



# JOE COLEMAN MEDICAL RELEASE ACT

Governor JB Pritzker on Aug. 19, 2021, signed into law House Bill 3665, the Joe Coleman Medical Release Act. The law goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2022. The Joe Coleman Medical Release Act allows incarcerated people with terminal illnesses or disabilities to end their sentences and return to their families.

## ELIGIBILITY

People eligible for release under the Joe Coleman Medical Release Act must be terminally ill and have been given a prognosis of 18 months or fewer to live. People considered medically incapacitated might also be eligible, meaning that they need assistance to complete two or more activities of daily living, such as bathing, eating, walking, getting dressed, or using the restroom.

## APPLICATION AND CONSIDERATION

Beginning on Jan. 1, the Prisoner Review Board will accept applications for medical release. Applications can be submitted by email or fax, and do not need to be notarized. Anyone can submit an application, including the incarcerated person for whom medical release is sought, a family member, a friend, an Illinois Department of Corrections staff member, or a medical professional. Meeting the conditions for eligibility does not guarantee medical release. Release will be granted solely at the discretion of a three-member panel of the Prisoner Review Board.

Medical release is an additional avenue to pursue release from IDOC custody. Applying for medical release under the Joe Coleman Medical Release Act does not exclude someone from pursuing other forms of relief, such as commutation or resentencing.

## PREPARATION

If you are looking to apply for a medical release after Jan. 1, 2022, you can begin now by collecting medical records and preparing a parole plan. Medical records should include a brief overview of the applicant's medical history and specific documentation of the treatment and progression of the individual's terminal illness or disability. A parole plan should include where the person will live upon release, any additional support they will receive from family and friends, and any benefits they may qualify for, such as those through the Department of Veterans Affairs.