



NYSCOPBA Files Lawsuit Against DOCCS, NYS Department of Civil Service

Lawsuit Cites Lack of COVID-19 Leave Time for Officers Exposed to Virus

For Immediate Release
January 15, 2021

Albany, NY – Today, NYSCOPBA filed a lawsuit against the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision and the Department of Civil Service. The lawsuit alleges that, through policies and their actions, DOCCS and Civil Service have improperly withheld paid leave for NYSCOPBA members who have been placed on more than one mandatory quarantine or an extended quarantine beyond 14 days for exposure to or infection with COVID-19. DOCCS has only provided, at most, one 14-day block of paid leave to NYSCOPBA members who have been quarantined.

“Our members are essential staff and must come to work every day, without exception. Our members cannot work from home like so many others, and our members are often directed to work mandatory overtime. Our prisons are at constant risk for COVID-19 outbreaks, so our members face constant risk of becoming infected every time they walk into their facilities. Then, when many of them inevitably become exposed to or contract COVID-19, they are placed out of work, through no fault of their own. They have no control over this. Since the pandemic has raged onward since March, our members are now being placed on second or even third mandatory quarantines, having been exposed to COVID-19 again and again while on duty. Many of our members have contracted COVID-19 at work, have been unable to return to work in 14 days, and have been out on their own pay after that. They should not be punished by being forced to use personal leave or to go without pay when State law provides paid leave for them without charge to their accruals. This lawsuit will hopefully achieve our goals and put an end to this once and for all,” stated NYSCOPBA President, Michael B. Powers.