

Facebook is asked to take down pages of California inmates

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California inmates, who are getting their hands on contraband cellphones in record numbers, have been using the devices to surf the Web and update their Facebook accounts, prison officials say.

So on Monday, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation administrators announced that they have started reporting inmate pages to [Facebook](#) and that the company will take down pages that have been updated since the owners went to prison.

"Access to social media allows [inmates](#) to circumvent our monitoring process and continue to engage in criminal activity," Corrections Department Secretary Matthew Cate said in a statement posted on the prison system's website.

It's not just inmates posting on their own social media pages that has prison administrators concerned. Some have used their contraband cellphones to troll their victims' pages and harass them from behind bars. A child molester who has been incarcerated for at least seven years recently sent up-to-date drawings of a victim to her house. He'd apparently sketched portraits of the now 17-year-old girl from photos he found on her [MySpace](#) and Facebook pages, according to Monday's statement.

In 2006, corrections officers found 261 contraband cellphones behind prison walls. They found more than 7,200 in the first six months of this year, according to the statement.

Prison employees, who unlike visitors don't get searched on the way into the facilities, have long been considered a primary source of contraband phones, which can fetch as much as \$1,000 each. Currently, it is a violation of [prison](#) rules to smuggle a phone inside and pass it to an inmate, but it is not illegal. So a profiteering employee can be fired but not prosecuted.

A pending bill by state Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Pacoima, would make smuggling a phone to an inmate a crime punishable by a \$5,000 fine and up to six months in jail.

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