



Strengthening Families Through Support, Education & Advocacy

TIFA and TCJC want to hear from you!!

The Texas Inmate Families Association (TIFA) in conjunction with the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition (TCJC) is doing a survey of folks whose friends or loved ones have been impacted by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). TDCJ is presently undergoing an evaluation called a Sunset Review which is an assessment process used to determine whether a state agency is working properly. As the Sunset Review Commission evaluates the functions, policies, and procedures of TDCJ, commission members will seek input from the public. This is our chance to voice our thoughts, concerns and suggest improvements and have a significant impact on confinement issues – a chance to humanize the TDCJ system. At the end of the process, the Sunset Commission will submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Legislature in the form of “Sunset Legislation”.

TIFA and TCJC want to understand your concerns regarding TDCJ and we are gathering information that will be used to prepare a list of concerns and recommendations that will be presented to the Commission. All information will be **confidential**. If you do not wish to participate in the Sunset Review Process and have received this survey in an email, please hit reply and say ‘I do not wish to participate in the SSR process’ and we will not contact you again.

Let’s stand up and be heard – your loved ones need you!!

QUESTION 1 – DEMOGRAPHIC & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Email address:

Offender’s first name:

Are you a TIFA member: Yes ___ No ___

How are you associated with TDCJ? *(Check and answer all that apply)*

___ Loved one incarcerated

- What is your relationship? _____
- What was the crime and how long is the sentence? _____
- In what county was the crime committed? _____
- What unit is your loved one in now? _____

___ You have been/are incarcerated

- What was the crime and how long was/is the sentence? _____
- In what county was the crime committed? _____
- What unit are you in now? _____

___ You work in a criminal justice associated job

___ You volunteer with a group/ministry

___ Other _____

QUESTION 2

We want to know what your top concerns are. Please rank at least the top 3 issues (you can rank as many as you wish) that you would like to see changed in TDCJ. You can do this by placing a number next to each issue.

1. Visitation ____
 - *e.g., frequency, accommodations for children, considerations for disabilities, etc.*
2. Mailing Issues ____
 - *e.g., problems with the process, access, mail being read, etc.*
3. Health Care ____
 - *e.g., access to medicine, doctor visits, etc.*
4. Physical Conditions of Confinement ____
 - *e.g., heat, water quality, etc.*
5. Administrative Segregation ____
 - *e.g., use, excessive use, etc.*
6. Overcrowding ____
 - *e.g., what problems associated with this, how is space limited, does it impair access to exercise, activity, etc.*
7. Commissary ____
 - *e.g., availability of goods, quality, access, expense, usefulness, etc.*
8. Property ____
 - *e.g., how is it stored, issues of confiscation, can they give property away, store property in cell, etc.*
9. Grievance Process ____
 - *e.g., how accessible, difficulties with the process, clarity, unavailable, usefulness, etc.*
10. Staff issues ____
 - *e.g., thoughts on training of staff, lack of staff, bad treatment by staff.*
11. Education ____
 - *e.g., availability, access and restrictions to participation, are they helpful, do they need to be better, etc.*
12. Rehabilitation & Treatment Programs ____
 - *e.g., availability, access and restrictions to participation, use as disciplinary tool, are they helpful, do they need to be better, etc.*
13. Parole Board & Parole ____
 - *e.g., problems, communication, transparency, issues with parole, oversight, availability and access to programs and resources/services, etc.*
14. Re-entry ____
 - *e.g., specific problems, communication of resources, availability of resources and services, access to programs, etc.*
15. Food ____
 - *e.g., availability of alternative meals, issues with dietary restrictions, health problems, vegetarian meals, nutrition issues, quality, availability, etc.*
 -
16. Other _____

QUESTION 3

Please give us a few sentences to describe your concerns about the issues you indicated in the previous question. *(If you need more space please continue on a separate sheet of paper.)*

1. Priority Concern Identified: Description:
2. Priority Concern Identified: Description:
3. Priority Concern Identified: Description:
4. Priority Concern Identified: Description:
5. Priority Concern Identified: Description:

QUESTION 4

Would you be willing to help in some way with the Sunset Review? Please rank your preferences with a 1, 2, 3, etc.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Conduct research ____ | 8. Contact Sunset Commission members in your area ____ |
| 2. Write input statement ____ | 9. Contact Legislators ____ |
| 3. Write feedback statement ____ | 10. Testify – talk about personal issues with TDCJ ____ |
| 4. Provide organizations with information ____ | 11. Help others prepare to offer written materials or provide oral testimony ____ |
| 5. Provide written information ____ | |
| 6. Make phone calls ____ | |
| 7. Develop and/or disseminate handouts/brochures ____ | |

QUESTION 5

Would you be interested in attending a Sunset Review hearing?

Yes ____ No ____

QUESTION 6

Would you like to receive more information about the Sunset Process?

Yes ____ No ____

QUESTION 7

May we contact you if we need additional information?

Yes ____ No ____

Thank you! We appreciate your time. Please let us know if we can provide you more information about this process.

If you wish to mail the survey:

Texas Inmate Families Association
P.O. Box 300220
Austin, TX 78703-0004
Phone: (512) 371-0900 Email: tifa@tifa.org