



NYSCOPBA Calls on DOCCS to End Inmate Transportation

All Non-Essential Transportation Should be Suspended Immediately

***For Immediate Release
March 18, 2020***

Albany, NY – NYSCOPBA is calling on the Acting Commissioner of DOCCS to immediately end all non-essential transportation of inmates to minimize the exposure to COVID-19 for staff and inmates.

In a letter dated March 9, 2020, NYSCOPBA requested a number of measures to be taken to minimize the possible exposure of the Coronavirus. One of the requests was the immediate reduction of transportation of inmates to outside facilities except for medical emergencies.

A follow up letter dated March 14, 2020 outlined a number of measures that DOCCS failed to take to safeguard correctional facilities, staff and the inmate population from the Coronavirus. The letter referenced an “indifference” on the administrations part to follow proactive measures recommended by the CDC and World Health Organization to contain the spread of the deadly virus. All of this inaction occurred prior to, and after Governor Cuomo declared a state of emergency on Saturday, March 7, 2020 and President Trump declared a national state of emergency on Friday, March 13, 2020.

“The health and well-being of DOCCS employees and the incarcerated population should be of paramount importance to the administration, yet as other state and county correctional institutions across the country took proactive measures to limit exposure, DOCCS failed multiple times to heed the advice of the CDC as well as disregard NYSCOPBA requests to suspend all unnecessary inmate transportation, inmate visits and remove double bunking to improve social distancing among inmates. ” – stated Michael B. Powers, NYSCOPBA President.