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**Survey Comment  
Report**



# **Southwestern Illinois 2023 MQPL Survey Comments**

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# Introduction

Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center (SWICC) is a minimum-security male prison within the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) that housed 386 people on March 13, 2023. SWICC is a substance use disorder treatment prison with this programming provided by contractor GEO Group. The John Howard Association of Illinois (JHA) conducted a modified short [Measuring the Quality of Prison Life](#) (MQPL) survey by providing enough survey packets (consisting of the [MQPL survey](#), an informed consent notice/instruction sheet, and a privileged mail prepaid business reply envelope addressed to JHA) so that every person incarcerated at SWICC had an opportunity to participate in the voluntary and anonymous survey if they chose to do so. JHA received 130 responses to the MQPL survey from people at SWICC through May 24, 2023, representing approximately 36% of the static population. JHA also visited SWICC in March 2023.

Below are the comments from the MQPL surveys for the open-ended survey questions followed by marginalia comments. Please note:

- All blank answers have been omitted
- Names and other personally identifying details have been redacted
- Spelling and grammar have been lightly edited for understanding and to account for possible transcriber typos

## OPEN-ENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS

### Q12. What are the most positive things about life in this prison?

1. able to move around because its a dorm setting
2. "Good time"
3. Good time
4. The fact you may go home sometime.
5. An individual can earn good time from dealing with Substance abuse issues they have an learn from education programs that would Help Someone upon release.
6. Schooling has Been really good here.

7. There are alot of TVs in the dorm so there is different programs to watch. Some of the C/O's will talk and care on a good conversation with you while others just walk right past you like you are not there
8. There is an outdate eventually
9. Possibly getting out of here early, then putting this place on blast with every contact I have and every news agency possible
10. Good time for the drug program
11. Able to get to groups in Geo and get treatment.
12. nothing positive
13. You get more good time here then any other facility.
14. The inmates are well orientated and we all work together to get thing acomplish. The staff help with certain things.
15. counseling
16. Good time, movement, drug treatment
17. Nothing but good time
18. The yard access is the only positive thing
19. Being in the position to be to earn good time and get out early
20. The Geo program here has taught me some good things on the way I think. They give a generous amount of good time here.
21. School, sober
22. Good time
23. drug program. good time
24. Good time is the only positive
25. Nothing at ALL
26. It gives a way to pick up tools to handle problems in Drug and criminal behavior.
27. They offer the program that gives large amounts of time off of your sentence
28. Possibility of earning good time.
29. The structure of the GEO program and the tools they try to equip us with for our return to society
30. Im going home I have an outdate
31. Being able to recieve good time for Substance abuse program, work, and school.
32. Better chance of getting home early.
33. The freedom to take a shower + do laundry + Dayroom when you need to.
34. The good time
35. Going to some services here.
36. The treatment + GEO program. They try to help you however DOC staff does not. They couldn't care less.
37. The GEO program
38. met Lot Good People and Im new man
39. that we got an opportunity to better ourself and get good time to get back to our families
40. It treat you so bad you never want to come back.
41. you have an outdate
42. Trying to get my good time, hope going home soon

43. Good time
44. Learn to see that I had it good outside
45. Nothing, it's an oppressive & Racist system.
46. Good Time
47. Get an opportunity to get double contracts.
48. There is the opportunity to get more good time credit here than I would in another prison.
49. that Im getting the treatment I need
50. To be honest, Good time in abundance
51. Education, Structure, Rehabilitation.
52. Nothing cause they treat us like animals.
53. Im older so I know how to treat staff with respect in return they do same too me. most of time its the best prison Ive been in
54. They are dorms and we have free movement!
55. That it gives us tools to not come back.
56. getting The good time, but They do what They want. make up There own rules.
57. It is not dangerous. It has a nice gym. There are no gangs.
58. We get good time for work, school, Geo
59. yard and gym
60. nothing
61. yard and gym
62. Frequent yard/gym, good vocational school if you can get in it
63. That you Take the time to Reflect on your past and future
64. The most positive thing about this prison is the Collaboration with IDOC, GEO, + Individuals in custody's efforts to reduce recidivism
65. There is None
66. Not many
67. That you have a outdate!
68. You get time to reflect on yourself and get ready to be reentered into society.
69. None, this place is a joke
70. It is open dorm, we are not locked down all the time, except multiple covid quarantines. Being able to have tablets + do correspondence course as options.
71. trying to Stay out of trouble. going home one day
72. I like the GEO Programs, The Sgts, Lieutenants, some guards Treat you Terrible. Disrespectful you, call you out your name, cuss you out, Etc.
73. Nothing Southwestern is horrible!
74. None
75. prison not supost to be positiv.
76. Programing, yard, and good time
77. The GEO reentry services. A correctional recovery program in helping inmate's lives.
78. Good time
79. The good time we get for participating in groups
80. You know youre going Home some day
81. you can get treatment for your drug addiction and earn good time

82. yard and gym, religious services, vocational school
83. Sgt [REDACTED], Lt. [REDACTED], the little good time we are able to get.
84. Sober, Healthy
85. The good time for most people here.
86. Free weights/recreation
87. I can use the phone.
88. Learn to appreciate life in the world.
89. Nothing
90. Once we get into GEO and either school or work, we get to earn some good time credit. You can utilize the program if you want it bad enough.
91. The Good Time
92. This prison gives you tools to better your thinking and do positive things once you are released.
93. I got a chance to get GED
94. Good time
95. Nothing
96. Not a DAMN Thing!!!
97. There isn't any
98. That you can trust an inmate more than a guard
99. the good time
100. the good time we Recive
101. able to earn some good time
102. Nothing they Run this Supposed to Be Drug rehab prison more like a Disciplinary prison.
103. Good time
104. The open movement although we should have bigger yard with more activities and having a treatment center and school are positive
105. your not in a cell all day.
106. The good time being offered.
107. the amount of movement we get
108. good time
109. Nothing, the staff treat us like garbage, etc.
110. So many yards. And gyms.
111. Programs available for good time. Freedom of movement
112. GEO. I think GEO is a very positive part of prison life so I can use the things I learn to keep myself sober when I am free.
113. Eating helping ppl and staying safe
114. The phone call's home
115. The GEO program...chance to go to school...Able to work...Able to go to gym and yard weekly...
116. Geo program...
117. Good time
118. getting the good time to get home fast.
119. There is plenty of female staff that like to have sex.

120. The good time is all this prison Has to offer
121. The time to Exercise to take care of our health and school programs and Days we can go to church, play instrument with prison Band, AA, church, inside out Dads, inner circle.
122. Inmate to inmate relations are 10 out of 10. Shower is hot.

## Q13. What are the most negative things about life in this prison?

1. The food quality
2. The repercussions to writing a grievance
3. People here run the place and nothing is done to combat it. Also I can't even video visit with my girlfriend cause of a past felony. I came here from **[PRISON REDACTED]** and I as allowed visits with her there.
4. Getting Stabbed, raped or forced into a gang.
5. The racial tension, and racial discrimination with the EDSC, where it is 85% white male to 15% Black, an 5% Latino Spanish. What goes for certain individual does not apply to the entire group.
6. Lack of Commissary options and availability. 1/2 the C/O's don't care overall. Constant COVID lockdown. Counselors are no help. 85%ers have no value here. Technology availability sucks. Warden treats you as a number, not a person.
7. Some of the upper officers (control freaks!!!) The meal portions (child size) The bathrooms (1/2 stools don't work, showers heads missing, ceiling leaks) Temperature in summer inside (steam bath inside) GEO program messed up (no control or order in running it
8. The staff needs training. The warden is a horrible person in general and hates inmates.
9. The warden hates inmates. The food in this place is awfull!
10. The people who run the prison are criminals themselves, please investigate
11. To many people.
12. the staff
13. It's turn over rate is way too slow for this small facility.
14. The phones are ran by the inmates. Staff should run the phones. The prices of things are to high. We are not getting the good time provide by Springfield.
15. healthcare, how long it takes for a phone list to update
16. People on gun cases/violence without drug offenses, who try to gang bang/run shit. They don't belong here and make it hard for us with drug problems.
17. everything but good time
18. This prison really doesn't help prepare a Individual in Custody prepare for live outside these fences. They don't set Us up to be successful
19. The staff act like Our issues don't matter. We are treated like Third World citizens.



20. The staff here hate the prisoners. The staff lies on Prisoners for small negative interactions and are being trained by there superiors to lie on IDRs to get prisoners who need help to be sent out of this prison to higher level facilitys.
21. Being away from family
22. The only sink available to wash my dishes is in the restroom. There is no Air conditioner in the housing unit and the staff does not provide Ice water to drink.
23. officers, and staff
24. The C/O-staff lie to you they dont help with anything. I was told by doctor 5 week's ago i was getting med for my foot still havent heard or seen any
25. everything
26. The communication is poor Between the counselors also They are under staff witch leads to no movement. The ice machines on the unit are broke. The showers have mold.
27. The staff degrade, talk down to, and insult inmates ALL the time. Staff defineatly play "favorites." Not enough phones per number of inmates. Half of the toilets do not work. This place is very unsanitary. Wifi broken/not working ever.
28. The officers treat you and talk to you like shit, the counselors dont even try to be an advocate for you
29. Theres so many made up rules every officer comes up with and your forced to follow them to earn any good time
30. The inconsistency, and the fact that we are all stressed out about the conditions here. overcrowding, and staff shortages which causes them to cancel school all the time.
31. The dorms can be very loud and noisy at night time depending on what dorm your in.
32. Some correctional officers abuse their authority. This facility has been understaffed and at times C/O's sleep on the job. C/O's at times talk down and yelling at inmates is common for minor disciplinary actions. Inmates also receive tickets for a lot of minor disciplinary actions. Inmates miss out on schooling as well. often.
33. The food + getting spun by officers.
34. The food here is horrible
35. Not being able to go to school because of my outdate. Not being submitted for the good time here.
36. The counselors don't give the days people for the programs here. Good time days.
37. no staff to run school. School gets cancelled one or twice a week because staff play pickelball all day
38. The staff do nothing to help your situation + most of the sergeants and above degrade us at every turn.
39. The shortage of staff has led to me being in a 94 day horticulture class for **[6+]** months which has drastically prolonged my outdate.
40. The staff, Warden **[NAME REDACTED]** always has an attitude, the commissary, Small chow Portions, they always cancel school because they're short on staff, Phone Situation causes tension
41. majority of People Here



42. that it Changes every day. Staff talk and treat you like shit Cause they know we get good time, only getting limited phone Calls, Commissary is not guaranteed every week, Bathrooms are never in working order
43. I can't do anything with out the police being on bullshit.
44. Way to many people amongst each other, only been here two months and already caught COVID and a cough that wont go away.
45. not no Jobs school and programs to help enough People
46. commissary, No Respect as a person from staff. they dont Feed you enough either
47. Staff treatment of us. Not enough programs. Not enough Food always hungry. Not enough phones or able to use Phone to talk to people I love
48. Everything prison Dont make you a Better person.
49. underqualified staff, unfair Treatment
50. Constantly changing no two days are the same dorms are always loud cant get on the phones no air conditioning no ice machines in the summer
51. Housing area is nasty! Doesn't have proper cleaning supplyz. no A/C units in housing areas! Get's so hot in summer people pass out from heat exhaustion, Officers don't monitor inmates close enough so there is no structure
52. being called a white piece of shit by officer [REDACTED].
53. The cares and concerns that we have go unnoticed or nothing actually happens! The food is okay but we get fed like children!
54. Dehumanizing, disrespectful, Officers whom talk to you like you're worse then shit! Counselors who tell you anything But the truth
55. That we are always on lockdown cause of Covid
56. dietary doesnt have diabetic tray Available. They dont offer bottom bunks permits to 55 and older. my mattress is Junk and they wont Replace it causing me Severe pain
57. No structure, can't get into a routine, stressful, denies everybody 6 months EDSC cause they say we get enough Good Time. Not a kick out joint.
58. That because of good time we're missing out on possibilities
59. Staff, Abuse. The lack of following The Law. There is nothing an inmate can do to stop These Things except lash out. And That punishes us.
60. Staff is highly disrespectful. They are understaffed, affecting available programs. There is no consistency.
61. The people that are not getting good time
62. The way staff treats us and the overall Shape of the prison
63. There is not enough Phones for everyone on the unit to call our Family.
64. commissary
65. Dirty living conditions, very poor food, poor treatment by staff
66. Not Being with family or kids
67. The negative thing is that we are treated more Like children, than adults
68. They make you Focus and snitch on other Inmates you cant transfer to get Closer To Home
69. Getting responses back from staff on your concerns. Unfair treatment. Warden not accessible—treat unfairly—she won't let me get glasses. I was told I would have to not see for 4 months until I get glasses here

70. The staff treat you like shit! Nothing ever works here, ice machines don't work so you can't get ice! The medical neglect is the only type of medical you can receive.
71. You get treated like shit and the food is Bad
72. Treating us like animals back here.
73. Staff seems to have a lackadaisical attitude. Officers have consistently not shown up for work, therefore getting school work + activities canceled which effects "good time" for non attendance
74. not giving me my six months good time to go home Right date to see my family the counselor negative not getting that done doing they Job
75. The way they treat you hear. Its totally unprofessional SAD!
76. Just Being here away from my loved ones.
77. everything about SWICC!
78. Disrespect.
79. Inmates have to much control
80. Staff treatment towards inmate, super hot with ice machine, bad water, poor wifi, and staff is barely here so we can go to school or anything but yard.
81. stop letting individual who don't want the program to stop letting them come here.
82. The C/Os treat us like shit
83. some of the staff
84. It's very hard to get Edsc or know if you really Been put in for it
85. the commissary officers are Being Bias against 1 house for writting grievances and dont allow us to purchase what other houses get we are always last to shop
86. Dorm setting. Cleanliness. the bathrooms are atrocious There is nowhere you can go to find privacy. You cannot get away from other people.
87. It's easy to get bullied in this prison.
88. The bathroom is trashed leaks, wifi connection always goes out. food is small on trays, commissary is bogus to certain houses. short of staff shutdowns.
89. being around ungreatful people
90. That I think that 85% should get some type of good time
91. Staff treatment of inmates in custody.
92. Im able for good time but can't get it because of my background. But people with gun cases can get it...
93. Staff treating us unfairly. Staff not caring When you have an issue. In dorms not able to use the restroom When I have to even though you can unless Physical count. Staff not allowing. Not enough food. Not able to use the phone as much because phone schedule/not enough phones
94. Respect
95. If you are in GEO, a lot of people here only want the good time but no program values, they continue "hitting" which makes it hard for anyone who wants what the program offers.
96. food, commissary, phones, mice, mold, crowded
97. The most negative thing about this prison is the inmates not trying to plug into the program.
98. The attitudes of officers.

99. Covid-shutdowns every other week and teacher absences
100. Boring. Nothing to do
101. It's ALL About the money that's all.
102. The fact that staff treat you Like a Animal insted of a Person
103. The guard will lie about everything just for you to get in deeper trouble
104. quarantine
105. that staff i.e. counselor's can't do their job. the food they give you is like 5 fries. never enough.
106. Covid lockdowns, staff shortages, every C/O has different ways of doing every thing, no structure. too much personal choice when it comes to EDSC.
107. They threaten you all the time about If you Don't Do this we're taken your good time + shipping you. Bathroom's are Broke, showers are NASTY, small portion's in Chow hall. Ceiling leaking water, Black mold, always on lockdown/no movement aint enough officers
108. the portion of food.
109. The way the staff talk to us inmates we are grown men not little kids they speak to us like dirt mostly the white shirts and the food servings wouldn't even fill up a 1st grader
110. they short your servings on treys because they dont make enough to begin with. no one can transfer out of here unless they get in a flight. only two people have went to work release since i have been here. I have been here for **[30+]** months so far.
111. The negative treatment from staff
112. Hostile staff and disrespectful staff that try to instagate
113. No security to attend classes. No proper drug treatment due to covid. No communication between anyone. No yard due to lack of staff.
114. Fed very little compared to other prisons. Miss so much school compared to other prisons. No ice in our house. Hard to sleep in dorms.
115. Sanitation/Structural (This place is falling apart!) Lack of staff to keep programs open! Wifi provided is consistently down
116. How the Warden spins you when you ask her questions. How healthcare is extremely slow with every thing they do. I have multiple unanswered request slips and I unanswered grievance concerning a lump on my **[REDACTED]** that is getting painful.
117. lack of food lack of C/O's they not having your property
118. They dont gave us are good time that we should get
119. How the C/Os disrespect you, the way they pack up the dorms with imates and the houses be so little, how little food they serve us at chow time, theirs only 6 phones and like 180 imates in one house, visits only 2 hours and visitors come from far away
120. The way Geo runs B/c of covid-19 due to IDOC protocol
121. Shit changes daily
122. you have GEO + IDOC saying different things, day to day are different. It'll change from one day to the next. so unorganized!
123. You really have to be careful about who you go into the shower with or you end up getting raped.
124. Inhuman treatment

125. This prison does not provide the right fitting clothes That they are suppose to have. They don't have not even clothes to sell in commissary to Buy. It is inhuman to make a person go out there hole Bit with having to deal with it or holes in There Blankets Even.
126. Staff. Staff to inmate relations are not good. We're treated like less than. Like Lesser beings. Not like inmates, or Animals, but like were less important people because we are in Prison. Like our lives, comments, concerns, etc. do not matter much.

## **Q14. What suggestions do you have for improvement?**

1. Better Food and a Better Law Library that has a E-file machine/opportunity. Also, Larger portions of Food.
2. Commissary is a joke. They hold food until they get rid of other stuff. Also the workers get everything we don't and charge everyone double for it.
3. Highly Trained Internal Affairs and more consequences.
4. Let IDOC in Springfield select who receive EDSC, and do frequent visits an personal come ask questions in groups, or by questionnaire such as this
5. Better WIFI or overall system. Better COVID system. Too many lockdowns and missed visits. Better help to move 85% people to work release faster. More overall consistency.
6. Don't overcrowd—doesn't help programs or attitudes (inmates or C/O's) Get GEO up+running right. Better food portions. Better commissary
7. Fire warden 1. Hire a man to deal with men.
8. Shut it down, fire the staff and start over.
9. Install the air conditioners that were already approved and paid for. Be consistent on a daily basis
10. That people who cant afford TV's or Tablets should be able to get state loans.
11. Train staff better
12. Give the most attention to where its NEEDED. make this place a revolving door the way it should be.
13. Good time giving, phone situations, commissary pricing, best mattress
14. more caring healthcare
15. make it for Drug offenders only, cut phone privileges from guys Taking over phones, that gang bang and try to bully older white guys
16. close it down
17. Springfield and JHA needs to come down unannounced so you can really see how we are treated. Also have an Individual in Custody call line to hear Our side of this story
18. The Warden needs an Incarcerated Individual call line so she can know what is going on here. Springfield and JHA need to come down unannounced to see how this prison really treats the Incarcerated. Also they should have a call line so real issues can be voiced without fear of retaliation from staff and officers

19. Bigger portions on the trays. More access to cleaning supplies. An outside advocate for the prisoners to talk to. Cameras be placed in the housing units and basically the whole prison so the staff cannot lie on the prisoners about fake staff assaults and threats and intimidations.
20. A/C
21. Communication. Consistency. Better programs. more LTS activities.
22. Respectful staff
23. care about how it's ran. staff works so much over time they just want to be off they dont care.
24. Treat us Better our voice matter Listen To what we have to say
25. I suggest when IDOC counselors ask question and say they going to get back with you they should. The prison should follow all Illinois statutes and Bill that are pass. I think they should fix their toilets and showers
26. Upgrade the wifi system. Put more phones in the dayroom. Get more workout equipment for the yard. Serve bigger portions of food at chow. Fix the plumbing!
27. get wardens that actually care other than securing a pension
28. Staff and medical need re-evaluation of some sorts
29. Hire more staff. more consistency with school, commissary and programming. Adequate servings for our three meals. more professional staff. More Phones, to ease the tensions of overcrowding
30. Keep the dorms quiet when lights are out. It can get noisy.
31. Need more C/O's to work so we can work more and receive good time for school. As well as having more C/O's that don't abuse their authority. Commissary days and times need to be consistent. Better more reliable mail efficiency.
32. Organization
33. Better food
34. That people here get training on how to treat us as people not a number or our sentence
35. more staff. more schooling
36. IDOC counselors seem VERY Impersonal. **[STAFF NAMES REDACTED]**
37. Hire a Warden who cares about the inmates and not just the paycheck. we are suppose to receive EDSC 45 days and do not.
38. A new warden, more phones, reliable maintenance response to work orders for toilets and ice machines, more competent staff. more reliable, consistent, and competent commissary Supervisors, more school, programs Opportunities to earn good time.
39. Get more Hispanic People and phones
40. get a schedual and maintane it let every house shop every week not Just some cause they are so slow, put more phones on unit. there are 6 phones for 180 people.
41. The officers need to lay off the bullshit, they always on somethings with the inmates.
42. Bring more weights on the yard and open up the big part of the yard. Alot approximately 100-150 people on a concrete black top yard similar to Lawrence C.C.
43. which is a Maximum this is supposed to be a minimum security
44. Hire more staff!!
45. The Food, more Jobs, Triple contracts

46. Staff training. More phones. More Food at Dietary. allow us to get on the phone. More programs.
47. Let people with petty crimes go home.
48. Staff Conduct Regulations.
49. Enforce the rules that are in place quiet in the dorms more phones or less people in each dorm.
50. Officers should monitor and enforce rules. provide cleaning supplies. more structure, more learning opportunities to prepare for re-entry to community. More discipline, consequences for those who don't want to follow the structure, disruptive and getting in the way of those who want to grow. Remove the bad applies
51. get rid of officer **[REDACTED]** for racism.
52. Get people in the administration (Head Warden) that actually cares about making this place better and treats us like human beings that are on their way to society!
53. Beter training. more officers, counselors whom know there jobs
54. They need to change this hole Jail this hole system is mess up.
55. Better dietary. more programs. Pay Attention too inmates medical needs.
56. Get structure, organization, help people go home instead of keeping them here.
57. N/A
58. Fire people. Follow mount Sterlings prison and Bring charges on The staff
59. More communication between staff and inmates. Less disrespect towards inmates. More consistency in all facets of life
60. Everyone is submitted for the Edsc and springfield hands it out not if parent joint submits you
61. Many for one I am a Disable man **[DETAILS REDACTED]** and this prison is not Handicap Accessible
62. Put more phones so people can call Family more often and with less crowded phones.
63. Better food + commissary
64. provide better food. properly repair issues in bathroom + housing units
65. That they do more to pay attention to people's Health and answer their request sooner than later and get proper staff.
66. To increase effectiveness make it more realistic to the outside world, to make reentry a bit easier
67. Burn It down/close It
68. New management. Air conditioning. Training for the guards.
69. Get a better medical team!! Get ice machines!! Teach staff not to threaten or harm individuals in custody! Get a phone for each dorm so there are no fights over the phone.
70. Commissary needs worked on and not enough staff. Needs more activities
71. All new staff & warden they are horrible
72. More staff, organization + effectiveness of all activities. cancelation of classes as a last resort, get covid 19 cases under control, better food in chow hall, stools for top bunk inmates, activating app on tablet to make calls since inmates wrestle over them.
73. New Counselor help brothers like me to change for programs and classes Better prison things is poorly I don't like it how the prison running it. Real talk

74. Dietary Food Need To give us more, The portions Not Right. Commissary we DONT GET TO GO ON TIME. The Toilets Dont work, Mice rats, No air conditions, no ice, Total Disrespect
75. Giveing us our EDSC So we can Go Home to our family's
76. needs to be ran alot better and organized.
77. Shut it down NOW!
78. C/O's need to start doing there job's and start taking control of things
79. Better staff training, AC in the housing units, more staff hired to run the prison, someone here that's not IDOC to hear issue and watch staff treatment towards inmate
80. Let individuals who really want to change and Better them self into GEO program.
81. Phone System (not enough phones)
82. serv us more food
83. Springfield comes and see how they Run this place for General population!
84. get more officers that will do there jobs correctly so we can make it to school and change the commissary supervisors stop them from giveing special treatment to other inmates
85. It needs cleaned up really bad and there needs to be more communication about what programs and services are offered.
86. hire more staff. Hire Qualified counselors. Treat houses fairly with everything including store. fix the maintenance issues.
87. more officers
88. Staff
89. Consistency amongst administration. More programs to better utilize time served.
90. Starting over my life.
91. More phones. Better communication by staff. better staff training. Staff to care about your issues. better programs. more staff. more food, better food.
92. Respect Better Food, Commissary
93. True day for day. We are made to follow program guidelines even when we are not scheduled, so we should get credit—90 for 90
94. consistency, order in the way things are ran, EDSC is rarely given, work release is rarely given
95. Be more strict on people that are not trying to improve their way of thinking, acting, and overall trying to become a better person.
96. Better training for officers
97. Get some teachers that want to be here & stop covid lockdowns b/c they take days away from contracts & prolong school
98. Better food. Better staff. More good time
99. This prison NEEDS to be looked into deeply.
100. Better Healthcare and Dental and Better treatment by staff
101. hire more people with mental health background
102. staff goes thru training
103. Consistency + rehabilitation. more school options, more programs.
104. Close it Down, Hire more staff, Run it like a Drug rehab and not a Disciplinary Prison.
105. better portions on the food trays



106. more respectful staff. MORE STAFF more food porportions. the Counselors need to be more Respectful as well
107. that they get a better checks & ballence system because this Place does whatever it wants
108. more organized ways of almost everything. like seperating work, school, and unassigned with programs and commissary
109. were supposed to have certain meals on our menu but staff tend to keep better menu items for themselves such as chicken tenders and fried chicken
110. over sight of some sort
111. Come see how this place is ran. Or read all the other surveys from here at S.W.I.C.C
112. Make the portions of food larger. Get us to school regularly. Fix our ice machine. Enforce quiet time in dorms.
113. Just better sanitation, and more staff. fix wifi, so tablet sold actually works. Add phone to tablet, would decrease much of internal fighting.
114. Be repetitive with things they do instead of switching staff up daily and then getting yelled at for being wrong. Fixing the Ice Machine. Getting air conditioning.
115. more C/O's to work
116. none
117. more time on visits with loved ones, more phones in houses, better order for commissary, more food served at chow, teach officers how to talk to inmates, were humans not dogs!
118. No more quarantines
119. Close it
120. Get organized. Get everyone on the same page. This person says this—as this person says to do this. and we are suppose to read minds...pure chaos.
121. Condoms + Lube
122. Tone it down Mold & Asbestos
123. provide clothes and Jackets to All prisoners Boots, gloves, hats, sweaters, underwear. The fact that I have to write all this shit Down. The state is suppose to provide These Things and All sizes.
124. More Phones. More qualified, Less argumentative wardens. Fix the Ice machine. be compassionate if You're Staff. Staff consistency. Follow the Geneva convention rules by the way, we're at Southwestern Illinois correctional.

## **Q15. Please write any other comments or feedback on this survey below.**

1. Better Food and a Better Law Library that has a E-file machine/opportunity. Also, Larger portions of Food.
2. I have **[MEDICAL INFORMATION REDACTED]** and can't feel where I'm stepping and have been denied a bottom bunk. It's a matter of time before I get hurt.

3. The staff here are completely unprofessional, Some of them are having sex with inmates, others are bringing drugs in. Some of us are forced to do certain things or the staff will threaten to frame us for misc. things. Life behind bars is treacherous.
4. I think the shower area should be evaluated because of IDOC standards of sanitation, and security reasons. The sleeping unit is extremely uncomfortable and dangerous in the summer. Air condition is equip to other buildings, and should be suitable for all staff and individuals living within the units. Someone my age or older could die from heat exhaustion in their sleep. So this is very dangerous, and extremely unbearable, in which I don't know if I will make it through another summer here. Ice is necessary to stay hydrated
5. I get I broke the law, but I am human. I do my best to show respect to those here at SWICC. I wish people would recognize the effort. I am punished by my % here, not the work I am doing.
6. Fix bathrooms!!!! Fix commissary—more supply, non union!!!! Upper officers—this is not the service!!!! Control population!!!! More don't mean better!!!! Better run GEO program!!!! Better air flow—temperature inside + COVID!!!! Better warden—1 or 2 that can work together and run things like they need to be run. Not 3 that each run things their own way. Don't run like service and not a adult daycare full of people that should not be here.
7. 2 women run this place. They have no business running a mens Jail
8. The Geo staff are ok but other than that people and staff are just cashing checks and going home!
9. The inmates here get away with too much Bullying. Phones are dominated by gang members. People steal from me almost on a daily basis.
10. John Howard needs to do more checks on this facility cause its a lot goes on needs addressed then it is to the eye
11. People hide behind good time and Bully old white guys for phone, weights, shower and many other things. Cause we are smart and won't sacrifice good time.
12. Medical here is horrible!
13. This prison needs to be shut down. the maintenance issues and how staff treats the individuals in custody is inhumane. It is like living in another company
14. This place puts on a good front but when visitor are not here the Incarcerated are treated badly. There need to be some opportunities for the Incarcerated to be able to let people who care and that can make changes do what is necessary to make the Incarcerated feel like they are human. Instead of us being treated like animals
15. We need a new warden that cares about the prisoners and the over all goal of the IDOC which is to rehabilitate and re-program the prisoners and get us back into society as soon as possible. This warden will not make her staff do their jobs. She tells our counselors to lie to us about EDSC. She puts out her own memos that are not approved by the Director and are not on official memorandum letter head. This warden has bred a culture of hate towards the prisoners. Any thing we bring to her attention she tells us we are lucky we are getting good time and dismisses us. We never know when we are going commissary. The majority of the C/O's with exception of about 5 are very aggressive and they are being trained to be that way. This warden is also

putting out her on policies on when we can put in for transfers like going to work release. Telling us even if we meet the criteria to go she will not put us in even when we are done with the drug program. She tells her staff to confiscate our property with out issueing shake down slips and giving IDR's and giving us a chance to recieve our property back or send home she tells them to throw our property in the trash. I could go on and on. Something needs to be done about this prisons culture.

16. This is a drug treatment facility and only people who are serious about treatment should be allowed to be here. There are too many people here who do not fit the criteria. It is not a good environment for someone who seriously needs/wants help.
17. I heard a guy tell staff he was having thought of hurting his self the staff said not on his shift wait till he went home...and SWICC will not let anyone transfer out without getting in a fight or walking your self.
18. The bathroom upstairs leaks on us thru the ceiling in the bathroom on my deck. The staff treat the inmates less than humanlike. The John Howard people toured here recently. It was very comical watching the frenzy the staff were in prepping for and during their visit.
19. Why even bother nothing go change been locked up 20 years and officers are the same worse
20. The medical negligence is absolutely unfair + unjust.
21. The GEO program can be very helpful to my life and my return to society, but the day to day here is very negative. From interactions with staff, overcrowding, inconsistencies with commissary.
22. I'd appreciate if dorms were kept quiet at nighttime. Thank you.
23. I believe if you look at these surveys and change the negative things you read about. This is probably the best prisoner advocate there is. And I thank you for your service.
24. They are good indicators to be used.
25. The number one warden doesn't care about inmates. Commissary is not consistent.
26. Help!!!
27. we need AC soon as posible
28. Staff treat us like shit Cause they know they Can Cause we all get good time, also these video visits I dont see how they can deny family members for Criminal history when its only over video and its monitored, I Cant see my family or my kids Cause of this.
29. If the officers wasn't on so much bull it be a nice joint to be in.
30. The food in dietary is the worst quality and quantity I have seen in all the **[6+]** different prisons I have been in. The commissary is garbage you cannot even get a peanut Butter or some good coffee to drinks these two things are essential to survival in prison.
31. When you have people staying out of trouble they should be able to work go to school and program so they can get home. We need more staff!
32. This place is horrible you need to help us.
33. The U.S. criminal justice system needs to change.
34. Be humane and Fair

35. Some kind of resources for people getting out. Good time programs you can do through the mail school life skills ect., because the teachers never show up and the guards are way understaffed. Acctually submit us for EDSC good time.
36. on **[DATE REDACTED]** during commissary I was called a racist slur by Officer **[REDACTED]** he called me a white piece of shit I wrote a grievance about the situation I feel the officer should be fired.
37. I think the funding for this place is misplaced!
38. Need to analyze the portions on the trays because they are not following the state guidlines on portion size. More training for your officers. The safty of the water we drink the levels are unsafe.
39. Can't wait to complete all my contracts so I can get home
40. Seems like you get told by officers, wardens, and counselors they will Help you in matters, and nothing ever done. responses to questions or request slips, doesnt happen as should, communication sucks Here. the C/Os block you from talking to warden.
41. This is my **[4+]**th prison bit and I have never been so stressed out in my life. This is the only place I've seen deny everybody EDSC to everyone or not put you in for it.
42. N/A
43. Im not a whistle blower but for This prison Id gladly Testify against The staff for every Thing from drug Dealing to Abuse. Id Throw In The female officer sleeping with the 2 Inmates for Free!
44. I feel like the staff at the upper levels does what they can to intentionally limit our EDSC and other good time. I do not feel like communication to Springfield or to us is open and honest. Also, commissary is distributed randomly and unfairly.
45. People need to make sure that Springfield is recieving our names for good time
46. They claim thing Such as ADA But Disregard Them no Handles anywhere not in Shower or toilet No shower chair I get treated like Shit Because they Don't Know How to Handle a disabled Person like myself they tell me to Transfer or get over it yet I am only **[MEDICAL DETAILS REDACTED]** here very behind the times win it comes to this My Name Is **[REDACTED]** Please look into this as this prison offers most good time But Throws it in your face and gets Away with it.
47. Give more good time for Good Conduct
48. The Warden and Healthcare Sucks here and they don't care about your Health at all.
49. There needs to be questions about IDOC receiving and their treatment of humans
50. The staff degrade you. I've Begged them For Teeth. But without money They wont do Shit For ya,
51. you can't even go To your dam Hometown 4 work Release Have to go to Chicago. They do Nothing But tell you Lies Here. P.S. I would Love to Tell you more
52. This place needs to put the A/C in that they got paid 4.1 million in 2020. The fans they sell here won't even reach you off your shelf!! They need to sell the fans they use to. I have had surgery Here for **[MEDICAL INFORMATION REDACTED]** and They won't even give me a colonostomy!! I have been here a year takes 2 weeks to get batteries for your hearing aids. This place needs to be investigated BADly!! My name is **[REDACTED]** at SWICC

53. Needs more hooks and chairs for showers theres no where to put our things while taking showers
54. Staff are so lazy, not getting any EDSC at all. It's a race thing here, and not right
55. In the short period of time that I have been here. I have seen efforts in making things here more organized + activities more consistent however that will take group effort by administration + attitudes of staff members, possibly more officers to alternate when ones don't come in or they are low staff. It seems they have many officers, + they need consistency in thier practices, as well as putting thier efforts in the right changes, not just yelling or directing inmates with thier authority. Thank-you, Respectfully!
56. I want to go home to see my outdate so I need to go better prison than here Better food and classes Better counselor help Inmates go get a Education on school or Better See Better. Thank you
57. When you put in a grievance, on a certain person or Department, They give or show the grievance to that Department and when Its Time for you or your wing to go, they scar us all The Time. They treat us Real Bad Down here. 10 Toilets, 4 that work. The Showers Dont have hot water and only 4 work out of 12. Mice run around At nighttime in our shoes and boxes that we have no control of. Every weekend, It seem Like the wifi gets turned off so we cant get our visits or use the machines. Is 180 Inmates on this wing and 6 phones, There is always a problem Everyday about the phones, some of us dont Even get to use the phone. IDOC Dont care. 1 House always shop last when Everybody Else get the good commissary before we go. They never Let us get a chance to get the good stuff. The NAACP or someone thats over these people needs to be investigated soon. This Just what I see and my opion.
58. The covid quarantines are pushing everybody's outdates back months and months this prison is very poorly ran!!!
59. Start making it more like a prison and less like a summer camp. prisoners will always complane no matter how good they have it
60. Please take these issues seriously. It's super hot in these dorms with no AC, no ice, bad water. These conditions especially coming towards the summer months are and will become even more inhumane. Them being under staffed stops school and other programs.
61. Ice machines need fixed and the phone situation sucks the same inmates get on the phone over and over again so not every one has a fair chance to get on the phone
62. I think they treat GEO way Better than General Population
63. they need to quit useing criminal history to denee people for edsc good time. as the statute says
64. This place falls very short. but certain staff help make up for some of it. over all its rough time though.
65. Get rid of 85% no good time allowance
66. I was told the I can get the extra good time. But this prison block me because of my background which is only theif case's no gun's or violents I should be able to get the EDSC
67. Our bathroom is leaking from the upstairs bathroom. Staff know and don't care and bathroom over flowing and alot of toilets broke. Staff won't allow us to use bathroom

even though we can unless physical count. They threaten us with tickets and shipping us out. There is not enough food given to us I've lost so much weight and I only really get money from family every 2 months. Not selling cloths or good enough hygiene/bowls spoons. Please help us

68. The guidelines for visitation are ridiculous. This joint has made it damn near impossible to visit my loved ones, even on video. My parents are 70 and disabled and live in **[REDACTED, IL]**. My Daughter is in **[ANOTHER STATE]**
69. I think this survey is a good way for people to start looking at themselves in a whole new light.
70. Test the water and levels.
71. I don't care I'm going in 3 months
72. This place is good for the good time & Nothing else, barely have staff to Run this place its very sad.
73. They care more about people breaking the rules then and inmate health and well being. Swicc east St. Louis Illinois
74. I just want to be put in for EDSC or work release. I've been here a year they say they have to vote you in to phase 4. Before you can put in for work release.
75. Make this prison Resubmit you every 90 Day's for EDSC like the law says. Make them fix everything that is wrong with it. this the worst Prison in Illinois I've Been in. Staff is very Rude + Dietary Don't Feed us very Good at all.
76. cheaper + better commissary
77. There needs to be more staff and they need to be more respectful and treat us like we are humans and not trash!!!
78. Staff need to be trained on not Letting there Personal Life/feeling's dictate how they treat inmates at this facility.
79. We are not allowed to put in for a transfer and leave unless it's a disciplinary transfer making inmates have to fight another inmate to leave the facility. Money is this facility's motivation.
80. Staff tends to give special treatment to inmates who snitch on other inmates and those inmates tend to then feel immunity to go and bully and have no consequences for anything that other individuals would have consequences for. another staff member walked into a room full of inmates and said "bad guys everywhere," so there's a lot of disrespectful staff
81. We're not being put in for EDSC, we are being locked down constantly due to lack of staff. No proper procedures, poor healthcare. Every C/O and security treat us like shit. And we have to just hang our heads and take it or they'll ship us and use the drug good time as their control device.
82. There are a couple good C/O's at this prison. But overall, say 90%, of staff from Majors down to C/O's are extremely rude and unhelpful compared to staff at Illinois River. If I did this survey for Illinois River my answers would be totally different. SWICC is so much worse in every way other than all the rec here.
83. The roof in bathroom leaks mystery liquid! Drinking water in jugs is filled in closet...where toilet brush hangs overhead. Lack of real supervision. No state loan items, hard to replace clothing. Thank you for your time!



84. When anyone asks staff Questions, 65% of the time the staff says I will get back to you and never do. The staff are terrible. Also the phone situation is FUCKED!!! One day inmates run it, the next guards run it. When the guards run it, they flicker the hallway lights to show counts clear then 50-60 men all sprint down the hallway to be first on the phone. One of these times someone WILL FALL and someone WILL GET TRAMPLED OVER! And then the prison WILL have a LAWSUIT! The way they do it is BULLSHIT because if your not big, strong, or fast, your pretty much fucked on getting an early slot. Also, when everyone runs down the hallway, the guards just laugh at us. IT IS ABSOLUTE BULLSHIT! Something needs to be done!
85. working to hard to get this good time
86. none
87. The joint needs to work on how they run things and take care of problems. The joint is poorly ran and never on the same acord...the GEO program is a great program and needs more support and funding...I think 3 contracts should get brought back if possible...
88. More college programs. College credit hour courses.
89. Not enough guards
90. Just wish things would fall in line, be in order, have some sort of structure. TOOOO many Chiefs so the indians are running around with our heads cut off!
91. It a very well varity of useful & Helpful Qs
92. This institution is unstructured, unorginized, understaffed. people are treated poorly not a fair chance to a fair hearing if you get a ticket. Forced to have your good time on hold if your teachers Dont come to work. And homework is not provided in order to get your good time if you dont have class.
93. Female staff give repremands to inmates who are in the shower, disrobed, nude. Female staff members who repetedly gaze into the shower make me uncomfortable to shower on their shifts.

## OTHER MARGINALIA COMMENTS

### **Q2. Race or ethnicity [White, Black, Hispanic or Latino, Other]**

1. [Hispanic or Latino] and Proud

### **Q5. What housing status are you currently on? [General Population, Restrictive Housing, Other]**

1. [Other] Drug Program
2. [Other] Programming
3. [Other] Dorms
4. [Other] Geo



**Q6. Are you currently getting at least 2 hours a day out of your cell or sleeping area? [Yes, No]**

1. [Yes] sometimes. Depending on shortage of staff

**Q7. Do you have a work or school assignment? [Work assignment, School assignment, Both, Neither]**

1. [Neither] Geo
2. [Neither] And lv begged for one

**Q8. Mark response that best describes how you feel (Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Neutral = N, Disagree = D, Strongly Disagree = SD)**

I receive support from staff when I need it.

1. [SD] Never

Staff here treat incarcerated people here fairly when applying the rules.

1. [SD] Never

I am treated as a person of value.

1. [SD] Today as of [DATE REDACTED] I was cussed at and Threatened in The Chow Hall

**Q9. Mark response that best describes how you feel (Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Neutral = N, Disagree = D, Strongly Disagree = SD)**

Staff have enough experience and expertise to deal with issues that matter to me.

1. [SD] HAHA

Staff are argumentative towards incarcerated people.

1. [SA] Daily

Positive things only happen for a certain type of people.

1. [A] Black

I have to be careful about everything I do, or it can be used against me.

1. [SA] Yes

Staff respond promptly to incidents and alarms.

1. [SD] Never

**Q10. Mark response that best describes how you feel (Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Neutral = N, Disagree = D, Strongly Disagree = SD)**

Anyone who harms themselves is considered by staff to be more of an attention seeker than someone who needs help.

1. [SA] Yes

Mental health treatment is available.

1. [SD] NEVER

I am satisfied with food from dietary.

1. [SD] HA!
2. [SD] HAHA

**Q11. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 10, mark the box this prison deserves in terms of the quality of life/general treatment of the people incarcerated here. [1 (Lowest), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (Highest)]**

1. [1] you Have no clue how bad This place is ran. Ive Heard staff belittle me, cuss me and us racist remarks to me and others. Trash cans have black mold, even The Internet Router is full of mold
2. [1] to nice

**Miscellaneous comments**

1. Law Library should be a lot more plentiful and available. 1 or twice every 2 weeks is not enough. Why does SWICC not have an Efiling system to file complaints? And to receive filings?
2. If we write a grievance we get punished for it



This report was compiled by JHA staff. Media inquiries should be directed to JHA's Executive Director Jennifer Vollen-Katz at (312) 291-9183 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 read every letter and track 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 everyone who graciously shared their experiences and insights with us.

