

# Juvenile center boss raps report on reforms

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In another sign of friction at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center, administrators are disputing the report of a court-appointed monitor who said officials were not cooperating.

"We believe that we are continually cooperative in every way," wrote Supt. J.W. Fairman, in an internal memo obtained Wednesday by the Tribune. The five-page memo, dated Nov. 29, is addressed to Brenda Welch, appointed by a federal judge to oversee reforms at the center.

In her own report earlier this month, Welch had said her relationship with the center's leaders had deteriorated, with "adversarial" officials limiting access, slowing information and creating roadblocks.

Welch also complained that information was being funneled through a new liaison, Richard Scott, who Welch said had no juvenile justice experience.

Fairman on Wednesday questioned whether Welch "had the authority to recommend staff hiring." Fairman also listed Scott's qualifications, including his work as a youth gang expert at the U.S. Department of Justice.

"He brings a great deal of understanding and compassion for the youth of Cook County," Fairman said.

Fairman acknowledged other problems, noted by Welch, such as glitches in keeping up with relatives on appointments. But he said the overall effect of the changes was positive.

"There were some small glitches but overall a well-received and appreciated result," he wrote.

Though Welch noted that reports of violence persist, Fairman pointed out that not all reports in October were against detention staffers.

"[The] compliance administrator says there were 18 abuse allegations when in fact there were only 11 under direct JTDC authority," Fairman wrote, adding that other allegations against the Juvenile Temporary Detention Center involved family members or sheriff's deputies.

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