” – Shawnee, January 2022*

JHA also asked whether there were other types of products, besides hygiene, clothing and linens, or food, which had previously been available through commissary and were, at the time of the survey, unavailable. 44% of responses reported that electronics—such as TVs, tablets, accessories, and fans—had been unavailable, 38% indicated that paper and writing utensils—such as pens, envelopes, and typewriter tape—had been unavailable, 37% reported lack of over-the-counter medications, 33% reported unavailable art supplies, and 12% reported lack of cosmetics. Those taking the survey with information from people at maximum-security prisons frequently reported that incarcerated people were unable to purchase paper and writing products, while those taking the survey with information from people at women’s prisons were proportionately more likely than others to indicate that electronics and cosmetics were unavailable for purchase.



Regarding electronics someone wrote, *“due to the pandemic, inmates are required to spend more time in the room (cell). Having a fan &/or a T.V. to help pass the time is crucial to well-being.”* Someone also commented regarding Robinson, *“No watch batteries anymore. You have to buy the whole watch. No book lights. No electric shavers like they used to have. No hydrocortisone or tums anymore. No art supplies... you have to order out of a book and only a certain kind.”* Someone commented regarding Logan that fans were needed because air conditioning was not working; most IDOC prisons have no air conditioning or limited air-conditioned housing areas for people who are housed in healthcare or mental health settings.

Responses from all types of IDOC prisons indicated that that writing products were unavailable. It bears noting that because writing products being unavailable directly impacts how incarcerated people communicate with their families, they may be more likely to mention not being able to access those items to their loved ones than other types of items. As phone time and video visits may be limited during COVID outbreaks, or for those at maximum-security prisons and people on restrictive movement statuses, this has been particularly concerning. Several survey respondents from various prisons of varying security levels commented specifically regarding ongoing issues with lack of movement or time out of cells. For example, a respondent wrote regarding Pinckneyville, *“Medium/low security housing is only out for 1 hour a day. That is horrible to treat these guys like they're in max prison lock down.”* For many, letter-writing is the most reliable way to communicate with loved ones in the community. Someone commented regarding a loved one at Sheridan, *“He is unable to write letters home because of the lack of paper. He is not able to mail out legal type documents in appropriate envelopes.”* Someone wrote that people not having art supplies also meant that people could not make cards to send to loved ones. Another wrote, *“he needs art supplies because his art is keeping him centered.”*

Specific over-the-counter medications or supplements mentioned included cortisone cream, antifungal cream, antibiotic cream, antihistamines, Tylenol, vitamins, etc.

Again, the lack of many of these items is particularly a hardship during COVID lockdowns. A respondent wrote regarding Dixon, *“With the facility being on lockdown due to covid again, tensions are higher than normal due to lack of food and basic necessities and the ability to get fresh air and burn off energy the correct way which is causing fights and more disciplinary punishments.”* Another wrote regarding Menard, *“Hard on them to just sit there and have*

*nothing to do.*” Others commented about supply issues compounding the stress, tension, “*population unrest,*” aggravation, frustration, demoralization, boredom, and depression experienced in prisons. One person wrote, “*I believe that it has cause undue stress on staff as well as incarcerated persons.*”

## Noted Changes in Early 2022

Based on IDOC entering into temporary emergency contracts for supplies, some improvements were expected in early 2022. However, this was not immediately felt by people in IDOC custody. **Most JHA online survey respondents, 62%, reported that they were not aware of any improvements or negative changes to commissary since February 1, 2022 at the time they completed the survey.** For the 39% who reported they were aware of a change, both positives and negatives were reported. Some people commented on lack of access for shopping and product unavailability. Others noted renewed COVID lockdowns. Some people provided specifics about items incarcerated people could buy. For example, someone wrote that people were now able to purchase a 4oz pack of coffee, which “*isn't much of an improvement!*” Others wrote about selection, e.g., “*They have some weird brand names now,*” “*more products available but of lesser quality,*” “*Less Items and More Expensive Items,*” and “*Prices have went up for cheaper made products.*” Someone commented, “*They buy the cheapest brands and no other option, because guys complained about high prices.*” Costs were noted again as barriers. A respondent wrote based on a conversation with a loved one, “*Pricing has inflated significantly, i.e. meat items and deli packs have nearly doubled in price. [He] Understands that this is felt outside of prisons too but ‘Guys are not rich. We're depending on friends and family to be able to buy what we need.’*”

Some people reported a positive change but ongoing issues, e.g., regarding Danville, “*In the past month, more food items have been available but still personal hygiene, clothing and electronics are not available;*” and regarding Hill, “*Finally have some products available to purchase which is good. Commissary still runs out of merchandise before all houses have a chance to shop. Initially there were 4 sheets to the commissary order form. Now there is only 1 sheet of merchandise available. Limited to \$75 per month.*” Several people commented on commissary spending limit changes. For example, “*More products, low limits;*” regarding Graham “*Currently very limited in how much they can spend. \$20 this week;*” and “*the spending*

*limit was dropped to \$50 a shop so of course we can shop twice a month. With no items to buy and no money to spend it looks from the outside that Logan is really doing something for the ladies, but they are not."*

Similarly, 79% of JHA online survey respondents said they were not aware of any changes to state-issued items, and 21% indicated they were aware of changes to these items. Several people commented about lack of items, e.g., *"State provides nothing," "Nothing available," "Still no boxers or t-shirts," "No hygiene items," "Soap and a toothbrush aren't available," "Still no laundry detergent," "Shortage in toilet paper,"* etc. Of those who noted some provisions, many commented that they were limited, e.g., *"They were issued some small packs of laundry detergent," "Very limited amount of state-issued items," "slight improvement,"* and *"For a while they didn't have the 1 roll of toilet paper a week to hand out. They do now."*

Amidst the ongoing scarcity, several people commented in the survey about things they perceived as other options for IDOC to get some needed items to people, e.g., *"Our church sent 8 boxes of hygiene items that were rejected. Reason? They only use official vendors, but they cancelled vendor contracts," "Commissaries are using "supply chain problems" as an excuse and are not allowing outsiders to send needed items. Many states allow families and nonprofits (like churches) to send items, but not Illinois;" "I would send food if I could,"* and someone commented that in the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice staff were able to buy items for youth at Walmart. Another person wrote *"they have you paying for everything, so what is the problem besides up-charging?"*

**From hygiene and self-care products to weather appropriate clothing, linens, and materials to write home, the goods people purchase through commissary are necessities and increased availability, access, and fair pricing should be provided to everyone who is in custody.** The commissary issues that people have experienced in the past year touch on several areas in need of review and reform: procurement and contract policies, cost containment, improved and expanded policies for accepting donations, and review of State obligated provisions to people in custody, to name some. Learning about these issues from the people closest and most deeply impacted by them is critically important and provides JHA with clear, detailed information with which to advocate for change. JHA will continue to monitor these issues and push for improvement. We are grateful to everyone who responded to our survey,

spoke with us during a visit and contacted us via letter, email, and phone; sharing information publicly is important to both increasing transparency and fueling impactful reform.



This report was written by JHA staff. Media inquiries should be directed to JHA's Executive Director Jennifer Vollen-Katz at (312) 291-9555 x205 or [jvollen@thejha.org](mailto:jvollen@thejha.org)

Incarcerated individuals can send privileged mail to report concerns and issues to the John Howard Association, P.O. Box 10042, Chicago, IL 60610-0042. JHA staff are reading every letter and tracking this information to monitor what is occurring behind prison walls and to advocate for humane policies and practices. Family and friends can contact JHA via our website [www.thejha.org](http://www.thejha.org) or by leaving us a voicemail at (312) 291-9183.

Since 1901, JHA has provided public oversight of Illinois' juvenile and adult correctional facilities. Every year, JHA staff and trained volunteers inspect prisons, jails, and detention centers throughout the state. Based on these inspections, JHA regularly issues reports that are instrumental in improving prison conditions. JHA humbly thanks all the persons who agreed to be interviewed for this report and who graciously shared their experiences and insights with us.



The John Howard Association was the proud recipient of the 2015 MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions

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<sup>1</sup> 5% reported that there had not been issues obtaining items and 3% did not respond to the question. Of the eight respondents who answered that there had not been issues with either commissary or access to state-issued items, four indicated that some products had been unavailable to purchase through commissary elsewhere on the survey, and three of those also indicated that some state-issued items had been unavailable, suggesting that some issues had in fact been observed.

<sup>2</sup> JHA received responses regarding all three maximum-security prisons: Menard (11), Pontiac (8), and Stateville (9); medium-security prisons: Big Muddy (6), Centralia (3), Danville (13), Graham (12), Hill (13), Illinois River (1), Lawrence (3), Pinckneyville (5), Shawnee (7), Sheridan (7), and Western (10); minimum-security prisons: Jacksonville (4), Lincoln (3), Robinson (4), Southwestern Illinois (1), and Taylorville (4); multilevel prison: Dixon (6); and both women's prisons: Decatur (4) and Logan (9).

<sup>3</sup> JHA received repeated survey responses about Big Muddy (2), Danville (2), Decatur (1), Graham (3), Hill (1), Lawrence (1), Logan (1), Taylorville (1), and Western (1). Unless otherwise indicated, only the first response from each survey taker is included in compiled results reported herein.

<sup>4</sup> The other facilities reported about included responses regarding both IDOC and Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) mental health treatment centers, as well as IDOC's adult transition centers (ATCs, or work release), county jails or other facilities outside of IDOC. Because some respondents in the "Other" category provided information from a facility outside IDOC, this category has been largely excluded from the compiled results reported herein, although all of the survey responses were reviewed by JHA staff and issues noted.

<sup>5</sup> As of June 2022, the link to constituent services "Quick Link" on the front page of IDOC's website was not functional; however, IDOC contact information is linked [here](#) and IDOC's family liaison's phone number is included in the [Commissary FAQs](#) under IDOC's COVID-19 page.

<sup>6</sup> IDOC's three male maximum-security prisons also are the parent prisons for smaller population housed in minimum or medium-security units where individuals are allowed to shop more often than their maximum-security counterparts. Because of this, JHA has no way of knowing with certainty if the incarcerated people who whom these respondents were in contact were classified as maximum-security.