

All New York prisoners to get free tablet computer

3rd February, 2018



All prisoners in the U.S. state of New York are to be given free tablet computers. The freebies are part of a deal struck between a private communications service called JPay

and New York's prison service. The lucrative but controversial agreement involves the contractor providing 54,700 convicts with a free tablet. The tablets will not be Internet enabled, but prisoners will be able to get limited, but monitored, online access by plugging their device into approved kiosks at specific times. Inmates will be allowed to email an approved list of family and friends; order certain music, books and videos; and file grievances and reports of abuse. All of this activity will be heavily monitored by prison staff.

Prisoner support services welcomed the free tablet initiative. They called it a "game-changer" and a "huge step forward". A New York State official said the tablets would help prisoners remain closer to their families, and reduce tensions between prisoners and prison guards. However, law enforcement agencies are questioning the wisdom of giving tablets to convicts. Some law enforcement officers described it as a good example of how crime does pay. Top police officer Ed Mullins questioned why prisoners were getting free tablets when other people in society are struggling. He said: "Little is done for the homeless, mentally ill, and hard-working people who can't afford tablets in New York State."

Sources: nydailynews.com / nypost.com / foxnews.com

Writing

Prisoners should never be given free tablet computers. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

prisoners / tablet / private / lucrative / agreement / online / access / family / staff / initiative / huge / tensions / wisdom / crime / society / struggling / homeless / afford

True / False

- a) A pharmaceutical company is giving New York prisoners free tablets. T / F
- b) Just under 55,000 prisoners will be given a free tablet. T / F
- c) The prisoners will not have any access to the Internet. T / F
- d) The prison staff will not monitor prisoners' use of tablets. T / F
- e) Prisoner support services like the idea of the free tablets. T / F
- f) Law enforcement agencies are happy about the free tablets. T / F
- g) A police officer said the tablets show that crime pays. T / F
- h) A police officer questioned why so little was done to help the homeless. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. deal | a. particular |
| 2. lucrative | b. have money for |
| 3. controversial | c. stay |
| 4. specific | d. profitable |
| 5. grievances | e. common sense |
| 6. huge | f. complaints |
| 7. remain | g. agreement |
| 8. wisdom | h. be profitable |
| 9. pay | i. enormous |
| 10. afford | j. contentious |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of tablet computers?
- b) Why should prisoners get free computers?
- c) Why do you think the company is providing these tablets for free?
- d) How will this initiative help the prisoners?
- e) How important are tablets?
- f) What are the good and bad things about tablets?
- g) Should the prisoners' online access be monitored?
- h) What are the purposes of prisons?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

1. The freebies are part
 2. 54,700
 3. allowed to email an approved
 4. file grievances and
 5. All of this activity will be heavily monitored
 6. support services welcomed the
 7. a game-changer and a
 8. law enforcement
 9. a good example of how crime
 10. people in society
- a. free tablet initiative
 - b. by prison staff
 - c. are struggling
 - d. of a deal
 - e. huge step forward
 - f. list of family
 - g. does pay
 - h. reports of abuse
 - i. agencies
 - j. convicts

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Why might the free tablet initiative be a "game-changer"?
- c) How much freedom should prisoners have in prison?
- d) Does crime pay?
- e) Why should prisoners get free tablets when law-abiding people are poor?
- f) Should prisoners have things like computer games and TV?
- g) How might poor people in New York feel about this news?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the prison bosses?

Spelling

1. The ireesfeb are part of a deal
2. The ucvlertai but controversial agreement
3. plugging their cevdei into approved kiosks
4. at iepsfcci times
5. file egsvcneari and reports of abuse
6. heavily oeinmdort by prison staff
7. the free tablet netitiiavi
8. A New York State fciiolfa
9. reduce nsoiesnt
10. law enforcement scangiee
11. other people in octyesi are struggling
12. people who can't rfaofd tablets

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. j	4. a	5. f
6. i	7. c	8. e	9. h	10. b

Role Play

Role A – Tissues

You think tissues are the best freebies. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their freebies. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): pens, English lessons or drinks.

Role B – Pens

You think pens are the best freebies. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their freebies. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): tissues, English lessons or drinks.

Role C – English Lessons

You think English lessons are the best freebies. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their freebies. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): pens, tissues or drinks.

Role D – Drinks

You think drinks are the best freebies. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their freebies. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): pens, English lessons or tissues.

Speaking – Freebies

Rank these with your partner. Put the best freebies at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- music
- movie tickets
- chocolate
- deodorant
- tissues
- pens
- drinks
- English lessons

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.