



**WILLIAM J. SCOTT**  
**ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
**STATE OF ILLINOIS**  
**SPRINGFIELD**

November 2, 1979

FILE NO. S-1465

OFFICERS:  
County Corrections Officers

Honorable Clyde L. Kuehn  
State's Attorney  
St. Clair County  
10 Public Square, 2nd Floor  
Belleville, Illinois 62220

Dear Mr. Kuehn:

I have your letter in which you ask whether persons employed as corrections officers at the St. Clair County jail are "law enforcement officers" or "officers" within the meaning of section 2 of the Law Enforcement Officers, Civil Defense Workers, Civil Air Patrol Members, Paramedics and Firemen Compensation Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1977, ch. 48, par. 281 et seq.). I agree with your opinion that they are.

Section 2(a) of the Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1978 Supp., ch. 48, 282) provides in pertinent part:

"As used in this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

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(a) 'law enforcement officer' or 'officer' means any person employed by the State or a local governmental entity as a policeman, peace officer, auxiliary policeman or in some like position involving the enforcement of the law and protection of the public interest at the risk of that person's life. This includes supervisors, wardens, superintendents and their assistants, guards and keepers, correctional officers, youth supervisors, parole agents, school teachers and correctional counsellors in all facilities of both the Juvenile and Adult Divisions of the Department of Corrections, while within the facilities under the control of the Department of Corrections or in the act of transporting inmates or wards from one location to another or while performing their official duties.

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Your letter states that the corrections officers at the St. Clair County jail have the following duties: (1) Maintenance and operation of the jail; (2) Holding all inmates securely; (3) Prevention of escapes; (4) Prevention of bodily harm; (5) General responsibility for the safety and well-being of all inmates; (6) Escorting inmates to penal institutions; (7) Providing security of outdoor recreation areas. These duties require the corrections officers to carry weapons from time to time; consequently, St. Clair County requires all such officers to complete successfully the training course prescribed by section 2 of "AN ACT in relation to firearms training for peace officers" (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1977, ch. 85, par. 516).

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The duties of the St. Clair County corrections officers clearly involve the enforcement of the law and protection of the public interest at the risk of the lives of the officers. It is therefore my opinion that persons employed as corrections officers at the St. Clair County jail are included within the provisions of the Law Enforcement Officers, Civil Defense Workers, Civil Air Patrol Members, Paramedics and Firemen Compensation Act.

Very truly yours,

A T T O R N E Y   G E N E R A L