



## All New York prisoners to get free tablet computer

3rd February 2018

Harder

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](http://nydailynews.com)  
[nypost.com](http://nypost.com)  
[foxnews.com](http://foxnews.com)



1. Just under 55,000 prisoners will be given a free tablet. **T / F**
2. The prison staff will not monitor prisoners' use of tablets. **T / F**
3. Prisoner support services like the idea of the free tablets. **T / F**
4. A police officer said the tablets show that crime pays. **T / F**
5. A police officer questioned why so little was done to help the homeless. **T / F**



1. Why should prisoners get free computers?
2. Why do you think the company is providing these tablets for free?
3. How will this initiative help the prisoners?
4. What are the good and bad things about tablets?
5. How much freedom should prisoners have in prison?