



November 20, 2025

Acting Warden I _____ s
Federal Correctional Institution Thomson
1100 One Mile Road
Thomson, IL 61285

RE: OSHA Inspection # 1825063

Dear Warden _____ :

An OSHA inspection of your facility located in Thomson, Illinois, beginning on May 15, 2025, disclosed the following hazards:

Correctional Officers processing general correspondence and legal mail may potentially be exposed to hazardous drugs/substances trafficked through the mail system, intended for delivery to inmates.

We have examined available information on the hazards associated with the mail processing operations conducted at your facility. Based on this inspection, the following specific findings and recommendations are being made to enhance employee safety and health:

FINDINGS:

- A. FCI Thomson does not require Mail Room and SIS employees to utilize protective arm sleeve covers or similar barriers to protect against direct and/or inadvertent dermal (skin) contact. On or about 15 May 2025, and at times thereafter, BOP employees handled general mail and legal correspondence potentially contaminated with hazardous drugs/substances. Employees wore short sleeve uniform shirts, and/or rolled up their sleeves, leaving portions of their forearms and upper arms exposed to direct dermal (skin) contact when opening and handling mail.
- B. FCI Thomson does not require Mail Room and SIS employees to utilize aprons, coveralls or similar contact barriers to protect employees against the inadvertent transfer of contamination from gloves to their duty apparel/gear (e.g., uniform, belt, radio, firearm holster, etc.). On or about 16 April 2025, and at times thereafter, BOP employees handled general mail and legal correspondence potentially contaminated with hazardous drugs/substances. The duty apparel/gear represents a secondary/indirect route of contamination when touched or handled without gloves.
- C. FCI Thomson does not require Mail Room and SIS employees to utilize a face shield or similar transparent visors to protect against direct and/or inadvertent dermal (skin) contact. On or about 16 April 2025, and at times thereafter, BOP employees handled general mail and legal correspondence potentially contaminated with hazardous drugs/substances.

- D. FCI Thomson does not require R&D (Mail Room) and SIS employees to wear respiratory protection when opening and inspecting contents of mailed envelopes and other correspondence/packages, prior to photocopying and/or scanning for narcotics, unless the package is characterized as suspicious. On or about 16 April 2025, in the absence of accepted and effective engineering controls, FCI Thomson did not require R&D (Mail Room) to wear respiratory protection when opening, inspecting and photocopying contents of general correspondence.
- E. FCI Thomson does not ensure that general mail and legal correspondence envelopes had content removed and inspected within the HEPA-filtered Biological Safety Cabinet. On or about 16 April 2025, and at times thereafter R&D (Mail Room) employees only cut open / slitted general correspondence envelopes inside the hood; the inner contents were removed, unfolded and inspected outside the HEPA-filtered Biological Safety Cabinet, at the photocopier.
- F. FCI Thomson does not ensure that packages, books, catalogues and other bulky mail items were opened and inspected within a HEPA-filtered Biological Safety Cabinet. On or about 16 April 2025, and at times thereafter R&D (Mail Room) employees cut open and inspected bulky mail items outside the HEPA-filtered Biological Safety Cabinet, which was neither sized nor positioned for such items.
- G. FCI Thomson does not equip the portions of the facility occupied by SIS and R&D (Mail Room) employees, during the opening, inspecting, and testing of Legal Mail, with accepted and effective engineering controls, such as but not limited to a HEPA-filtered Biological Safety Cabinet. On or about 13 August 2025, and at times previous, SIS and R&D (Mail Room) employees processed legal mail in a hallway and did not have access to a HEPA-filtered hood.
- H. FCI Thomson does not adopt and implement commercially available detection technologies (e.g., scanners utilizing the principles of Ion spectroscopy; Raman spectroscopy; Terahertz electromagnetic waves; etc.) for the early identification of hazardous drugs/substances in the mail stream within the Mail Room and to inform on the selection of PPE and the use of other controls (engineering and administrative) for downstream tasks. On or about 16 April 2025, and at times thereafter, Mail Room employees did not have access to a narcotics detection device.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Among other methods, feasible and acceptable means of abatement include but are not limited to:

1. Strategically co-locate R&D Mail Room and SIS operations pertaining to inmate mail/correspondence handling (as described in existing policies) and revise applicable procedures to minimize the transfer of inmate mail/correspondence and reduce the potential for tracking of contamination through multiple prison units. Current setup provides for one HEPA-filtered Biological Safety Cabinet in the Mail Room located outside the secure area and one Ion Scanner located inside the secure area. Furthermore, the Ion Scanner is transferred between the facility's lobby area and the secure hallway for Legal Mail delivery. Co-locating resources allows for increased oversight and reduced response times.
2. Revise existing policies to require additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and adopt a strict enforcement posture, always requiring the use of such PPE by correctional

officers handling mail/correspondence that has not been evaluated using narcotics detection methodologies.

3. Expand the use of existing FCI Thomson narcotics detection methods (i.e., Ion Scan) to all inmate correspondence and legal/special mail. Revise accordingly existing policies which authorize the use of such narcotics detection methods.
4. Revise existing procedures for mail opening in a HEPA-filtered Biological Safety Cabinet and expand it to all types of correspondence approved for inmates, including but not limited to catalogues, publications, or packages. Revise procedures to focus on taking out the contents and inspecting them inside a calibrated HEPA-filtered safety cabinet, through shaking, waving, and other investigatory methods as deemed necessary to ascertain whether the piece of correspondence/mail is suspicious.
5. Expand the definition of correspondence that may be rejected and uniformly adopt it across all existing guidance and directives. Seek to reduce burdens (including but not limited to tracking and paperwork) associated with the rejection and returning of mail by working with other agencies such as the US Postal Service.
6. For suspicious general correspondence or legal/special mail that is referred to SIS, adopt a visual tagging system (e.g., colored dot) to identify mail that had been vetted by SIS and returned to Mail Room and revise accordingly existing policies.
7. Train all Correctional Officers and support staff who are expected to handle inmate mail, including but not limited to Mail Room staff, SIS employees, and Unit Management, on the identification and handling of all suspicious mail. Training shall include but not be limited to suspicious mail examples; criteria for rejection of mail; options for narcotics testing (including functionality, operation, maintenance and limitations of narcotics scanning devices such as the Ion Scanner).
8. Acquire additional narcotics detection devices such as but not limited to ThermoFisher Scientific TruNarc Handheld Narcotics Analyzer and/or Smiths Detection IonScan 600 Portable Narcotics Trace Detectors, for the exclusive use of the mailroom staff. Additional drug contraband detection technologies for correctional facilities have been identified by DOJ -funded research in 2017 and 2021.
9. Acquire additional portable HEPA-filtered Biological Safety Cabinet(s) for use by SIS and R&D staff during the opening, inspection, and testing of Legal Mail.
10. Adopt bulk mail scanning systems for all mail/correspondence that use electromagnetic technologies such as Terahertz Radiation which is proven to penetrate materials. Examples include but are not limited to RaySecur MailSecur™ desktop system which has been designed by US Department of Homeland Security as a Qualified Anti-Terrorism Technology (QATT) under the Safety Act.
11. Implement inmate mail digitizing technologies as tested and piloted by US DOJ FBOP at other facilities (e.g., FCI Beckley, West Virginia, and USP Canaan, Pennsylvania) since at least 2017. Such technologies which allow for photo scanning and digitizing inmate general correspondence and legal/special mail and subsequently making it available to inmates via secure electronic means (e.g., tablets or kiosks) include but are not limited to “LIAM SAFE /LIAM LEGAL” that has been previously evaluated by FBOP.

OSHA welcomes any report of your efforts to reduce the above-mentioned exposures. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact this office at: (630) 300-7100.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke.

Jacob Scott
Area Director



Citation and Notification of Penalty

To:
Department of Justice / Federal Bureau of Prisons / FCI
Thomson
and its successors
1100 One Mile Rd.
Thomson, IL 61285

Inspection Number: 1825063
Inspection Date(s): 05/15/2025 - 11/19/2025
Issuance Date: 11/20/2025

Inspection Site:
1100 One Mile Rd.
Thomson, IL 61285

The violation(s) described in this Citation and Notification of Penalty is (are) alleged to have occurred on or about the day(s) the inspection was made unless otherwise indicated within the description given below.

This Citation and Notification of Penalty (this Citation) describes violations of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. The penalty(ies) listed herein is (are) based on these violations. You must abate the violations referred to in this Citation by the dates listed and pay the penalties proposed, unless within 15 working days (excluding weekends and Federal holidays) from your receipt of this Citation and Notification of Penalty **you either call to schedule an informal conference (see paragraph below) or** you mail a notice of contest to the U.S. Department of Labor Area Office at the address shown above. Please refer to the enclosed booklet (OSHA 3000) which outlines your rights and responsibilities and which should be read in conjunction with this form. Issuance of this Citation does not constitute a finding that a violation of the Act has occurred unless there is a failure to contest as provided for in the Act or, if contested, unless this Citation is affirmed by the Review Commission or a court.

Posting - The law requires that a copy of this Citation and Notification of Penalty be posted immediately in a prominent place at or near the location of the violation(s) cited herein, or, if it is not practicable because of the nature of the employer's operations, where it will be readily observable by all affected employees. This Citation must remain posted until the violation(s) cited herein has (have) been abated, or for 3 working days (excluding weekends and Federal holidays), whichever is longer.

Informal Conference - An informal conference is not required. However, if you wish to have such a conference you may request one with the Area Director during the 15 working day contest period by calling (630) 300-7100. During such an informal conference, you may present any evidence or views which you believe would support an adjustment to the citation(s) and/or penalty(ies).

If you are considering a request for an informal conference to discuss any issues related to this Citation and Notification of Penalty, you must take care to schedule it early enough to allow time to contest after the informal conference, should you decide to do so. Please keep in mind that a written letter of intent to contest must be submitted to the Area Director within 15 working days of your receipt of this Citation. The running of this contest period is not interrupted by an informal conference.

If you decide to request an informal conference, please complete, remove and post the Notice to Employees next to this Citation and Notification of Penalty as soon as the time, date, and place of the informal conference have been determined. Be sure to bring to the conference any and all supporting documentation of existing conditions as well as any abatement steps taken thus far. If conditions warrant, we can enter into an informal settlement agreement which amicably resolves

this matter without litigation or contest.

Right to Contest – You have the right to contest this Citation and Notification of Penalty. You may contest all citation items or only individual items. You may also contest proposed penalties and/or abatement dates without contesting the underlying violations. Unless you inform the Area Director in writing that you intend to contest the citation(s) and/or proposed penalty(ies) within 15 working days after receipt, the citation(s) and the proposed penalty(ies) will become a final order of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission and may not be reviewed by any court or agency.

Penalty Payment – Penalties are due within 15 working days of receipt of this notification unless contested. (See the enclosed booklet and the additional information provided related to the Debt Collection Act of 1982.) Make your payment online at www.pay.gov. At the top of the [pay.gov](http://www.pay.gov) homepage, type "OSHA" in the Search field and select Search. From **OSHA Penalty Payment Form** search result, select Continue. The direct link is:

<https://www.pay.gov/paygov/forms/formInstance.html?agencyFormId=53090334>

You will be required to enter your inspection number which is included in the Citation Summary on the first page. Payments can be made by credit card or Automated Clearing House (ACH) using your banking information. Payments of \$25,000 or more require a Transaction ID, and also must be paid using ACH. If you require a Transaction ID, please contact the OSHA Debt Collection Team at (202) 693-2170.

If you are unable to pay electronically or have additional questions, please contact our office at (630) 300-7100.

OSHA does not agree to any restrictions or conditions or endorsements put on any check, money order, or electronic payment for less than the full amount due, and will process the payments as if these restrictions or conditions do not exist.

Notification of Corrective Action – For each violation which you do not contest, you must provide *abatement certification* to the Area Director of the OSHA office issuing the citation and identified above. This abatement certification is to be provided by letter within 10 calendar days after each abatement date. Abatement certification includes the date and method of abatement. If the citation indicates that the violation was corrected during the inspection, no abatement certification is required for that item. The abatement certification letter must be posted at the location where the violation appeared and the corrective action took place or employees must otherwise be effectively informed about abatement activities. A sample abatement certification letter is enclosed with this Citation. In addition, where the citation indicates that *abatement documentation* is necessary, evidence of the purchase or repair of equipment, photographs or video, receipts, training records, etc., verifying that abatement has occurred is required to be provided to the Area Director.

Employer Discrimination Unlawful – The law prohibits discrimination by an employer against an employee for filing a complaint or for exercising any rights under this Act. An employee who believes that he/she has been discriminated against may file a complaint no later than 30 days after the discrimination occurred with the U.S. Department of Labor Area Office at the address shown above.

Employer Rights and Responsibilities – The enclosed booklet (OSHA 3000) outlines additional employer rights and responsibilities and should be read in conjunction with this notification.

Notice to Employees – The law gives an employee or his/her representative the opportunity to object to any abatement date set for a violation if he/she believes the date to be unreasonable. The contest must be mailed to the U.S. Department of Labor Area Office at the address shown above and postmarked within 15 working days (excluding weekends and Federal holidays) of the receipt by the employer of this Citation and Notification of Penalty.

Inspection Activity Data – You should be aware that OSHA publishes information on its inspection and citation activity on the Internet under the provisions of the Electronic Freedom of Information Act. The information related to these alleged violations will be posted when our system indicates that you have received this citation. You are encouraged to review the information concerning your establishment at www.osha.gov. If you have any dispute with the accuracy of the information displayed, please contact this office.



Citation and Notification of Penalty

Company Name: Department of Justice / Federal Bureau of Prisons / FCI Thomson
Inspection Site: 1100 One Mile Rd., Thomson, IL 61285

Citation 1 Item 1 Type of Violation: **Serious**

29 CFR 1910.120(q)(1): Emergency response plan. An emergency response plan shall be developed and implemented to handle anticipated emergencies prior to the commencement of emergency response operations. The plan shall be in writing and available for inspection and copying by employees, their representatives and OSHA personnel.

a) On or about 16 April 2025, FCI Thomson did not develop and implement an emergency response plan to address emergency responses to hazardous drug/substance staff exposure incidents consistent with the elements of an emergency response plan outlined within 1910.120(q)(2). Numerous employees responded to an alleged hazardous drug/substance staff exposure incident originating within the Mail Room on 16 April 2025 in the absence of an established institution specific emergency response plan covering hazardous drug/substance exposure emergencies.

Among other methods, feasible and acceptable means of abatement include but are not limited to the development of an emergency response plan covering all emergency types to include hazardous drug staff exposure incidents and inclusive of the eleven (11) elements of an emergency response plan outlined in 1910.120(q)(2):

- 1) Pre-emergency planning and coordination with outside parties;
- 2) Personnel roles, lines of authority, training, and communication;
- 3) Emergency recognition and prevention;
- 4) Safe distances and places of refuge;
- 5) Site security and control;
- 6) Evacuation routes and procedures;
- 7) Decontamination;
- 8) Emergency medical treatment and first aid;
- 9) Emergency alerting and response procedures;
- 10) Critique of response and follow-up; and
- 11) PPE and emergency equipment.

ABATEMENT DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR THIS ITEM

Date By Which Violation Must be Abated:
Proposed Penalty:

February 26, 2026
\$0.00

U.S. Department of Labor
Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Inspection Number: 1825063
Inspection Date(s): 05/15/2025 - 11/19/2025
Issuance Date: 11/20/2025



Citation and Notification of Penalty

Company Name: Department of Justice / Federal Bureau of Prisons / FCI Thomson
Inspection Site: 1100 One Mile Rd., Thomson, IL 61285

The alleged violations below have been grouped because they involve similar or related hazards that may increase the potential for injury or illness.

Citation 1 Item 2 a Type of Violation: **Serious**

29 CFR 1910.120(q)(6): Training. Training shall be based on the duties and function to be performed by each responder of an emergency response organization. The skill and knowledge levels required for all new responders, those hired after the effective date of this standard, shall be conveyed to them through training before they are permitted to take part in actual emergency operations on an incident. Employees who participate, or are expected to participate, in emergency response, shall be given training in accordance with 1910.120(q)(6)(i)-(v).

a) On or about 16 April, 2025, employees expected to participate in and those participating as responders in the emergency response for an alleged hazardous drug/substance staff exposure incident originating within the Mail Room had not been given emergency responder training consistent with their expected duties and functions as responders.

ABATEMENT DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR THIS ITEM

Date By Which Violation Must be Abated: February 26, 2026
Proposed Penalty: \$0.00



Citation and Notification of Penalty

Company Name: Department of Justice / Federal Bureau of Prisons / FCI Thomson
Inspection Site: 1100 One Mile Rd., Thomson, IL 61285

Citation 1 Item 2 b Type of Violation: **Serious**

29 CFR 1910.1200(h)(3)(ii): The physical, health, simple asphyxiation, combustible dust, and pyrophoric gas hazards, as well as hazards not otherwise classified, of the chemicals in the work area;

a) On or about 16 April, 2025, SIS and R&D (Mailroom) employees assigned to work with inmate mail as well as first responders capable of responding to an alleged hazardous drug/substance emergency had not received formal training on the physical hazards (i.e., routes of exposure, signs/symptoms of exposure, potential outcomes of exposure, risks of exposure, etc.) of different categories of illicit drugs including, but not limited to, synthetic opioids, synthetic cathinones, synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic psychedelics, synthetics hallucinogens, barbiturates, etc.

ABATEMENT DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR THIS ITEM

Date By Which Violation Must be Abated:
Proposed Penalty:

January 13, 2026
\$0.00

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacob Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Jacob Scott
Area Director



INVOICE / DEBT COLLECTION NOTICE

Company Name: Department of Justice / Federal Bureau of Prisons / FCI Thomson
Inspection Site: 1100 One Mile Rd., Thomson, IL 61285
Issuance Date: 11/20/2025

Summary of Penalties for Inspection Number: 1825063

Citation 1 Item 1, Serious	\$0.00
Citation 1 Item 2a, Serious	\$0.00
Citation 1 Item 2b, Serious	\$0.00

TOTAL PROPOSED PENALTIES: **\$0.00**

To avoid additional charges, please remit payment promptly for the total amount of the uncontested penalties summarized above. Make your payment online at www.pay.gov. At the top of the pay.gov homepage, type "OSHA" in the Search field and select Search. From the **OSHA Penalty Payment Form** search result, select Continue. The direct link is:

<https://www.pay.gov/paygov/forms/formInstance.html?agencyFormId=53090334>.

You will be prompted to enter your inspection number which is included in the Citation Summary on the first page. Payments can be made by credit card or Automated Clearing House (ACH) using your banking information. Payments of \$25,000 or more require a Transaction ID, and also must be paid using ACH. If you require a Transaction ID, please contact the OSHA Debt Collection Team at (202) 693-2170.

OSHA does not agree to any restrictions or conditions or endorsements put on any check, money order, or electronic payment for less than the full amount due, and will cash the check or money order as if these restrictions or conditions do not exist.

If a personal check is issued, it will be converted into an electronic fund transfer (EFT). This means that our bank will copy your check and use the account information on it to electronically debit your account for the amount of the check. The debit from your account will then usually occur within 24 hours and will be shown on your regular account statement. You will not receive your original check back. The bank will destroy your original check, but will keep a copy of it. If the EFT cannot be completed because of insufficient funds or closed account, the bank will attempt to make the transfer up to two times.

Pursuant to the Debt Collection Act of 1982 (Public Law 97-365) and regulations of the U.S. Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 20), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is required to assess interest, delinquent charges, and administrative costs for the collection of delinquent penalty debts for violations of the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Interest: Interest charges will be assessed at an annual rate determined by the Secretary of the Treasury on all penalty debt amounts not paid within one month (30 calendar days) of the date on which the debt amount becomes due and payable (penalty due date). The current interest rate is one percent (1%). Interest will accrue from the date on which the penalty amounts (as proposed or adjusted) become a final order of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (that is, 15 working days from your receipt of the Citation and Notification of Penalty), unless you file a notice of contest.

Interest charges will be waived if the full amount owed is paid within 30 calendar days of the final order.

Delinquent Charges: A debt is considered delinquent if it has not been paid within one month (30 calendar days) of the penalty due date or if a satisfactory payment arrangement has not been made. If the debt remains delinquent for more than 90 calendar days, a delinquent charge of six percent (6%) per annum will be assessed accruing from the date that the debt became delinquent.

Administrative Costs: Agencies of the Department of Labor are required to assess additional charges for the recovery of delinquent debts. These additional charges are administrative costs incurred by the Agency in its attempt to collect an unpaid debt. Administrative costs will be assessed for demand letters sent in an attempt to collect the unpaid debt.



11/20/2025

Jacob Scott
Area Director

Date