

Volunteer Opportunities in Illinois:

Holding ICE Accountable – Go to <https://reporticenow.com/>, a site created by the **ICE Accountability Project**, to submit testimony, video, and other digital evidence on a confidential basis of incidents of abuse by ICE, as they occur or as they have occurred in the past year, to help in a systematic effort to confirm, document, and challenge those abuses, and to publicize them systematically in one place, in a manner that can't be censored by the government or by U.S. media giants.

Find more about this initiative by watching Lori Lightfoot's January 9, 2026 launch video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96McpUqZRzY>

Mentoring Our Youth – Celebrate National Mentoring Month by joining in the mentoring work of the Chicago Mentoring Collaborative. Find out more here:

<https://www.chicagomentoringcollaborative.com/>

Mentoring of our underprivileged youth, in which we can all participate, is a primary way of helping them to thrive and to avoid a life of involvement in the criminal

2025 relaunch of Cook County Jail Votes

Questions? – email Freddoe@chicagovotes.com

Volunteer to get training and to register voters in the jail:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XhDq5BR2G7KeDfBLzYSgaNiev6CLvf5wzOUzWBTRh1k/viewform?emci=c8d1f86-6171-f011-8dc9-6045bda9d96b&emdi=99e360ae-ed79-f011-b481-6045bdf8e9c&ceid=9503032&edit_requested=true

Court Watching opportunity – [Sign up here](#) to complete a one-hour training virtually to participate in at least two 2-3 hour shifts in May and June in observing and reporting on courtroom proceedings under the Pretrial Fairness Act, working with the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice and Chicago Appleseed Center for Fair Courts You will help to hold judges and other court stakeholders accountable, to demystify the judicial process, and to strengthen Appleseed's research and advocacy.

Click here: <https://www.chicagoappleseed.org/court-watching/> to learn more.

Volunteer opportunities at **Safer Foundation** at locations throughout Illinois and eastern Iowa

Learn more at: <https://saferfoundation.org/get-involved/>

Kolbe House Prison Ministry of the Archdiocese of Chicago – volunteer to help prep, deliver, or underwrite the cost of meals for their twice monthly FAITH night--Families Affected by Incarceration; contribute basic items to their clothing and food pantry which serves individuals coming out of jail and families in need, and find out about possible opportunities to participate in their in-jail ministry at the Cook County Jail

Information about how to learn more about Kolbe House's mission, ministry, and needs is available at

<https://pvm.archchicago.org/human-dignity-solidarity/kolbe-house-jail-ministry/contact-us>

Chicago Community Jail Support – on-site assistance 5:00 to 10:00 pm daily at 27th and California for those being released from Cook County Jail, run entirely by volunteers

<https://chicago-community-jail-support.webnode.com/>

Learn how to volunteer at:

<https://chicago-community-jail-support.webnode.com/my-work/>

Learn about volunteer roles at:

<https://chicago-community-jail-support.webnode.com/volunteer-roles/>

Learn of other ways to contribute:

<https://chicago-community-jail-support.webnode.com/donate/>

Follow on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook:

<https://chicago-community-jail-support.webnode.com/follow-us/>

Join the Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice (as an individual or an organization) at

<https://www.ilarj.org/>

Defy Ventures <https://www.defyventures.org/>– volunteer to mentor incarcerated and formerly | incarcerated individuals in the entrepreneurial programs that enable them to find their inner strength and to become the CEOs of their own lives: <https://www.defyventures.org/take-action-main/take-action-volunteer/volunteer> .

Register to be a volunteer at: <https://volunteer.defyventures.org/>

For more information about volunteering at Defy Ventures, email Melissa at

melissa@defyventures.org

Volunteer opportunities at **St. Leonard's Ministries** including mentoring, training in interviewing and other skills,

Learn more from Gloria Riley at gloria.riley@slministries.org

Volunteer opportunities for lawyers at **Cabrini-Green Legal Aid** to provide legal assistance to formerly incarcerated individuals and other in a wide variety of matters, from administrative proceedings, to litigation to helping people expunge and seal their criminal records

Learn more at <https://www.cgla.net/volunteerwithcgla>

Fill out this form to learn of future volunteer opportunities at the **John Howard Association** in:

Prisoner Information Services

General Administrative/Office & Fundraising

Citizen Prison Monitoring

<https://www.thejha.org/volunteer-application>

Opportunities to be a **Pen Pal** with someone who is incarcerated. Find details for:

Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry Network through the **Church of the Larger Fellowship Ambassador Program for Illinois** /

follow the steps outlined at <http://www.uupmi.org/penpals.html>

The **Friends Beyond the Wall** program at <http://www.friendsbeyondthewall.com>

The **Write to Prisoners Project** at <https://prisoninmates.com/>

Go to <https://jmail.cc/> for further information about how to communicate with prisoners without disclosing your address

The Federal Prisons all have email via www.corrlinks.com

Social Change – Volunteer to become a change agent in amplifying community voices and disrupting the legacy of systematic injustice through organizing, policy advocacy and storytelling, at

<https://socialchange.site/join-us>

Help in the work of **Chicago Books to Women in Prison** (<https://www.cbwp.org/>) by contributing paperback books, hosting a book drive or fundraiser, volunteering in packaging and sending incarcerated women books that they have requested, or soliciting books from publishers and authors.

Learn more here: <https://www.cbwp.org/volunteer> or by writing to chicagobwp@gmail.com and note "Volunteer Training" in the subject line

(Semimonthly volunteer orientations start again in February 2025)

Volunteer opportunities in **Illinois Correctional Facilities** through the Department of Corrections

Learn more at <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/programs/Pages/VolunteerPrograms.aspx> and from the volunteer coordinators at each facility (available at the phone number for each facility available at a link in that page)

Tutor/Mentor Program of the Tutor/Mentor Institute – Volunteer to tutor at risk kids all over Chicagoland. Get more information at: <http://www.tuormentorexchange.net/volunteer>

Campaign to Free Incarcerated Survivors of Police Torture (CFIST)

Learn how to help in getting the Cook County State's Attorney to vacate convictions and in seeking pardons from Governor Pritzker at <https://www.caarpr.org/take-action-sao>

Join the CFIST list serve by writing to cfist@caarpr.com to participate in the monthly online CFIST meetings at 6:00 the first and third Thursday of each month

Volunteer opportunities at the **Community Renewal Society** in Policy and Organizing, depending on available time commitment and areas of interest -see:

<https://www.communityrenewalsociety.org/take-action> .