

CHICAGO COMMUNITY BOND FUND



**YEAR-END
REPORT 2019**

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INTRODUCTION



In our fourth year of operation, Chicago Community Bond Fund surpassed one million dollars paid in bond to free people in Cook County from jail or house arrest with electronic monitoring. Passing this threshold was only possible because of the amazing support we have received from each and every one of you; from near and far, CCBF's supporters made this work possible by donating your time, money, or other resources. **At this time, we have paid more than \$1.5 million to secure the freedom of more than 280 people who otherwise would have remained incarcerated.** Their return to their families, jobs, and lives is something to celebrate. At the same time, we also want to recognize that if Cook County had honored these individuals' right to pretrial freedom, this ransom money would not have been needed. Instead, it could have been used to provide real support to the communities most harmed by criminalization and incarceration.

Like all community bail funds, bailouts, and bail fundraisers across the country, CCBF is meeting important and urgent needs by buying the freedom of people whose communities could not afford it themselves, but the practice of paying bond is just a stopgap in an unjust and racist system. It is an inherently unsustainable activity that does not, alone, change the fact that there are presently thousands of people caged in Cook County Jail—and many more people in other county jails across Illinois—simply because they cannot afford to pay a money bond.

This is why, over the past year, CCBF has dedicated even more energy towards expanding our advocacy efforts to end money bond and pretrial incarceration—not just in Cook County but across Illinois. In 2019, working with our partners in the Coalition to End Money Bond, we were able to help form the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice, a network of more than thirty organizations across the state dedicated to promoting pretrial freedom. In July, the Network held its first convening in Springfield, Illinois, bringing together more than 170 people from 11 counties across the state.

Pictured above: CCBF and our partners in the Coalition to End Money Bond rallying in downtown Chicago on June 17, 2019 in advance of the public listening session hosted by the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practices.

INTRODUCTION

Additionally, we continued to hold Cook County judges accountable to General Order 18.8A, a court rule directing judges to set money bonds only in amounts that people can afford. In September, the Coalition to End Money Bond released our third report on bond reform in Cook County, *Protecting Pretrial Freedom: Two Years of Bond Reform in Cook County*. Working with our Coalition partners, CCBF has pushed back on false narratives put forward by the Chicago Police Department and elected officials that mischaracterize the impacts of bond reform in Cook County.

Thanks to our collective efforts, the number of people incarcerated in Cook County Jail reached a 30-year low of 5,552 people in February 2019. Because of reforms CCBF helped win and the work we have done to hold stakeholders accountable, over 10,000 fewer people passed through Cook County Jail this year. We recognize that this is a tremendous accomplishment, but it also does not go far enough. CCBF remains committed to eliminating money bond and working towards a world in which no one is incarcerated while awaiting trial.

We hope you enjoy looking back over what we accomplished in 2019!



The opening session of the People's Convening on Pretrial Freedom in Springfield, Illinois on July 13, 2019.

OUR MISSION



Chicago Community Bond Fund (CCBF) pays bond for people charged with crimes in Cook County, Illinois. Through a revolving fund, CCBF supports individuals whose communities cannot afford to pay the bonds themselves and who have been impacted by structural violence. Inability to pay bond results in higher rates of conviction, longer sentences, loss of housing and jobs, separation of families, and lost custody of children. By paying bond, CCBF restores the presumption of innocence before trial and enables recipients to remain free while fighting their cases. CCBF also engages in public education about the role of bond in the criminal legal system and advocates for the abolition of money bond. CCBF is committed to long-term relationship building and organizing with people most directly impacted by criminalization and policing.

Pictured above: CCBF Advocate Devoureaux Wolf giving a presentation to students at the University of Illinois Chicago in March 2019.

CCBF'S HISTORY

In August 2014, two weeks after Michael Brown was killed by police in Ferguson, Missouri, Chicago police shot and killed DeSean Pittman, a Black 17-year-old.

A few days after DeSean's death, his family gathered for a vigil to uplift his memory. Chicago Police came and disrupted the vigil by shouting racial slurs, threatening attendees, and knocking over candles that had been lit for DeSean. The vigil ended with the arrest of eight of DeSean's friends and

family members, five of whom were incarcerated in Cook County Jail because they could not afford to pay a money bond. Future founding members of Chicago Community Bond Fund worked with DeSean's family to raise nearly \$30,000 to free everyone arrested at the vigil. It took four months to raise the money needed to free the last person, one of DeSean's cousins, from Cook County Jail. After he was released, his mother pointed out that no one should have to experience what they just went through: fundraising for months to get their child out of a cage.



DeSean Pittman, seen here before his murder by Chicago Police.

She and others impacted by the arrests at the vigil began working with activists and organizers from across the city to launch Chicago Community Bond Fund in November 2015. In our first year of operations, CCBF paid over \$300,000 to free 45 people from Cook County Jail or house arrest with electronic monitoring. In our second year, CCBF paid over \$250,000 to free 59 people, and we paid over \$370,000 to free 71 people in our third year. **This past year, our fourth in operation, we paid over \$550,000 to secure the freedom of 108 people.** We keep DeSean in our hearts as we continue to fight for a world without police violence, money bond, or pretrial incarceration.

For our first two years, CCBF operated entirely on volunteer labor. As the organization's work rapidly expanded, we hired our first employee in February 2017. While much of CCBF's work is still driven by volunteers, CCBF now has a staff of five full-time and two part-time employees. Hiring staff has allowed CCBF to maintain regular paying of bonds, dramatically expand our advocacy work, and better support new volunteers in all areas of our operations. Our staff is currently driving the county and statewide advocacy to end money bond, working in concert with our partners in the Coalition to End Money Bond and supported by dozens of volunteers.

In total, nearly 100 volunteers sustain CCBF's work, including operation of the revolving bail fund and local and national advocacy efforts to end money bond and

CCBF'S HISTORY

pretrial incarceration. These volunteers work tirelessly to follow up on requests for help paying bond, fundraise to replenish the revolving fund, support people freed from jail, and advance CCBF's public education and campaign work. In 2018, CCBF took over management of the Coalition to End Money Bond and also hired a full-time Campaign Coordinator to support the Coalition's work.

Decisions about who to pay bond for are made by our Review Committee, a group composed of people involved in Chicago's many movements for abolition and racial justice. We are committed to ensuring that people who are formerly incarcerated, those whose loved ones are currently or formerly incarcerated, and people whose communities are disproportionately harmed by criminalization have decision-making power regarding who CCBF bonds out. Review Committee membership currently includes organizers with Black and Pink Chicago, Love & Protect, Moms United Against Violence

CCBF STAFF

Sharlyn Grace
Executive Director

Keisa Reynolds
Deputy Director

Matthew McLoughlin
Director of Programs

Ruby Pinto
Outgoing Campaign Coordinator

Malik Alim
Incoming Campaign Coordinator

Ashlyn Ruga
Intake Coordinator

Devoureaux Wolf
Advocate

Lavette Mayes
Advocate

Some CCBF staff and people for whom CCBF paid bond at our Summer Party in July 2019. From left to right: Lee, Flo, Matt, Lavette, Devoureaux, Sharlyn, and Ruby.



ADVOCACY EFFORTS



Since 2017, CCBF has increasingly directed our focus towards policy change efforts that will ensure that no one is incarcerated in Illinois because they can't afford to pay a money bond. Working with our partners in the Coalition to End Money Bond, we have engaged a multifaceted approach in our efforts to end money bail and pretrial incarceration. Together, CCBF and our partners have pursued litigation, legislation, courtwatching, public education, and holding public officials accountable to bring about change. Some of our biggest efforts of 2019 are highlighted below.

AT THE STATE LEVEL

Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practices

In October 2016, CCBF and the Coalition to End Money Bond supported a historic lawsuit challenging the practice of jailing people too poor to pay their bond. That lawsuit prompted Cook County Chief Judge Timothy Evans to issue General Order 18.8A, a groundbreaking court rule aimed at ending wealth-based incarceration in Cook County. After the Order was announced, the Coalition began calling on the Supreme Court of Illinois to issue a similar, legally-binding, statewide rule that would limit money bonds to amounts immediately payable, thus dramatically reducing the number of people incarcerated pretrial in Illinois. In response to those efforts, the Illinois Supreme Court formed a commission to investigate the state's pretrial practices in December 2017 and issue a report in December 2019. The commission is made up of system stakeholders and elected officials from across Illinois with just one community representative.

Pictured above: CCBF staff with Coalition to End Money Bond and Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice partners at the Springfield listening session of the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practices on April 22, 2019.

ADVOCACY EFFORTS

In February 2019, the Coalition to End Money Bond and our partners around the state began a concerted campaign to create an avenue for public input into the Commission's recommendations. Working with people across Illinois, the Coalition sent hundreds of postcards to the Commission requesting a public hearing and submitted a petition with over 1,500 signatures reinforcing that demand. In April 2019, the commission announced three "listening sessions" to take place in April, May, and July 2019 and a written comment process. A fourth listening session was announced in May 2019. CCBF and the Coalition to End Money Bond helped mobilize more than fifty speakers to testify at the four hearings; all of them called on the Supreme Court Commission to dramatically reduce the use of money bond and pretrial incarceration. The majority, including several elected officials from Cook County, recommend the implementation of the previously proposed Supreme Court Rule. In addition, written comments from impacted people, experts, and community advocates were submitted to the Commission for inclusion in their final report. Notably, the single speaker in opposition to greater freedom for our friends and neighbors was a State's Attorney from the suburbs of Chicago. No written comments were received opposing bond reform in Illinois.

The Coalition eagerly anticipates the release of the commission's findings and recommendations this December. Regardless of what the Commission recommends, however, we are ready to use the issuance of their final report as an opportunity to educate the public and policymakers about the need to end wealth-based pretrial incarceration in Illinois.

Legislative Advocacy

Every year since 2017, CCBF has worked with our partners in the Coalition to End Money Bond to draft, introduce, and support the Equal Justice for All Act in the Illinois legislature. The bill (HB 3347 in 2019) would end the use of money bond, dramatically reduce the number of people incarcerated pretrial in Illinois, and enact other complementary pretrial reforms. The Coalition also introduced a new bill this year, the Pretrial Data Act (HB 2689), which would require counties across the state to record and report the outcomes of bond hearings and information about the people in their local jails. While neither bill passed, both were the subject of significant conversation.



CCBF Executive Director Sharlyn Grace (first on the left) testified on April 30, 2019 at a subject matter hearing on bail reform held by the Illinois House of Representatives alongside other supporters of eliminating money bond.

ADVOCACY EFFORTS

On April 30, 2019, the Illinois House of Representatives Judiciary-Criminal Committee held a subject matter hearing on the issue of bond reform. CCBF Executive Director Sharlyn Grace testified alongside Coalition member Sharone Mitchell from Illinois Justice Project, Molly Galloway from Champaign County Bailout Coalition (a member of the Illinois Network), Laurence Msall from the Civic Federation, and Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx. Sharlyn and Sharone testified in support of both the Equal Justice for All Act and the Pretrial Data Act. They also emphasized the importance of maintaining the protections created by the Bail Reform Act of 2017, most importantly the guarantee of court-appointed counsel at bond hearings. Molly spoke to the impact on families of people incarcerated and the urgent need for statewide reform. Our in-person testimony was supported by more than 1,000 witness slips in favor of reforming Illinois' pretrial justice system—all filed in just six days!

The People's Convening on Pretrial Freedom and the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice

In June, the Coalition released *Pursuing Pretrial Freedom: The Urgent Need for Bond Reform in Illinois*. This report examines pretrial practices in counties across Illinois using both real people's stories and county data. Illinois' 102 counties are home to 92 different jails. More than a quarter of a million people pass through their doors annually, and 90% of the people there are incarcerated pre-trial. Every day, thousands of people are caged in Illinois, not because of a criminal conviction, but simply because they cannot afford to purchase their freedom.

In July, the Coalition to End Money Bond hosted The People's Convening on Pretrial Freedom in Springfield. This event brought together impacted people, organizers, and advocates from around Illinois to the state's capital to share priorities and learn from each other while demanding an end to wealth-based incarceration statewide. The convening featured workshops by experts on electronic monitoring and risk assessment tools, an art-making session, a panel discussion, and a rally and march. This event also marked the launch of the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice. The Network was convened by the Coalition to End Money Bond and now includes more than 30 organizations from across the state of Illinois.



Attendees at the People's Convening on Pretrial Freedom marching in Springfield to demand an end to money bond and pretrial incarceration on July 13, 2019.

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The Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice connects organizations working to reduce pretrial incarceration in Illinois and, more broadly, to end mass incarceration and address the root causes of socio-economic and racial inequity in the legal system. By sharing information about local efforts, generating opportunities for collaboration, and developing shared strategies, we generate more power and leverage our local work to achieve transformative pretrial policy changes for all Illinoisans.

The Network includes: ACLU of Champaign County, Black Justice Project, The Center for Empowerment and Justice, Champaign County Bailout Coalition, Change Peoria, Chicago Democratic Socialists of America, The Coalition to Reduce Recidivism in Lake County, Decarcerate BloNo, Faith Coalition for the Common Good, IL-NOW, Peoria Coalition to End Money Bond, Rockford Urban Ministries, Students for a Sensible Drug Policy-IL, TASC, United Congregations of Metro East, Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois, Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of Illinois, and the Coalition to End Money Bond.

AT THE COUNTY LEVEL

Defending Bond Reform in Cook County

CCBF has continued to work with our partners in the Coalition to End Money Bond to hold Cook County judges accountable to General Order 18.8A. In September, we marked the second anniversary of the Order's implementation with the release of *Protecting Pretrial Freedom: Two Years of Bond Reform in Cook County*, a report documenting the success of the bond reform in Cook County and highlighting areas that still need improvement. While the number of people incarcerated in Cook County Jail is at a thirty-year low, approximately 2,000 people remain in jail solely because they can't afford to pay a money bond.



CCBF and Coalition to End Money Bond partners rallying alongside organizers in Champaign-Urbana before the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practices listening session on May 6, 2019.

If judges were adhering to General Order 18.8A and setting only affordable money bonds, CCBF's

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revolving bail fund would no longer be necessary. While the Order's implementation has been uneven, it has resulted in a marked drop in the number of people incarcerated in Cook County from 7,500 in September of 2017 to roughly 5,750 as of October 2019. It is also important to note that this drop has not coincided with a significant increase in the number of people incarcerated in their homes on electronic monitoring (EM). As we work to end the harm caused by pretrial incarceration, it is important that we not accept false alternatives to incarceration such as EM that are being offered up across the country.

In addition to what we know about the positive, stabilizing impact of people remaining in their communities pretrial to care for their families and maintain their jobs and homes, court data shows that less than 1% of people who were released or bonded out were rearrested for offenses considered "violent." Despite this overwhelming evidence, the Chicago Police Department has attempted to undermine bond reform by erroneously linking it to a (non-existent) uptick in gun violence. In summer 2019, CPD leadership exploited tragic incidents of gun violence in El Paso, Texas and Dayton, Ohio to call for a return to the use of more unaffordable money bonds specifically for people accused of possessing a gun without a license.

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot adopted CPD's rhetoric and even held several "Accountability Monday" press conferences during which she made verifiably false claims about specific cases to give the impression that bond reform was making the city less safe. In response, CCBF worked with GoodKids MadCity, the Children and Family Justice Center, Live Free Chicago, and Chicago Appleseed to hold our own "Accountability Monday" press conference on August 12, 2019, during which impacted people and advocates set the record straight and issued an important reminder: we



Representatives of CCBF, GoodKids MadCity, Live Free Chicago, Chicago Appleseed, and the Children and Family Justice Center after our "Accountability Monday" press conference holding CPD and the mayor's office accountable for spreading misinformation about the relationship between bond reform and gun violence.

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cannot incarcerate our way out of gun violence. Valuing the lives of victims means focusing on prevention and root causes, not merely punishment after violence occurs.

For the last several years, Cook County has been leading the way in pretrial justice reforms. We have significantly reduced the number of people incarcerated pretrial without endangering community safety. We cannot allow ourselves to be exploited by racialized fears to roll back these achievements. When we make policies based on fear, Chicago Police and the Fraternal Order of Police benefit, but our communities are subjected to more militarized violence. We must be brave and protect the progress Cook County has made while calling for greater action to stop punishing individuals most at risk of experiencing violence and start supporting them in building community safety through community.

Now more than ever, it is important that we do not merely defend bond reform but push for even more freedom for our friends and neighbors.

Demanding Reinvestment in the Cook County Budget

For the second year in a row, CCBF called for a decrease in spending on the Cook County Department of Corrections during the county's budgeting process. Despite a massive 45% decrease in the number of people incarcerated in Cook County Jail between 2013 and 2019, the Cook County Sheriff's jail budget grew 28% over the same time period—reaching a whopping \$588 million in 2019. CCBF believes that the historic decline in the number of people incarcerated in Cook County Jail should coincide with a similar decrease in the Sheriff's jail budget and that money saved should be reinvested in communities.

CCBF staff and volunteers attended several of the budget hearings across the county. We called on the commissioners to move money from Cook County Jail's budget to investments in housing, healthcare, jobs, and economic security in the communities most harmed by mass incarceration.

IN THE MEDIA

CCBF was featured in 70 local and national news pieces this year in which CCBF staff, allies, or impacted people were interviewed. Publications ranged from Univision and *The Chicago Sun-Times* to WTTW's *Chicago Tonight* and NPR Illinois.



CCBF featured on the front page of *The Chicago Tribune* in March 2019.

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Of particular note was *The Chicago Tribune's* front page feature on our work to end money bond, which featured CCBF Advocate Devoureaux Wolf's experience spending three and a half months in jail due to an unaffordable money bond. In April, CCBF was even given a shout out by pop superstar and activist John Legend! In an op-ed he penned for *The Chicago Tribune*, Legend noted the "lead role" CCBF is playing in the "movement to end the criminalization of poverty." In June, CCBF Executive Director Sharlyn Grace was interviewed by Jenn White on WBEZ's *The Morning Shift*. Sharlyn relied on court data to successfully push back on CPD's assertion that bond reform had contributed to an alleged increase in gun violence, citing the fact that less than 1 percent of people who bond out are re-arrested for offenses that are considered "violent." This was an important intervention in the public conversation at the time, especially because abolition demands not only that we tear down oppressive institutions but also that we build strong communities where violence happens less and less.

Original Media

CCBF significantly increased the amount of original content we produced in 2019, all of which continues to reach wide audiences through social media sharing and online viewing. The videos provide quick explanations of complex issues like legislation, the Supreme Court Commission, and Supreme Court rulemaking in an accessible and compelling format. **In total, CCBF and our partners in the Coalition to End Money Bond created 13 original educational videos this year. Together, they were viewed more than 90,000 times.**



Still frame from "Reclaiming the Crown: The Footwork King's Battle with Money Bail."

In December 2018, CCBF released "Reclaiming the Crown: The Footwork King's Battle with Money Bail," a 9-minute video made in partnership with Tom Callahan of Sensitive Visuals. "Reclaiming the Crown" tells the story of CCBF Advocate Devoureaux "King Detro" Wolf's battle with the pretrial justice system in Cook County. The film chronicles Devoureaux's rise as Chicago's footwork king, his setback at the hands of Chicago Police, and eventual reclaiming of the crown as he gets back on his feet and begins working to end money bond.

In spring 2019, CCBF Director of Programs Matt McLoughlin worked with Sensitive Visuals to produce two original videos focused on the Illinois Supreme Court

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Commission and proposed Supreme Court rule. The first video, focused on demanding a public hearing from the Commission, featured people directly impacted by pretrial incarceration alongside CCBF staff; poet, author, and professor Eve Ewing; State Senator Robert Peters; Chicago Alderperson Maria Hadden; and members of Assata's Daughters, the Let Us Breathe Collective, and many others. The video directed viewers to sign a petition and send letters to the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practices. Ultimately, the video was shared more than 22,000 times; two months later, the Commission announced four public hearings and the opportunity for people to submit written comments.

CCBF and the Coalition to End Money Bond also created short videos that provide background information on important topics such as electronic monitoring and the role of lawyers in criminal justice reform. Our recently redesigned websites, chicagobond.org and endmoneybond.org, contain all our original videos, reports, and other commentary.

CCBF has also continued to publish our original writing in the traditional news media. In July, CCBF Executive Director Sharlyn Grace and civil rights attorney Matt Piers published an op-ed in the *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* highlighting the successes of bond reform in Cook County and calling for statewide reform. In his own *Truthout* opinion piece, CCBF Director of Programs Matt McLoughlin wrote about how news outlets enable police violence and mass incarceration by failing to fact check law enforcement claims and talking points.

CCBF also continued to reach thousands of people through social media. On Facebook, CCBF's posts made more than 2.6 million impressions and reached more than 1.1 million people in the past year. Our tweets were retweeted more than 10,000 times and favorited more than 14,000 times. CCBF even used social media to generate international attention this year. On the eve of the polar vortex in January, CCBF reposted a photo of people incarcerated in Cook County Jail shoveling snow without necessary winter attire. Our concern was amplified by stories in *The Daily Mail*, *Huffington Post*, *BET*, and numerous other sources, forcing a response from Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart and encouraging an important conversation about the use of incarcerated people's labor publicly and at the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

Creating and amplifying our own narrative through traditional and social media has been essential to CCBF's work this year. More than any set of statistics, it is the voices of impacted people and their communities that has shifted the public narrative around criminal justice reform.

EVENTS



In 2019, CCBF participated in 64 public events and spoke to more than 3,100 people, including organizers, service providers, advocates, students, and members of faith communities. Our presentations included campaign updates, policy overviews, and personal testimony about the harms of pretrial incarceration, but every one ultimately focused on the need to organize together for an end to money bond. A sample of the events we organized or co-organized is below.

FEBRUARY | CCBF traveled to Champaign-Urbana with our Coalition partners from the ACLU of Illinois and Illinois Justice Project for a film screening and panel discussion hosted by the ACLU of Champaign County. CCBF Advocate Lavette Mayes spoke alongside Coalition partners Sharone Mitchell and Ben Ruddell and Molly Galloway from the Champaign County Bailout Coalition. State Representatives Carol Ammons and Scott Bennett also spoke briefly about their interest in and commitment to pretrial reform in the legislature. More than 100 people attended the event at the Art Theatre where the CCBF produced short film, “Reclaiming the Crown” was shown on the big screen!

SPRING | Between April and June, CCBF participated in educational events in Rockford, Springfield, Peoria, Bloomington-Normal, Gurnee, Aurora, and Carbondale. The events focused on the Coalition’s work to influence the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practices and laid the groundwork for the foundation of the launch of the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice later in the summer.

OCTOBER | In October, CCBF hosted the Chicago launch event for MediaJustice’s new report, *No More Shackles: Ten Arguments Against Pretrial Electronic Monitoring*. The event featured CCBF Advisory Board member and MediaJustice Fellow James Kilgore breaking down the report’s main arguments and was hosted by CCBF Advocate Lavette Mayes. CCBF Advisory Board member Emmanuel Andre moderated a panel discussion with people CCBF paid bond for and supported while they were on electronic monitoring in conversation with representatives from JustLeadershipUSA Milwaukee.

Pictured above: CCBF volunteer Timothy Williams speaking about his experience on electronic monitoring at MediaJustice’s event Challenging E-Carceration In California and Beyond on October 12, 2019.

PAYING BOND IN OUR FOURTH YEAR

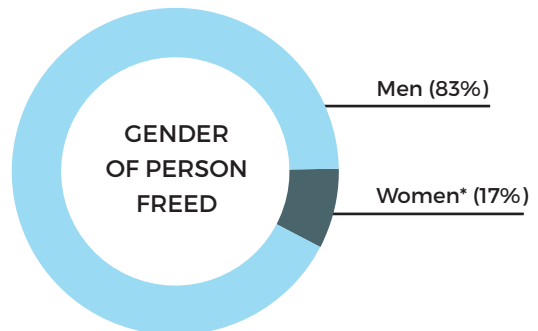
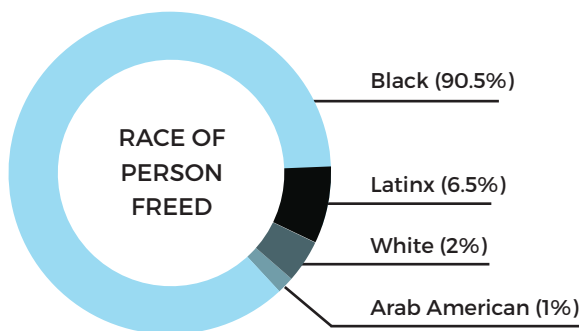
From November 2018 through October 2019, CCBF paid \$554,200 in bond to free 108 people from Cook County Jail or house arrest with electronic monitoring.

That's more people freed than in any of our previous years in operation. CCBF has now paid more than \$1.5 million in bond to free more than 280 people from Cook County Jail or house arrest with electronic monitoring. The average bond we paid in 2019 was \$5,131.

Having paid more than \$1.5 million in bond is a testament to the amazing support we have received from each and every one of you who made this work possible by donating your time, money, or other resources. We must simultaneously recognize, however, that if Cook County had honored these individuals' right to pretrial freedom, this \$1.5 million would not have been needed to purchase their freedom. Instead, it could have been used to meet other needs, support organizing, or otherwise benefit the communities most harmed by criminalization and incarceration.

CCBF has now paid more than \$1.5 million in bond to free more than 280 people.

CCBF has been paying bond for four years, and we hope that we do not have to pay bond for another four. We envision a world where people are not locked in cages, and where no one is punished for where they live or who they are. That vision will not be realized by just paying another \$1 million in bond—or even from \$20 million. True change will come when the systems of money bond and pretrial incarceration end, and when the parents, children, siblings, and other community members locked up in Cook County Jail are free.



* Includes one trans woman

How Our Revolving Fund Works

More information on CCBF's revolving bond fund, including the criteria we use in prioritizing requests for help paying bond, is available on our website, www.chicagobond.org.



Police make an arrest. Some people charged with misdemeanors and all people charged with felonies go to bond court.



Bail decisions are made in mere minutes. This determines whether someone is released or detained while their case is pending.



People who can pay bond are released. People who cannot pay bond are incarcerated at Cook County Jail or in their homes—often for months or even years.



Chicago Community Bond Fund helps family members and friends pay bond when they can't afford it themselves.



After their bond is paid, the person is released from jail. People free on bond have better case outcomes than people who are locked up.



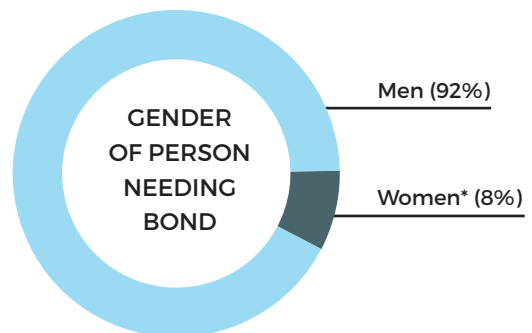
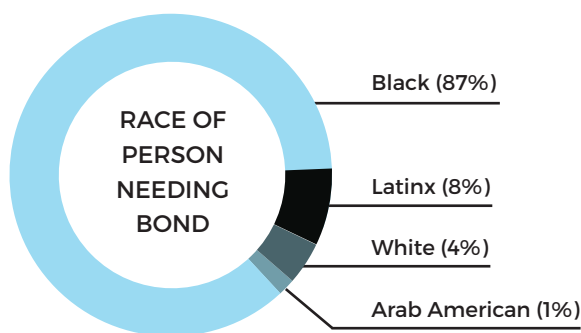
At the conclusion of the case, the bond money is returned to CCBF's revolving fund and can be used to free more people from Cook County Jail or house arrest.

REQUESTS FOR HELP PAYING BOND

In 2017, Cook County Chief Judge Timothy Evans issued General Order 18.8A. The Order instructed the county's judges to stop setting bonds in amounts that people can't pay. Nevertheless, since the order's implementation, we have received thousands of phone calls from people who have loved ones incarcerated in Cook County simply because they cannot afford to pay a bond. Each one of these bonds was set in violation of General Order 18.8A and points to the need for more robust statewide reforms that ensure that no one is incarcerated due to an unaffordable money bond.

Paying bond for every person that called CCBF this year would have cost more than \$7 million. This is just a small fraction of the amount of money Cook County judges are trying to extort from our county's most marginalized communities, given that not everyone in Cook County Jail contacts CCBF. During Cook County Board hearings in fall 2019, a representative of the Clerk of the Circuit Court testified that the county takes in an estimated \$4.7 million each year in revenue from bond money paid by people who are not the accused person themselves. This form of wealth extraction from the most vulnerable communities is another reason why we must eliminate money bond entirely.

Like most people in Cook County Jail, most people seeking CCBF's help paying their bonds were young Black men. Of the 861 requests CCBF received this past year, 92% were for men, 87% were for Black people, and 57% were for people under the age of 30. CCBF also received calls on behalf of more than 60 Latinx people and two transgender women, who are particularly vulnerable to violence and discrimination in the jail. The percentage of Black people in Cook County Jail is already hugely disproportionate, with Black people comprising 74% of the people in jail and only 24% of the general population of Cook County. The overrepresentation of Black men in the calls we receive is consistent with the fact that Black people are more likely to be ordered to pay a money bond, receive higher money bonds than white people in similar circumstances, and are less likely to be able to afford to pay a money bond due to historic and systemic racism.



* Includes two trans women

The average amount of bond requested in 2019 was \$8,000. On average, people had already been incarcerated in Cook County Jail for 115 days before reaching out to us for help paying their bond. Cook County judges' inability to follow General Order 18.8A clearly demonstrates why Illinois needs a Supreme Court Rule or a state law change to ensure that no one is incarcerated simply because they can't afford to pay a money bond.

CASE OUTCOMES

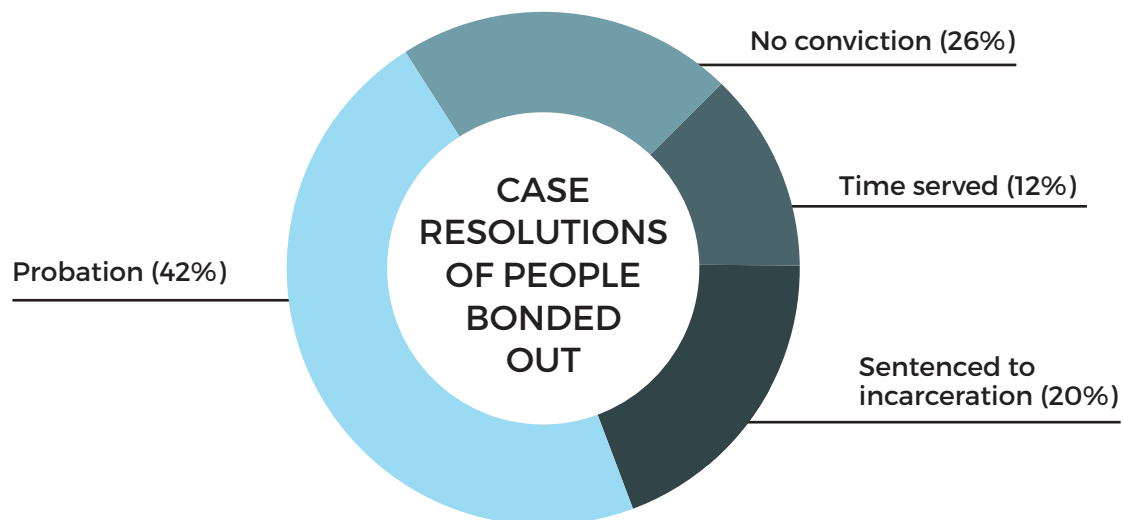
Over the last four years, CCBF has paid bond to free more than 280 people from Cook County Jail or from electronic monitoring. Of those people, 158 people's cases have completely resolved, including 53 cases that have resolved so far in 2019. In those 158 resolved cases, CCBF contributed more than \$692,000 to \$859,000 in total. Of the money CCBF has paid, less than 5% has been lost from our revolving fund to Clerk's fees and court-imposed fines, fees and costs. Combined with money contributed by families and communities, we have been able to recover approximately 94% of the total money paid in bond over the last four years.

Studies have shown that a person's outcome in their criminal case is statistically likely to be better when they are not incarcerated pretrial. There are numerous reasons for this, such as the increased ability to participate in one's own defense and a decreased likelihood of pleading guilty to escape the jail quickly. Of the 158 people whose bonds we paid and whose cases have completely resolved, 33 were not convicted of anything. Those 33 people spent thousands of total days in the jail before CCBF paid their bond—an average of over 200 days per person—only to have their cases dismissed or to be found not guilty. If they had remained in jail, they may have been forced to plead guilty. If a person cannot pay their bond, many will plead guilty to end a case, even if it might otherwise be dismissed, as 26 people's cases were, or result in a "not guilty" verdict, as 7 people's cases did.

The 158 people whose cases have resolved spent a total of 45,103 days free on bond after we purchased their freedom and before their cases ended: an incredible 123.6 years that people might otherwise have spent in a cage if they were not bonded out.

PAYING BOND IN OUR FOURTH YEAR

Fighting a case, even while released on bond, is not easy. Attending court significantly disrupts a person's life and the lives of their loved ones. Court dates are always scheduled on weekdays, and a person may have to wait several hours before their case is heard. If they are late by even a few minutes, a judge can issue a warrant for their arrest and enter an order forfeiting their bond. These threats and the ultimate threat of a years-long prison sentence hang over the head of everyone facing a felony charge. Of the people CCBF has paid bond for, 72 have pleaded guilty or been convicted and sentenced to some form of probation. Those people spent an average of 92 days in jail before CCBF paid their bonds.



PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to taking requests from the public through our hotline and website, CCBF works with legal aid and social service partner organizations to pay bond for their clients. By working with partners, CCBF is able to help ensure people remain connected to their communities and vital services they are already accessing.

Since our founding, CCBF has prioritized paying bond for people represented by Cabrini Green Legal Aid (CGLA) and Lawndale Christian Legal Center (LCLC). Both of these organizations provide wraparound services for their criminal defense clients. In the past year, we paid \$62,000 in bond to free nine people represented by either CGLA or LCLC.

PAYING BOND IN OUR FOURTH YEAR

We also continued our partnership with Believers Bail Out (BBO), which began last year. BBO is a diverse group of Muslim organizations that fundraises to pay both criminal and immigration bonds for Muslims. Every year during Ramadan, Muslims pay zakat, an annual tax on wealth. One of the eight uses for zakat described in the Qur'an is the freeing of slaves or captives, so BBO solicits zakat during Ramadan and uses the donations to free Muslims throughout the year. CCBF is one of several bail funds that BBO works with around the country. This past year, CCBF worked with BBO to pay \$44,000 to free eight Muslims incarcerated in Cook County Jail.



CCBF volunteer Timothy Williams, Director of Programs Matthew McLoughlin, and Advisory Board Member James Kilgore with organizers from around the country at MediaJustices' event Challenging E-Carceration In California and Beyond on October 12, 2019.

STORIES OF PEOPLE FREED

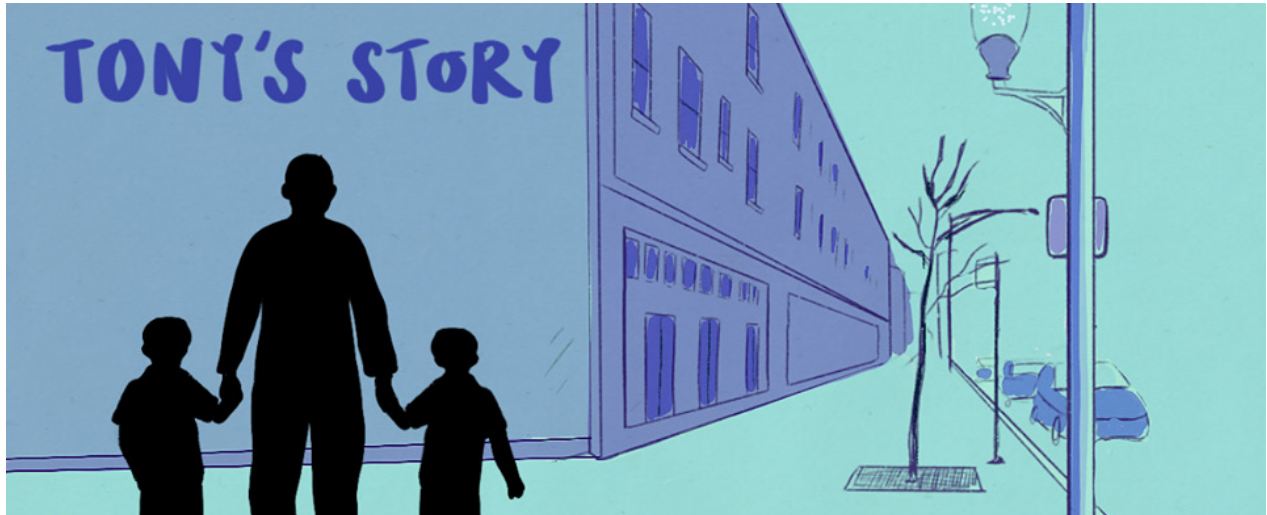


In July 2017, Alliyah was escorted into Cook County's central bond court without knowing that she would spend the next ten months in jail. Her bond was set at \$150,000, meaning she needed \$15,000 to regain her freedom while her case was pending.

The high costs of her bond and hiring a private attorney resulted in Alliyah's mother living with friends to cut expenses as the family slowly saved up. The support from her family kept Alliyah from slipping into destabilizing depression, but it came at a cost totalling nearly \$600 a month for her to use the phone and pay for basic toiletries and food items.

Chicago Community Bond Fund paid Alliyah's bond after her family reached out to us. While she was able to return to her beloved community, she was unfortunately not free. Alliyah's bond slip mistakenly said that she was assigned to "Pretrial Services" upon her release, which placed her on 24-hour house arrest without electronic monitoring. After a week and a dozen attempts to reach Pretrial Services, she learned that the length of her time in Cook County Jail excluded her from this requirement.

Alliyah's case resolved eight months after her release and she was given probation. At the time of her arrest, Alliyah was a year out of high school with a full-time job and four months from completing a medical training program at Truman College. Alliyah is back to pursuing her dreams despite the negative impact of the felony on her record. She is enrolled in a real estate program and hopes to have her own business one day. Alliyah plans to eventually seal her record after her probation ends and put this experience behind her once and for all.



In December 2018, CCBF paid \$5,000 for Tony* to be released from Cook County Jail and onto house arrest with electronic monitoring (“EM”). CCBF helped Tony return home to his five-year-old twins and ensure that he received proper medical care and a diet that supports his health. Tony, who is in his late 50’s, has a pacemaker, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. He has also had two triple bypass surgeries. Tony’s diabetes has been so severely aggravated by the food served in jail that his foot swelled to the point where he can’t lift it and is forced to drag it on the ground when moving around.

Ultimately, Tony was denied release onto EM because part of his rent is paid through a section 8 voucher. (The standard lease agreement for section 8 housing precludes anyone from being in the residence on electronic monitoring.) Tony’s public defender tried very hard to get EM removed as a condition of release, but the judge refused even though he knows that the EM requirement is resulting in Tony’s ongoing incarceration. Tony remained incarcerated in Cook County Jail for more than seven months after we paid his bond. Ultimately, Tony was sentenced to probation, meaning that the prosecutor and judge determined he could appropriately be in the community after convicted—even though he had been denied community supervision while presumed innocent. This contradiction is one of the most transparently illogical aspects of money bond and pretrial incarceration, since 70% of people exiting Cook County Jail return to the community.

*Names and some identifying details changed to protect their identity.



Having grown up on the South Side and around Robert Taylor Homes, Faith* has always been aware of the Chicago Police Department. She experienced months of police harassment before she was arrested while picking her eight-year-old son up from school in September 2017. Faith sat in a holding cell for three days before being brought to bond court where a judge ordered her to pay \$5,000 to gain her freedom pending trial.

Faith is a dedicated mother who tried to parent her son during her time in Cook County Jail (CCJ). She arranged a care schedule with family members who drove him from opposite ends of the city to attend school while he lived with his grandmother. While incarcerated, Faith's mother had to put money on her commissary account so she could call her son twice a day. One morning while waiting for the phone in CCJ, Faith was attacked and pepper-sprayed in her face by guards.

In December 2017, CCBF bonded Faith out of CCJ so she could return home to her family. After a CCBF volunteer paid Faith's bond, she sat in a sheriff's van for three hours while several other women were dropped off. It wasn't until the middle of the night that she finally arrived at her mother's home. During the intervening hours, Faith's mother had to stay awake because Faith could have been taken back to the jail if her mother didn't answer the door when she arrived.

Faith was on electronic monitoring ("EM") and granted movement to take her son to and from school each day. This allowed Faith's son to sleep in her home every night instead of being driven all over the city and staying with family. While this was a vast improvement from being in jail, Faith ultimately decided to take a plea deal—not because she thought she couldn't beat her case but because her time on EM had so greatly disrupted her life and the life of her family.

*Names and some identifying details changed to protect their identity.



D* grew up in El Paso, Texas, where he learned to speak English and Spanish and grow his own vegetables in the backyard. When he was 12, his family moved to Chicago so they could leave an abusive step-father. As an adult, D is a family man and a hard worker who is skilled in several trades including culinary arts, carpentry, and upholstery.

In June 2017, the police came to D's home and arrested him in front of his family. In bond court, D was given a \$75,000 D bond, requiring an unfathomable \$7,500 to gain his release pretrial. As the primary provider for his household, D had had a job repairing transmissions and had been able to create a positive life for himself and his family of five.

With the loss of his own income and his partner unable to work while pregnant, D was forced to sit in Cook County Jail (CCJ) for almost a year while awaiting trial. He lost his job, truck, and his family's home. During his time in jail, D saw leeches in the showers and had to endure a hot water shutoff. He found the conditions of incarceration to be so inhumane that he had suicidal thoughts.

D's partner visited him in CCJ often while trying to balance caring for their children alone. Working with D's partner, CCBF was able to free D after 10 months of incarceration, and he was released in April 2018. Today, D and his family, which has grown by three since his incarceration, are focused on moving forward and starting a new life together in Nashville, TN in the near future.

*Names and some identifying details changed to protect their identity.

CONCLUSION

With each passing year, CCBF and our partners have continued to gain significant ground toward ending money bond and pretrial incarceration in Illinois. Implementation of General Order 18.8A has continued to improve in Cook County courts, and our efforts to hold the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practices accountable have ignited a statewide conversation about bond reform.

2019 presented unique challenges and threats to the progress we have made since our founding in 2015, but our movement's ability to beat back the false narratives put forward by police and others displayed our power. We are not only getting stronger, we are also growing.

CCBF's travels around the state as part of the Coalition to End Money Bond introduced us to important new partners in the fight to end pretrial incarceration. We look forward to deepening these relationships as we work to hold the Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practices accountable to the demands of people from across Illinois.

In 2020, we will continue to expand our statewide work with the Coalition to End Money Bond and the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice. We are excited to work together to pass a bill in the state legislature that will bring an end to wealth-based incarceration and promote pretrial freedom in Illinois.

Together, our movement will end money bond and pretrial incarceration across the country.



Staff, volunteers, and people freed at a CCBF community lunch in spring 2019.

THANK YOU'S

Chicago Community Bond Fund would like to thank the following people and organizations:

Our Board of Directors: Chair Christian Snow, Treasurer Naomi Milstein, Secretary Niya Kelly, and members Jason Lydon, Diana Parker, and Maya Schenwar.

Our Advisory Board members: Emmanuel Andre, Rosi Carrasco, Beth Johnson, Mariame Kaba, James Kilgore, José López, Alan Mills, Mony Ruiz-Velasco, Eliza Solowiej, and Jennifer Vollen-Katz.

The Coalition to End Money Bond: ACLU of Illinois; A Just Harvest; Believers Bail Out, Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice; Community Renewal Society; Illinois Justice Project; Justice and Witness Ministry of the Chicago Metropolitan Association, Illinois Conference, United Church of Christ; Nehemiah Trinity Rising; The Next Movement at Trinity United Church of Christ; The Shriver Center on Poverty Law; Southsiders Organized for Unity and Liberation (SOUL); The People's Lobby; and Workers Center for Racial Justice.

The Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice: ACLU of Champaign County, Black Justice Project, The Center for Empowerment and Justice, Champaign County Bailout Coalition, Change Peoria, Chicago Democratic Socialists of America, Coalition to End Money Bond, The Coalition to Reduce Recidivism in Lake County, Decarcerate BloNo, Faith Coalition for the Common Good, NOW (National Organization for Women)-IL, Peoria Coalition to End Money Bond, Rockford Urban Ministries, Students for Sensible Drug Policy-IL, TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities), United Congregations of Metro East, Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois, and Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of Illinois.

Our fellow travelers and partner organizations: Access Living, AirGo, American Friends Service Committee, Arab American Action Network, Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Chicago, Assata's Daughters, Believers Bail Out, Black & Pink Chicago, Black Lives Matter Chicago, Brooklyn Community Bail Fund, the Brother David Darst Center, BYP 100, Cabrini Green Legal Aid, Challenging E-Carceration, Chicago Freedom School, Chicago Jobs Council, Chicago Recovery Alliance, Chicago Taskforce on Violence Against Girls & Young Women, Chicago Teachers Union, Chicago Torture Justice Center, Chicago Torture Justice Memorials, Chicago Votes, the Children and Family Justice Center, Circles & Ciphers, City Bureau, Civic Federation, Civil Rights Corps, Color of Change, Community Cave, Community Justice Exchange, Cook County Public Defender's Office, Covenant United Church of Christ, the Criminal Justice Policy Program at Harvard Law School, Critical Resistance, Dyke March Chicago, For The People Artists Collective, Free Write Arts & Literacy, Gay Liberation Network, GoodKids MadCity, Grace House, Hughes Socol Piers Resnick & Dym, Ltd, Human Rights Watch, Injustice Watch, Inner-City Muslim Action Network, Japanese American Citizens League, Jewish Voice For Peace-Chicago, Just Practice Collaborative, The Justice Collaborative, Justice Informed, Kuumba Lynx, LADhoc Accounting and Lee Dewey, Lawndale Christian Legal

THANK YOU'S

Center, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, League of Women Voters of Cook County and of Illinois, the Let Us Breathe Collective, Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, Live Free Chicago, Love & Protect, Lucy Parsons Labs, Masjid al-Rabia, MediaJustice, Metropolitan Planning Council, Moms United Against Violence and Incarceration, Monkey Wrench, NAMI Chicago, the National Bail Fund Network, National Lawyers Guild of Chicago & the NLG National Office, National Nurses United, New Zion Baptist Church, Northside Transformative Law Center, Organized Communities Against Deportations, People's Law Office, Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project, Project NIA, Roderick & Solange MacArthur Justice Center, Sapelo Square, SEIU Local 1, Sensitive Visuals and Tom Callahan, Showing Up For Racial Justice Chicago, Silicon Valley De-Bug, Sirat Chicago, Southerners on New Ground, Southside Together Organizing for Power (STOP), SPACE on Ryder Farm, Support Ho(s)e, Survived & Punished, Thedford Garber Law, Uptown People's Law Center, Transformative Justice Law Project, Westside Justice Center, Youth Empowerment Performance Project, and Young Chicago Authors.

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And all of the nearly 100 volunteers who make CCBF's work possible.



CHICAGO COMMUNITY BOND FUND

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