Delaware Department of Correction Pigeonly Contract Research Report

Contract DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN
Postal Mail Contraband Elimination Services

ADVOCACY AND OVERSIGHT DOSSIER

Research current through September 12, 2026

Public-records analysis • Source quotations • Contract-cost reconciliation • Records-request template

How to Use This Report

The fastest route to the State's public file is the official Contract Directory page below. It is the controlling index for the documents that Delaware has chosen to publish. The most important finding is that the public index does not include the signed professional-services agreement, Pigeonly's proposal, evaluation records, invoices, security addendum, or performance data. Those absences materially limit independent review.

Official contract record: https://contracts.delaware.gov/Contracts/Details/6420[1]

This report separates verified facts, agency or company claims, calculations, and inferences. Dollar projections are arithmetic based on posted monthly fees, not a representation that the State guaranteed every payment. Delaware payment totals are sums of transaction lines in the State Checkbook and may reflect invoice timing. The bankruptcy discussion reports docket facts and does not imply breach, insolvency at present, or inability to perform.

This is independent public-records research, not legal advice. Short quotations are included for verification; full source documents should be read for context. Superscript bracketed numbers refer to the Source Notes at the end.

At a Glance

Question	Answer
Who is the vendor?	Pigeonly Inc., doing business as Pigeonly Corrections.
What is the contract?	Postal Mail Contraband Elimination Services, DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN.
Current posted term?	Dec. 1, 2023–Dec. 31, 2028, combining the initial award and one posted renewal.
State fee?	$18,258/month initially; $16,568/month beginning Jan. 1, 2026.
Projected posted-fee total?	$1,052,898 across the 61 posted months, if every monthly fee is billed.
DOC payments found?	$579,327.50 through the latest identified check dated Aug. 5, 2026, including pilot-era payments.
Are families required to subscribe?	No public Delaware rule found makes the optional Pigeonly consumer subscription a condition of sending ordinary mail.
What happens to originals?	Current public instructions say originals are held for 45 days and destroyed, not returned.
Is legal mail scanned?	No. Public rules direct attorney legal mail to the facility; misdirected legal mail is to be forwarded unopened.
Is the signed contract public?	Not on the public contract page as of Sept. 12, 2026. The posted Appendix C is explicitly a sample.

1. Executive Summary

Delaware's official Contract Directory identifies Pigeonly Inc. d/b/a Pigeonly Corrections as the vendor for statewide postal-mail contraband elimination services under DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN. The original notice sets a Dec. 1, 2023 through Dec. 31, 2025 term at $18,258 per month. An Oct. 30, 2025 addendum extends service from Jan. 1, 2026 through Dec. 31, 2028 at $16,568 per month. The active landing page now displays a Dec. 31, 2028 expiration date.[1, 2, 3]

> *"Monthly fixed fee of $18,258 for the initial term of the contract."*[2]

> *"Addendum-1 extends the contract for three years effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2028."*[3]

At the posted rates, the initial 25-month period calculates to $456,450; the 36-month renewal calculates to $596,448; and the full posted 61-month schedule calculates to $1,052,898. The renewal reduces the monthly fee by $1,690, or 9.26 percent, producing $60,840 in three-year savings against continuation of the original monthly rate. These are derived figures, not an independently stated contract ceiling.

The State Checkbook shows $579,327.50 in Department of Correction payments to vendors whose name contains Pigeonly from fiscal year 2022 through checks dated Aug. 5, 2026. That total includes the 2022 JTVCC pilot and therefore should not be treated as spending solely under the 2023 statewide award. The payment sequence shifts from $18,258 to $16,568 after the renewal, corroborating the posted price change.[11]

Operationally, personal mail is sent to a Pigeonly post-office box in Las Vegas. Pigeonly opens and screens it, creates searchable color scans, places them in a facility-specific interface for DOC review, and forwards approved clean hard copies. Current instructions say originals are held for 45 days and then securely destroyed. Legal mail, government correspondence, publisher-direct materials, and certain approved financial, religious, and educational items continue directly to facilities.[4, 5, 9, 10]

The most consequential oversight gaps are documentary: the executed agreement and statement of work are missing; the public file does not establish enterprise encryption, access-log, deletion, breach-notice, audit, or subpoena-handling controls; the public evidence behind DOC's sweeping contraband-reduction claims is absent; and no public renewal file shows how the State assessed service quality, data security, financial stability, or Pigeonly's 2024 Subchapter V bankruptcy before extending the contract.[1, 7, 9, 13, 14, 16]

There are also two material public-record contradictions. The RFP Q&A says originals will be delivered to incarcerated people, while the current flyer says originals are destroyed after 45 days. And the RFP advertised a two-year initial term plus optional two-year extensions, while the notices implement a 25-month initial term followed by a three-year extension. Both discrepancies may be resolved by the signed agreement, but that agreement is not posted.[2, 3, 4, 5, 10]

2. Direct Official Links

The following links are the core Delaware record. The first is the contract landing page; the remaining links are its individual documents.

Record	Why it matters / direct link
Official contract landing page	Open Contract DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN
Initial award notice	Open award notice PDF
2025 renewal / Addendum 1	Open renewal PDF
Request for proposals	Open RFP PDF
RFP Addendum 1: Q&A	Open Q&A PDF
Revised proposals received	Open proposer list PDF
Appendix C sample agreement	Open sample agreement PDF
2022 JTVCC pilot release	Open 2022 release PDF
2024 statewide expansion release	Open 2024 release PDF
Current mail instructions / FAQ	Open March 2025 flyer PDF
State Checkbook dataset	Open Delaware spending data

3. What Is—and Is Not—Public

Documents the State posts

- Contract landing page and contract identifiers.[1]
- Initial award notice and 2025 renewal notice.[2, 3]
- RFP, Q&A addendum, and a four-vendor proposals-received list.[4, 5, 6]
- An unsigned sample professional-services agreement with blank scope and budget fields.[7]
- Agency releases, mail instructions, and statewide expenditure transaction data.[8, 9, 10, 11]

Documents not found on the public contract page

As of the research cutoff, the landing page did not post any of the following. Their absence from the page does not prove they do not exist; it means they are not available through the State's public contract index.[1]

- Signed master professional-services agreement, executed Appendix 1 scope/budget, schedules, exhibits, or order-of-precedence clause.
- Pigeonly's technical proposal, price proposal, contract exceptions, demonstrations, or best-and-final offer.
- Evaluation committee names, scoring sheets, reference checks, oral-presentation notes, award recommendation, or negotiation record.
- Purchase orders, invoices, itemized billing support, payment approvals, service credits, or penalties.

- Enterprise data-security and privacy addendum; system architecture/data-flow diagram; encryption, access-control, logging, audit, retention, deletion, incident-response, or breach-notice requirements.
- Insurance certificates; approved subcontractor list; background-check and Prison Rape Elimination Act compliance records.
- Monthly usage reports, mail volumes, rejections, processing times, loss/damage data, complaints, grievances, audits, corrective actions, default notices, or cure plans.
- Underlying data and methodology supporting DOC's public claims about contraband elimination and a two-thirds overall reduction.
- Renewal business case, price analysis, responsibility determination, financial-stability review, bankruptcy analysis, or continuity plan.

Why the sample agreement is not the contract

The posted Appendix C is a template. Its scope and budget appendix is blank, it has no Pigeonly-specific signatures, and it cannot establish which model clauses were accepted, modified, or supplemented. It is useful for identifying likely negotiating subjects—ownership, confidentiality, indemnity, audits, insurance, subcontracting, termination, and Delaware law—but its language should not be represented as binding without the executed agreement.[7]

4. Contract Snapshot

Field	Public record
Contract name	Postal Mail Contraband Elimination Services
Contract number	DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN
Agency	Delaware Department of Correction
Vendor	Pigeonly Inc. d/b/a Pigeonly Corrections
Award-notice vendor address	2252 East Pama Lane, Las Vegas, NV 89119
Award-notice contact	Keith Bowdle • 971-241-0117 • keith@pigeonlycorrections.com
State contract contact	Craig.Fetzer@delaware.gov
Initial term	Dec. 1, 2023–Dec. 31, 2025
Renewal term	Jan. 1, 2026–Dec. 31, 2028
Initial fee	$18,258 per month
Renewal fee	$16,568 per month
Vendor classifications	Portal says not M/WBE, not Veterans/SDV, and not a Delaware vendor

The renewal document's address line appears to contain a formatting artifact—"3713 2252 East Pama Lane." That should not be treated as proof of an address change. Pigeonly's current website lists 2510 E. Sunset Road, Suite 5-800, Las Vegas, NV 89120; that is a company website address, not necessarily the contract notice address.[3, 15]

5. Procurement History and Timeline

Date	Event	What the source establishes
Mar. 7, 2022	Pilot announced	One-year JTVCC mail-scanning pilot, scheduled to begin Apr. 4, 2022.
Apr. 4, 2022	Pilot begins	JTVCC personal mail redirected to Pigeonly in Las Vegas.
Aug. 21, 2023	RFP issued	State solicits subscription-based postal-mail contraband elimination services.
Sept. 6, 2023	Q&A issued	DOC answers 30 vendor questions and clarifies operational requirements.
Sept. 15, 2023	Bids due	Four proposers are listed.
Dec. 1, 2023	Initial contract effective	Pigeonly award begins.
Dec. 12, 2023	Award notice dated	Initial fixed monthly fee and term published.
Mar. 26, 2024	Expansion announced	DOC says remaining three Level V facilities will join effective Apr. 15.
Apr. 15, 2024	Statewide rollout	BWCI, HRYCI, and SCI join JTVCC.
Oct. 8, 2024	Bankruptcy plan confirmed	Third-party docket reports confirmation in Pigeonly's Subchapter V case.
Oct. 30, 2024	Plan effective-date notice	Third-party docket reports notice of plan effective date.
Oct. 30, 2025	Renewal signed/posted	Three-year extension and reduced fee published.
Jan. 1, 2026	Renewal begins	New $16,568 monthly fee period starts.
Dec. 31, 2028	Posted expiration	Current contract landing page expiration date.

The RFP was issued under 29 Del. C. §§ 6981 and 6982. It contemplated an initial two-year contract and up to three optional two-year extensions. The actual public notices instead produce a 25-month initial period and one three-year extension. The signed agreement and renewal negotiation file are needed to determine the authority, option structure, and order of precedence that governs this departure from the solicitation.[2, 3, 4]

> *"subscription-based postal mail contraband elimination services"*[4]

Competition and evaluation

The revised proposals-received list names BrightKey Inc. of Annapolis, Maryland; Court Record & Data Management Services Inc. of Wilmington, Delaware; Pigeonly Corrections of Las Vegas, Nevada; and TextBehind Inc. of Phoenix, Maryland. The public file does not disclose their prices or evaluation scores.[6]

Evaluation factor	Points
Experience and reputation	15
Expertise	15
Capacity and financial stability	15
Geographic location	10
Proposed services and timeline	20
References	5
Price	20
Total	100

The RFP required three years of financial statements. It did not require a performance bond. It also reserved discretion to select an offer other than the lowest price or highest numerical score if the State judged another result to be in its best interest. Those provisions make the missing financial-stability evaluation, award recommendation, and price comparison especially important.[4]

6. Cost, Projected Value, and Actual Payments

Posted fee schedule and derived value

Period	Months	Monthly fee	Derived total	Basis
Dec. 2023–Dec. 2025	25	$18,258	$456,450	Initial award notice
Jan. 2026–Dec. 2028	36	$16,568	$596,448	Renewal notice
Full posted schedule	61	Varies	$1,052,898	Arithmetic total

The renewal lowers the fee by $1,690 per month, a 9.26 percent reduction. Over 36 months, that is $60,840 less than maintaining the original $18,258 fee. The RFP estimated 2,927 mail pieces per month statewide, so the fixed fees correspond to about $6.24 per estimated piece initially and $5.66 during renewal. Those are normalized comparisons, not contractual per-piece prices.[3, 4]

The RFP reported average daily population of 4,296 across the four facilities. On that denominator, the fees correspond to about $4.25 per incarcerated person per month initially and $3.86 during renewal. The exact $4.25 relationship in the initial period may reflect a pricing assumption, but the vendor price proposal is not public, so that cannot be confirmed.[4]

State Checkbook payments to Pigeonly by DOC fiscal year

Fiscal year	DOC payment total	Interpretive note
FY 2022	$15,625.00	Pilot-era payments
FY 2023	$40,625.00	Pilot-era payments
FY 2024	$41,941.50	Transition from pilot to statewide award
FY 2025	$237,354.00	Predominantly $18,258 monthly-fee period
FY 2026	$210,646.00	Includes transition to lower renewal fee
FY 2027 through Aug. 5, 2026	$33,136.00	Two $16,568 monthly-fee equivalents
Total identified	$579,327.50	All identified DOC Pigeonly transaction lines

Method: filter the State Checkbook for Department of Correction transactions with a vendor name containing “PIGEONLY,” then sum the amount field by fiscal year. The public dataset was updated Sept. 6, 2026; the latest identified Pigeonly check date was Aug. 5, 2026. Repeated check numbers can represent multiple transaction lines, so all matching lines were summed. A separate $11,484 paid by Services for Children, Youth and Their Families was excluded.[11]

The Checkbook is payment data, not the contract ledger. Invoice timing, accruals, pilot purchase orders, partial periods, credits, and check reversals cannot be fully reconciled without purchase orders and invoices. The shift in recurring amounts from $18,258 to $16,568 nevertheless aligns with the renewal notice.[2, 3, 11]

7. Scope, Deliverables, and Contract Controls

The RFP required the contractor to receive redirected personal mail; open, inspect, scan, and copy incoming mail other than legal mail; transmit scans to a facility-specific graphical interface; permit DOC approval or rejection; and forward clean hard copies to facilities. The vendor was to pay forwarding costs and provide a method for handling misdirected mail.[4]

- Count mail items and provide monthly volume reports by facility.[4]
- Notify incarcerated recipients when mail is rejected and operate consistently with DOC Policy 4.0.[4]
- Provide required equipment and software at vendor expense.[4]
- Train DOC staff, educate families and friends, and provide customer service.[4]

- Deliver hard copies on the next business day after DOC approval, subject to holidays and unforeseen events.[4]
- Keep non-public Delaware data in the United States and perform no offshore activity.[4]
- Treat a mail piece as one envelope plus all contents, regardless of page count.[5]
- Retain digital copies in the interface throughout the contract and renewals; at contract end, DOC may request a media copy.[5]

  “Digital copies shall be retained within the GUI for the duration of the contract term and renewal terms.”[5]

Standard commercial controls in the solicitation

The RFP gives the State termination rights for cause or convenience with 60 days’ notice and includes a nonappropriation provision. It requires Delaware law and venue, specified insurance, monthly usage reporting by the fifteenth day, and cooperation with record retention and audit obligations. The contractor had to sign a formal agreement, and service was not to begin before a purchase order was signed by two authorized State representatives.[4]

The sample agreement includes model terms on intellectual property, confidentiality subject to FOIA, indemnity, subcontract and assignment approval, background checks, PREA compliance, insurance, record retention, audits, suspension, and termination. Its intellectual-property provisions appear internally important: one clause allocates work product to Delaware, while another contemplates vendor title to data. Only the executed agreement can show how these provisions apply to mail scans and metadata.[7]

8. Mail Process and Current Rules

Current end-to-end workflow

1. A correspondent addresses personal mail to the incarcerated person, includes the SBI number and facility code, and sends it to Pigeonly’s Las Vegas post-office box.[10]
2. Pigeonly receives, opens, screens, and scans the item. The scans are described as color and searchable.[4, 10]
3. The scans appear on a secure facility-specific dashboard for DOC approval or rejection.[4, 9, 10]
4. For approved items, Pigeonly prepares clean hard copies and sends them to the facility by priority mail.[4, 9, 10]
5. DOC distributes the approved copies. Current instructions say Pigeonly retains originals for 45 days and then securely destroys them.[10]

   “Originals will not be returned to the sender.”[10]

Addresses and facility codes

Facility	Pigeonly code	Personal mail via Pigeonly	Direct-mail facility address
Baylor Women's Correctional Institution	1200	Delaware DOC-1200 P.O. Box 96777 Las Vegas, NV 89193	660 Baylor Blvd. New Castle, DE 19720
Howard R. Young Correctional Institution	1202	Delaware DOC-1202 P.O. Box 96777 Las Vegas, NV 89193	P.O. Box 9561 Wilmington, DE 19809
James T. Vaughn Correctional Center	1101	Delaware DOC-1101 P.O. Box 96777 Las Vegas, NV 89193	1181 Paddock Road Smyrna, DE 19977
Sussex Correctional Institution	1201	Delaware DOC-1201 P.O. Box 96777 Las Vegas, NV 89193	P.O. Box 500 Georgetown, DE 19947

The above is a compact transcription of the March 2025 instruction sheet. Correspondents should always check the live DOC flyer before mailing because addresses and rules can change.[10]

What may be sent to Pigeonly

- Letters no larger than 8.5 × 11 inches; envelopes no larger than 4 × 9.5 inches.[10]
- Cards no larger than 5 × 7 inches and postcards exactly 5 × 7 inches.[10]
- Photographs from 4 × 6 through 8.5 × 11 inches, with a maximum of 10 per envelope.[10]
- Every item must have a valid return address and comply with DOC content and format restrictions.[10]

Items rejected or routed elsewhere

The current flyer identifies noncompliant or direct-route categories. Among them are legal and oversized mail; no return address; glitter, rhinestones, stickers, glued items, pop-ups, electronic cards, small or Polaroid-style photos, blank supplies, stamps, publications and clippings, money and checks, official documents, signature transactions, signature confirmation, and staples. Legal mail, government correspondence, publisher-direct materials, and certain preapproved checks, donations, religious materials, and educational materials go directly to the facility.[10]

Timing and subscription distinction

The 2022 pilot announcement said Pigeonly would process mail within 24 hours and allow one to three days for priority transit. The current flyer says processing occurs within 48 hours, followed by priority mailing, but it does not publish a complete end-to-end delivery standard or remedy for delay. That change should be clarified through the executed scope and performance reports.[8, 10]

Pigeonly offers an optional consumer account: its current pricing page advertises a free tier with one order per month and a paid tier described as “$5, unlimited everything.” The page does not place a clear billing interval beside that headline, while the consumer terms contemplate recurring subscriptions. Delaware’s public instructions do not make a Pigeonly account or paid subscription a condition of mailing an ordinary letter through USPS to the designated post-office box.[10, 12, 14]

9. Legal Mail, Privilege, and Due Process

The contract scope excludes legal mail. Current DOC instructions direct attorney legal mail to the correctional facility rather than the Las Vegas processing center. The Q&A says legal mail mistakenly received by the vendor must be forwarded unopened. These distinctions matter because interference with properly marked legal mail can implicate confidential attorney communication and constitutional protections.[4, 5, 10]

Restrictions on incoming prison mail are generally reviewed for a reasonable relationship to legitimate penological interests. The Supreme Court’s incoming-publication cases are context, not a conclusion about this specific system. A serious legal review would require the signed policy, current DOC Policy 4.0, rejection notices, appeal procedures, legal-mail incident logs, and evidence about delay, loss, confidentiality, and available alternatives.[22]

Practical safeguards to verify include immediate segregation of suspected legal mail; a documented unopened-forwarding chain; notice to sender and recipient; incident logging; prompt correction; no vendor scanning or retention; and an appeal path for disputed classification. None can be fully audited from the public contract page.

10. Data Retention, Privacy, and Security

What the public records affirmatively say

- Scans are searchable, in color, and available through a secure dashboard.[8, 9, 10]
- Digital copies are retained in the vendor interface for the full contract and renewal periods.[5]
- At contract end, DOC may require a media copy of retained scans.[5]
- Original paper is currently said to be held for 45 days and then securely destroyed.[10]
- The RFP prohibits storing non-public Delaware data outside the United States and prohibits offshore activity.[4]

What the public records do not establish

- Encryption standards in transit and at rest for the enterprise mail-scanning system.
- Role-based access design, staff privileges, multifactor authentication, or periodic access review.
- Access, search, export, print, and download logs—and whether incarcerated people or counsel can obtain an audit trail.
- Limits on full-text search, analytics, automated profiling, cross-person linkage, or reuse of correspondence content and metadata.
- Exact retention period after contract termination, deletion from backups, destruction certification, and disposition of the State-requested media copy.

- Security audit standard, penetration testing, SOC reports, vulnerability remediation, cyber insurance, or State audit rights specific to the platform.
- Breach definition, notification deadline, individual notice, remediation, indemnity, and responsibility for subcontractors.
- Process for subpoenas, law-enforcement requests, litigation holds, public-records requests, and preservation demands.
- Data-center locations, approved cloud providers, scanning subcontractors, and personnel screening.

Consumer policies are warning signals, not contract proof

Pigeonly's consumer Privacy Policy says it collects identity, contact, payment, device, and usage information and may share data with service providers, in business transactions, or when legally required. It describes security measures but does not guarantee security. Its retention language concerns consumer-account information and does not resolve enterprise mail-scan retention.[13]

Pigeonly's consumer Terms of Service state that consumer "account information and Communications are transmitted unencrypted." That language creates a legitimate due-diligence question, but it does not prove that Delaware's enterprise scans or dashboard traffic are unencrypted. The executed security schedule, architecture documentation, and technical attestations are required before making that claim.[14]

> *"account information and Communications are transmitted unencrypted"*[14]

11. Performance Claims and Evidence Gaps

The claims

DOC's 2022 announcement said JTVCC intercepted nearly 100 incoming mail packages in 2021 as suspected or confirmed contraband. Its 2024 expansion release said the scanning program had "virtually eliminated mail contraband at JTVCC" and contributed to a two-thirds overall reduction in contraband. The release also described clean copies as completely eliminating the risk of mail-delivered contraband.[8, 9]

> *"nearly 100 incoming inmate mail packages"*[8]

> *"virtually eliminated mail contraband at JTVCC"*[9]

What cannot be verified from the posted evidence

The public sources reviewed do not provide the raw data, baseline and comparison dates, definitions, denominators, contraband categories, detection method, facility-by-facility breakdown, trend series, or analytic method behind those claims. They also do not separate mail-related change from staffing, searches, visitation, technology, supply controls, drug-treatment measures, or other contemporaneous interventions. The claims should therefore be attributed to DOC, not presented as independently validated causal findings.[9]

A meaningful evaluation would track at least: items received; items rejected by reason; suspected and confirmed contraband by type and route; processing and end-to-end delivery times; lost or damaged mail; illegible copies; legal-mail misroutes; grievances and appeals; mail volume before and after implementation; facility population; and comparable non-mail contraband trends. It should publish definitions and distinguish incidents, items, people, and packages.

Pilot-to-statewide evidence question

The 2023 RFP estimated 2,927 personal-mail pieces per month across 4,296 people at four facilities. Those estimates are useful for pricing normalization but not outcome measurement. The public award file contains no evaluation report showing whether the pilot met predefined targets, why statewide expansion was preferable to alternatives, or how the State tested the vendor's efficacy and service quality.[4, 8, 9]

12. Renewal, Financial Stability, and Vendor Context

Renewal evidence gap

The 2025 addendum states the new term and price but gives no public explanation of performance, complaints, security, market comparison, negotiations, cost avoidance, or responsibility findings. Because the original solicitation assigned 15 evaluation points to capacity and financial stability, the absence of a public renewal due-diligence record is notable.[3, 4]

Pigeonly bankruptcy docket

A third-party reproduction of the federal bankruptcy docket reports that Pigeonly Inc. filed a voluntary Chapter 11 case under Subchapter V on Jan. 26, 2024 in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Nevada, case 24-10355, assigned to Judge Natalie M. Cox. The docket reports plan confirmation on Oct. 8, 2024, notice of the plan's effective date on Oct. 30, 2024, and continuing post-confirmation reports, including one filed July 17, 2026.[16]

Chronologically, Delaware's initial award predates the bankruptcy filing; the announced statewide rollout followed it; and the October 2025 renewal followed plan confirmation. These facts do not establish contract default, service failure, or current inability to perform. They do support requesting the State's bankruptcy notices, responsibility determination, financial review, continuity plan, and any cure or assurance communications. PACER or the court clerk should be used for authoritative docket documents.[2, 3, 9, 16]

Company context

Pigeonly describes itself as a communications company founded by Frederick Hutson after his incarceration, with a mission of making connection easier for incarcerated people and their families. Its About page reports awards and order volumes; these are company-controlled claims and are not substitutes for contract-level performance evidence.[15]

13. External Comparator and Advocacy Context

Utah implementation experience

Utah began using Pigeonly for mail in January 2025. In an official February 2025 update, Utah's Department of Corrections said it was working with Pigeonly on reported delays, quality problems, and business-practice concerns. It described finance and contract review, meetings to establish standards and timelines, physical-mail alternatives, transparency, and legal-mail concerns.[17]

> *"issues with delayed delivery, quality, and concerns about the vendor's business practices."*[17]

Utah's experience is a vendor-risk comparator, not evidence that the same failures occurred in Delaware. It identifies concrete Delaware oversight questions: complaint volume, timeliness metrics, quality sampling, service remedies, alternative formats, and contract-management records.[17]

National mail-scanning criticism

The Prison Policy Initiative reports that 31 states and the federal government use some form of mail scanning. Its advocacy guide argues that scanning can create delay, legibility, privacy, and family-connection harms and that mail-focused strategies can misidentify the dominant routes of contraband. This is a policy critique, not Delaware-specific proof; its factual propositions and citations should be evaluated alongside Delaware's own data.[18]

> *"mail scanning focuses on the wrong part of the problem"*[18]

14. Contradictions, Risks, and Verification Needs

Issue	Public evidence	Why it matters	Record needed
Original-paper disposition	Q&A says originals will be delivered; current flyer says held 45 days and destroyed.	Changes what families and recipients receive; affects property, notice, and evidentiary concerns.	Executed scope, policy versions, change approval, destruction logs.
Contract-option structure	RFP says 2-year initial plus 2-year options; notices create 25 months plus 3 years.	May affect procurement authority, competition, and future option expectations.	Signed contract, renewal request, legal/procurement approval.
Performance proof	DOC makes "virtually eliminated" and two-thirds-reduction claims without posted data.	Prevents independent replication and causal assessment.	Raw/aggregate metrics, definitions, methodology, evaluation report.
Data lifecycle	Scans retained through all terms and may be transferred to DOC; end-state unspecified.	Personal correspondence can remain searchable for years.	Data map, retention schedule, deletion and transfer protocol.
Security assurance	Public file calls dashboard secure but posts no technical standards.	A label is not a control framework.	Security addendum, audit reports, encryption and incident terms.
Legal-mail misroutes	Q&A requires unopened forwarding; no public incident data.	Mistakes may expose privileged communications and delay access to counsel.	Incident logs, notices, grievances, audit and corrective actions.

Issue	Public evidence	Why it matters	Record needed
Delivery standard	Pilot said 24 hours plus 1–3 days; current flyer says 48 hours plus priority transit.	No public end-to-end SLA or remedy is visible.	SLA, monthly timing data, credits, complaints.
Renewal due diligence	One-page renewal gives term and price only.	Does not show performance, market, security, or financial review.	Business case, negotiation, responsibility and continuity records.
Bankruptcy/continuity	Federal docket shows Subchapter V proceeding and post-confirmation reports.	Relevant to financial-stability and uninterrupted service review; not proof of default.	State due diligence, assurances, notices, contingency plan.
Consumer/enterprise terms	Consumer terms mention unencrypted transmissions; enterprise terms missing.	Consumer language cannot be imputed to DOC, but warrants technical verification.	Enterprise architecture, encryption attestations, testing.

15. Priority Oversight Questions and Actions

Ten questions that resolve the core record

1. What signed document actually governs— including all scope, pricing, data, security, subcontractor, audit, and order-of-precedence terms?
2. Why do the term lengths in the award and renewal differ from the two-year option structure advertised in the RFP?
3. Were original letters ever delivered under the 2023 Q&A specification, when did destruction replace delivery, and who approved the change?
4. What are the median, 90th-percentile, and maximum times from Pigeonly receipt to distribution, by facility and month?
5. How many items are rejected, lost, damaged, illegible, duplicated, or misrouted—including legal mail—and what appeal or remediation follows?
6. What evidence supports the “virtually eliminated” and two-thirds-reduction statements, and can the result be reproduced from disclosed definitions and data?
7. Who can search, view, download, export, or analyze correspondence, and are all such actions logged and audited?
8. Are scans encrypted in transit and at rest; what breach-notice, deletion, backup, subcontractor, and third-party-request rules apply?
9. What review supported the 2025 renewal, including service quality, price reasonableness, security, financial stability, bankruptcy, and continuity?
10. What less intrusive alternatives were evaluated—facility-based screening, photocopying, digital opt-in, or targeted controls—and at what comparative cost and effect?

Near-term actions

- Submit the records request in Section 16 and request rolling electronic production.
- Download and preserve the public portal file and current policy flyer; web pages and instructions may change.
- Reconcile each State Checkbook payment to invoice month, purchase order, facility coverage, and any credits.

- Request existing monthly aggregate reports rather than demanding that DOC create a new analysis.
- Interview affected correspondents, incarcerated recipients, mailroom staff, and attorneys using a structured incident questionnaire.
- Separate verified Delaware experience from Utah or national evidence; use comparators to form questions, not as proof.
- If records show adverse legal-mail or security events, obtain Delaware counsel for fact-specific constitutional, privilege, privacy, and procurement analysis.

16. Ready-to-Send Delaware FOIA Request

Delaware DOC identifies Tim Martin, Legal Services Administrator, as its FOIA coordinator. Requests may be emailed to DOC_FOIA_Request@delaware.gov or submitted through the State's online form. Delaware's statute generally requires a response within 15 business days but recognizes exemptions. The statutory public-records right is framed for Delaware citizens; a nonresident should consider using a Delaware resident or Delaware organization, while also asking DOC for discretionary release.[19, 20]

Attorney General Opinion 17-IB40 is especially useful for drafting: it concluded that DOC had to provide existing JTVCC contraband summary records even though individual incident reports could be exempt. Accordingly, the request below asks for existing summaries and non-identifying data, not for the agency to create a new record.[21]

Request text

> Subject: Delaware FOIA Request — DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN / Pigeonly
>
> Dear Mr. Martin:
>
> Pursuant to 29 Del. C. ch. 100, I request electronic copies of the records listed below for the period January 1, 2022 through the date of your search, concerning Pigeonly Inc., Pigeonly Corrections, postal-mail scanning, the JTVCC pilot, and contract DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN. Please search Legal Services, Procurement, Fiscal, Information Technology, Bureau of Prisons, facility mailrooms, contract-management staff, and any other reasonably likely custodians.

1. Pilot records: the signed 2022 JTVCC pilot agreement, scope, pricing, purchase orders, amendments, extensions, and closeout or evaluation records.
2. Executed statewide contract: the signed professional-services agreement, all appendices and schedules, executed Appendix 1 scope/budget, amendments, order-of-precedence terms, purchase orders, and renewal instruments.
3. Vendor submissions: Pigeonly's technical and price proposals, exceptions, clarifications, best-and-final offer, demonstrations, software and data terms, security materials, subcontractor disclosures, insurance, and licensing records.
4. Evaluation and award: committee appointments, individual and consensus score sheets, reference checks, oral-presentation notes, financial-stability review, award recommendation, best-value analysis, negotiations, and notice-to-proceed.

5. Invoices and usage: purchase orders, invoices, payment approvals, facility/month mail counts, prices, no-spend reports, service credits, penalties, and the monthly usage reports required by the RFP.
6. Renewal: the renewal request, approval, price analysis, negotiations, market comparison, performance review, responsibility determination, security review, legal/procurement approval, and decision memorandum.
7. Financial continuity: bankruptcy notices or communications; post-filing or renewal financial review; assurances, cure requests, continuity or transition plans; and records assessing the vendor's ability to perform.
8. Data governance and security: data inventories and flows; cloud and subcontractor locations; encryption in transit and at rest; identity and access controls; access/search/export logs; security testing, audits, SOC reports, vulnerabilities, incidents, breaches, notifications, subpoenas or legal demands; retention, backup, deletion, end-of-contract transfer, and destruction certifications.
9. Performance and contraband claims: existing raw or aggregate records, summaries, reports, presentations, and methodology supporting the "nearly 100" 2021 packages, "virtually eliminated" JTVCC mail contraband, "two-thirds overall reduction," or "completely eliminating" mail-risk statements, including definitions, baseline/comparison periods, categories, denominators, and facility breakdowns.
10. Service quality and impact: existing monthly or aggregate records concerning processing and delivery time, rejections and reasons, lost/damaged/illegible/duplicated mail, original destruction, legal-mail misroutes, complaints, grievances, appeals, audits, inspections, default/cure notices, corrective actions, and vendor performance meetings.
11. Policies and training: each version of DOC Policy 4.0 and relevant mail SOPs in effect since Jan. 1, 2022; vendor and staff training; family/public education; rejection notices; appeal forms; and legal-mail handling protocols.

Please produce records in native electronic format where available, with metadata preserved for spreadsheets and email. Rolling production is welcome. If any portion is exempt, please segregate and release the nonexempt portion, identify the specific statutory basis for each withholding, and provide an index sufficient to assess the claim. If no responsive record exists for a category, please say so.

Please notify me before costs exceed $25 and identify any narrower formulation that would materially reduce cost without omitting the substance requested. Please preserve responsive records while this request is pending.

Sincerely,
[Name]
[Delaware address, if applicable]
[Email and telephone]

Submission details

Channel	Details
Email	DOC_FOIA_Request@delaware.gov
Coordinator	Tim Martin, Legal Services Administrator
Mail	Delaware Department of Correction, 245 McKee Road, Dover, DE 19904
Online	Open the DOC FOIA page and form
Typical statutory response	Within 15 business days: access, denial with reasons, or notice that more time is needed.

17. Source Notes and Direct Links

Each entry below is directly linked. Delaware primary sources are preferred for contract facts; Pigeonly pages are used only for company-controlled consumer policies or self-description; the bankruptcy entry is expressly identified as a third-party docket reproduction; and national advocacy material is labeled as analysis rather than Delaware-specific proof.

[1] State of Delaware, Contract Directory, “Postal Mail Contraband Elimination Services,” contract DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN. Active landing page linking the public procurement file. Direct link

[2] Delaware Department of Correction, Notice of Award, DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN, Dec. 12, 2023. Identifies the vendor, initial term, contact, address, and fixed monthly fee. Direct link

[3] Delaware Department of Correction, Addendum No. 1 / Renewal Notice, Oct. 30, 2025. Extends the term through Dec. 31, 2028 and reduces the monthly fee. Direct link

[4] Delaware Department of Correction, Request for Proposals DOC23500-MAIL_SCAN, issued Aug. 21, 2023. Principal source for scope, facilities, estimates, evaluation, reporting, termination, insurance, and contracting requirements. Direct link

[5] Delaware Department of Correction, RFP Addendum No. 1, Questions and Answers, Sept. 6, 2023. Clarifies mail-piece counting, retention, legal mail, original-mail handling, GUI access, and operational details. Direct link

[6] Delaware Department of Correction, Revised Proposals Received list, Sept. 15, 2023. Lists four proposers. Direct link

[7] Delaware Department of Correction, Appendix C Sample Professional Services Agreement. This is an unsigned model, not the executed Pigeonly contract. Direct link

[8] Delaware Department of Correction, news release, “Delaware Department of Correction launches new incoming mail security program,” Mar. 7, 2022. Describes the one-year JTVCC pilot and pilot workflow. Direct link

[9] Delaware Department of Correction, news release, “DOC expands inmate mail scanning program,” Mar. 26, 2024. Announces statewide expansion and agency-reported contraband outcomes. Direct link

[10] Delaware Department of Correction, “Pigeonly Mail Processing Instructions,” revised Mar. 7, 2025. Current public-facing rules, facility codes, addresses, rejection categories, processing description, and FAQ. Direct link

[11] Delaware Open Data Portal, State of Delaware Checkbook dataset. Filtered for Department of Correction transactions whose vendor name contains “PIGEONLY”; dataset updated Sept. 6, 2026. Direct link

[12] Pigeonly, Pricing page, accessed Sept. 12, 2026. Describes optional free and paid consumer offerings; company-controlled source. Direct link

[13] Pigeonly, Privacy Policy, updated Oct. 1, 2022, accessed Sept. 12, 2026. Consumer-facing policy; it should not be assumed to state the enterprise contract’s data terms. Direct link

[14] Pigeonly, Terms of Service, updated Oct. 1, 2022, accessed Sept. 12, 2026. Consumer-facing terms; it should not be assumed to govern the DOC enterprise system. Direct link

[15] Pigeonly, About page, accessed Sept. 12, 2026. Company history, mission, and current website address; claims are self-reported. Direct link

[16] BKData, docket reproduction for In re Pigeonly, Inc., No. 24-10355, U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Nevada. Third-party docket source, not PACER; accessed Sept. 12, 2026. Direct link

[17] Utah Department of Corrections, “Pigeonly Mail Updates: Seeking Your Input,” Feb. 14, 2025. Official statement describing Utah implementation concerns and oversight steps. Direct link

[18] Prison Policy Initiative, “Stopping mail scanning in prisons and jails: A guide for advocates,” updated June 30, 2026. National advocacy analysis; not Delaware-specific performance evidence. Direct link

[19] Delaware Department of Correction, FOIA Request page, accessed Sept. 12, 2026. Provides the agency’s records-request channel and contact information. Direct link

[20] Delaware Code, Title 29, Chapter 100, Freedom of Information Act. Governing statute, including response timing and exemptions. Direct link

[21] Delaware Attorney General Opinion 17-IB40, Aug. 23, 2017. Holds that DOC improperly withheld existing JTVCC contraband summary records while distinguishing exempt incident-level records. Direct link

[22] Thornburgh v. Abbott, 490 U.S. 401 (1989). Supreme Court authority on reasonableness review for incoming-publication restrictions in prisons; legal context only. Direct link

Source Quote Register

For auditability, every source used in this report is represented below by a short verbatim excerpt. These snippets identify the source proposition but do not replace the linked document or page. Several fuller excerpts also appear in the body of the report.

Source	Short verbatim excerpt
[1] Delaware contract page	“Postal Mail Contraband Elimination Services”
[2] Initial award	“Notice of Award”
[3] Renewal	“Expiration Date: December 31, 2028”
[4] RFP	“No Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting”
[5] RFP Q&A	“The originals will also be delivered to the inmates”
[6] Proposer list	“Pigeonly Corrections”
[7] Model agreement	“Sample Professional Services Agreement”
[8] 2022 DOC release	“one-year pilot program”
[9] 2024 DOC release	“two-thirds overall reduction in contraband”
[10] Current DOC flyer	“Original copies will be held for 45 days”
[11] Open-data source	“State of Delaware Checkbook”
[12] Pigeonly pricing	“Free plan”
[13] Pigeonly privacy	“Pigeonly Privacy Policy”
[14] Pigeonly terms	“Terms of Service”
[15] Pigeonly company page	“About Pigeonly”
[16] Bankruptcy docket	“Pigeonly Inc.”
[17] Utah DOC update	“Seeking Your Input”
[18] Advocacy guide	“31 states”
[19] DOC records page	“Freedom of Information Act”
[20] Delaware FOIA statute	“within 15 business days”
[21] Attorney General opinion	“DOC violated FOIA”
[22] Supreme Court authority	“reasonably related to legitimate penological interests”

Calculation Notes

- Initial scheduled value: 25 × $18,258 = $456,450.
- Renewal scheduled value: 36 × $16,568 = $596,448.
- Combined posted schedule: $456,450 + $596,448 = $1,052,898.
- Monthly decrease: $18,258 − $16,568 = $1,690; $1,690 ÷ $18,258 = 9.26%.
- Three-year reduction against the old rate: 36 × $1,690 = $60,840.
- Estimated cost per RFP mail piece: $18,258 ÷ 2,927 = $6.24; $16,568 ÷ 2,927 = $5.66.
- Estimated cost per RFP average daily population: $18,258 ÷ 4,296 = $4.25; $16,568 ÷ 4,296 = $3.86.

Final Assessment

The public record proves that Delaware selected Pigeonly for a fixed-fee mail-screening and copying service now posted through 2028. It does not permit a complete audit of contract terms, data security, service quality, claimed contraband effects, renewal diligence, or legal-mail incidents. The immediate expert move is therefore not speculation: it is targeted acquisition of the executed agreement, evaluation record, enterprise security terms, monthly reports, supporting outcome data, and renewal file, followed by a transaction-level and performance-level reconciliation.