

ABOLITIONIST MAIL PROJECT

Please also see and share [this version](#) of the letter, sent to people incarcerated in Massachusetts



Hi! We're writing to you, a member of the Massachusetts community, to invite you to a new pen-pal opportunity, the Abolitionist Mail Project (or AMP). In this message, we want to introduce ourselves and invite you to get involved.

The Abolitionist Mail Project is a Massachusetts-based pen-pal project. Abolition means the end of the prison system and cultural attitudes that make us use prisons. AMP understands relationship-building between outside and inside members as central to any future where everyone is free. Pen-palling focuses on the connections we need to build that world. We want to build with people incarcerated in Massachusetts, and YOU.

We're inviting you to get involved in three ways:

- Sign up to send holiday and birthday cards, and/or
- Sign up to become a pen-pal, and/or
- Join us in building this project

AMP is open to anybody incarcerated in Massachusetts and people in the "free world." We will prioritize incarcerated people who are more isolated. This means that LGBTQ+/HIV+ people, people in solitary, people without outside connections will be our focus, BUT anyone incarcerated in Massachusetts is welcome as a member.

We want to be clear about what can and cannot do as "free world" organizers. We want to make sure we do what we say we can do, when we say we can do it.

We can:

- List people who want penpals on a website (AbolitionistMailProject.com)
- Recruit "free world" and incarcerated people to become penpals
- Send birthday and holiday cards to incarcerated people
- Share already-existing resources for incarcerated people and people planning their re-entry
- Share and endorse other work fighting for the dignity of incarcerated people

We cannot:

- Guarantee pen-pal connections
- Create re-entry programs (housing, income, treatment, job training)
- Do legislation, policy, and legal work
- Hire staff
- Become a 501(c)(3) or a registered, formal nonprofit business

This understanding of what we can and cannot do comes out of our experience organizing with Black and Pink MA. Many of us were involved with BnPMA over the years, and to the best of our understanding the “free world,” or outside, part of BnPMA is no longer functioning. We recognize how painful the loss of contact, money, and advocacy has been for people who have been involved over the years. Please [write to us](#) if you want to talk more about what happened last year.

We want to build AMP because of how much BnPMA meant to most of us. Friendships between incarcerated people and outside people changed all of our lives and we are ready to make that the focus of our work.

You can sign up just to be a cardwriter or pen-pal, or to also get involved behind the scenes. For folks who are interested in building AMP with us, the form below has a question where you can show your interest. Incarcerated people are essential to leadership and the way we want to conduct the group. Right now, AMP organizers are mostly made of people who have never been incarcerated. We want to be the inside-outside community we believe in, so we need support on both sides of the wall. Right now, we are brainstorming ways to actually do this, and we need your help. Some things you can probably expect if you want to build with us are:

- working closely with 1 inside organizer (who may or may not be your pen-pal)
- working with a large group of people inside and outside
- attending/facilitating meetings by phone, Zoom, or in person (masked)
- taking notes and reporting back
- doing reading and talking about what you learn
- sharing information with others

These are some of our ideas and we want to hear yours. We're going to learn together. We are eager for you to join us and will reach out soon. We'd love to hear from you about anything!

-Abolitionist Mail Project

DeAnza Cook, Eli Patterson, Elizabeth Rucker, Haden Smiley, Khadejeh Al-Rijleh, Ron Leftwich, Whitney Kay

Learn more about being a pen-pal or card writer

AbolitionistMailProject.com/pp



Browse inside members' profiles

AbolitionistMailProject.com/list



Sign up to be a pen-pal, card-writer, or inside/outside organizer

AbolitionistMailProject.com/signup



Sign-up form to print and share with people incarcerated in Massachusetts

tinyURL.com/AMP-form

