



BLACK CREEK

INTEGRATED SYSTEMS CORP.

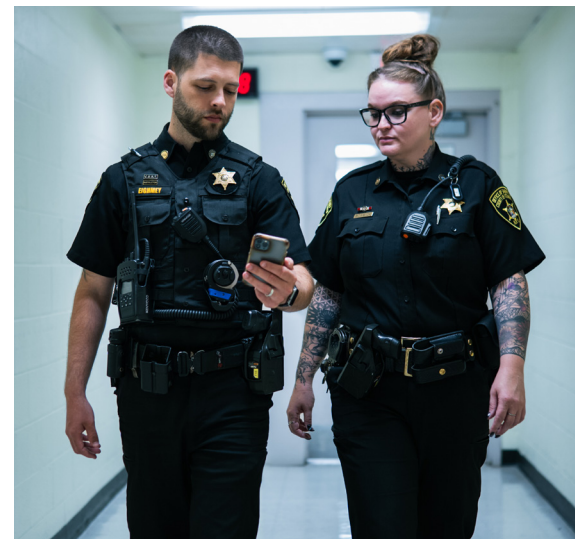
**Doing More
with Less:**

The Impact of Transformative Corrections Technology

*Manage health and safety, limit liability,
improve efficiency and ensure compliance
with help from the right solutions.*

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I. Introduction: Today's Corrections Landscape

In the corrections world, the ability to do more with less has always been critical. This remains true even though state and local expenditures on corrections (as well as police and the court system) continue to grow.

In 2021, state and local governments spent \$87 billion on corrections, but nearly all of these funds (97%) “went toward operational costs such as salaries and benefits” in an ongoing struggle to keep jails, prisons and other detaining facilities adequately staffed, reports the [Urban Institute](#).

THIS STAFFING CRISIS IS ONE YOU'RE LIKELY LIVING WITH EVERY DAY.

Not only do the demands of being a corrections officer make it tough to hire, but today's jails are being asked to do much more, including meeting mandated requirements for mental health and substance abuse treatment and delivering programming to lower recidivism and facilitate reentry. A 2020-2021 survey by the Correctional Leaders Association of its members found that, “for almost 50 percent of corrections agencies, officer turnover rates range from 20 percent to over 30 percent annually, 38 percent of staff leave within one year, and 48 percent of staff leave within one to five years.” ([Corrections Today, January/February 2023 issue](#))

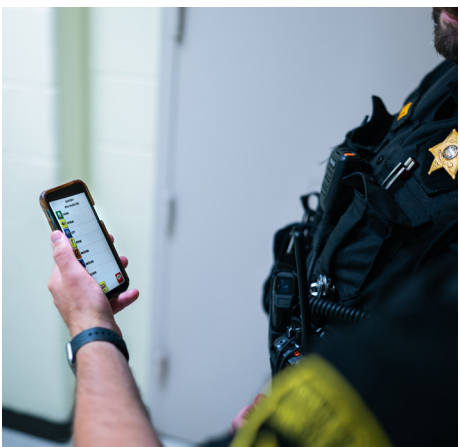
Adding to the challenges leaders face is the chronic underfunding of most jails and detention facilities. Many federal grants, for example, focus primarily on law enforcement while local corrections facilities are off the radar even as staff are asked to do more to care for and monitor detainees.

The relative invisibility of local detention centers also means that buildings and the systems and technology on which they operate can suffer. Even a recently built jail may require software and/or hardware upgrades within five to seven years. The funding needed to upgrade and modernize security control systems, maintain and improve detainee health and well-being, and institute programs that meet compliance requirements and limit liability can be nearly impossible to find in what's left over after staffing and other critical needs are met.

If that's a dark picture of what corrections leaders face, there *is* a brighter side. While technology can't solve all of these problems (and it shouldn't; there will always be a need for trained, skilled, compassionate people in corrections), it can help you meet many of the challenges you're facing. Put more simply, there are technical solutions that reduce risk at every level of facility operations while improving safety and efficiency and ensuring compliance.

As you read through this Ebook, you'll find guidance on:

- Where the right technology belongs on your priority list (what it can and should do)
- How to choose the right partner to work with (what to ask, what to expect)
- What transformative corrections technology looks like in action (including specific benefits that align with the biggest challenges you're probably facing)
- Encouraging buy-in and approval for technical upgrades and new solutions



II. The Role of the *Right* Technology

So what does it look like to start the process of choosing and operationalizing technical solutions for your jail or prison? The options can seem overwhelming. What follows are the most important signs to look for in any upgrades or new technology you're considering. Your goals: to find products that meet your current needs, take future needs into account, and set you up with a true technology partner.

• The right solution is interoperable.

Siloed solutions are likely to hamstring operations in numerous ways. Let's say you already have a tool for [detainee health](#) and another that monitors [officer duress](#), and you know you need a [jail management system \(JMS\)](#). These, though, are separate from your [security control system](#), which you know will soon need an upgrade. Having different vendors for different needs can make it difficult and time-consuming to get the data you need or perform frequent tasks like moving a detainee from one housing unit to another or booking in a new detainee. Often, one vendor is not willing to share data with another provider, making it tough for the corrections facility to see all relevant information in one place.

Look for technology that can integrate with what you already have or choose a platform where all or most of your needs are served within a single system so interoperability is

built in. Even if your immediate need (and the only solution you can afford now) is, say, a detainee well-being system to minimize in-custody deaths, it's important to consider other technical solutions you know you'll need sooner or later to see if a vendor offers these options as well.

• The right solution mitigates risk.

In the corrections world, risk comes in a variety of forms. A death-in-custody, medical neglect or wrongful-death case can easily cost a jail millions of dollars. Although the vast majority of cases are settled, the [average settlement](#) for a jail death litigation case is nearly \$1.4 million.

While avoiding such a tragedy in the first place is clearly ideal, understanding and documenting what happened can be critically important, especially if the incident is followed by litigation. Installing digital/IP cameras, for example, can provide evidence of what happened. When powered by artificial

Suicide is the leading cause of death (35%) in lawsuits filed against jails, while drug-related fatalities made up nearly 19% of cases.

Civil litigation cases involving deaths in jail custody represented more than \$292 million awarded between 2015 and 2020.

– ***“Dying Inside: To End Deaths of Despair, Address the Crisis in Local Jails,”*** O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law, Georgetown University Law Center, December 2022

intelligence (AI), this system is capable of monitoring hundreds of cameras 24/7 for a fight or indicators of impending violence, something few jails have the staff to do.

Over time, AI continually improves its ability to spot an altercation (or a fire or weapon), immediately alerts staff, and records and stores the incident—all of which limit an agency’s liability, potentially reduce medical costs because intervention happens faster, and show your insurance company that you’re actively taking steps to limit risk.

Similarly, biometric monitoring of detainees provides real-time tracking of heart rate and can be configured to vulnerable populations, including those who are elderly, pregnant or going through detox. And duress monitoring for officers provides instant alerts of location and visual and audible alarms that reduce response times.

Other risks may be harder to predict. Many detention facilities are exploring whether AI can make it easier for products from different vendors to work together to track, store and analyze data. AI might be a great solution for a range of challenges corrections leaders face, but an open-source platform that stores detainee and law enforcement information in the cloud or on the Web is vulnerable to compromise. Choosing an on-premise solution greatly reduces the risk of exposing sensitive public safety data.

· **The right solution is specific to your facility.** Openly sharing what you need and what you can afford is the best way to start a productive relationship with your technology partner. Look for and ask about features that will improve efficiency, such as a records management platform built to align with your state’s requirements, or features that make it easy to complete frequent tasks, like sharing detainee data with other agencies. If regular staff turnover makes training an ongoing headache, make sure that learning any new systems really is intuitive.



• The right solution is future-aware.

It's important to select a provider who knows what's impacting our industry and where corrections is headed, both nationally and locally. Does your partner understand the patterns and other factors you're seeing? Certainly staffing and underfunded facilities are huge challenges. So, too, are shifting legislative priorities at all levels. For example, in 2008 Congress passed the [Second Chance Act](#), which dramatically changed the national corrections landscape, pumping \$1.2 billion into "state and local efforts to improve outcomes for people leaving prison and jail," said an [April 2024 report](#) by the Council of State Governments Justice Center. (The goal of the Act was to reduce recidivism and ease re-entry for released offenders.)

In many cases, the then-new legislation meant that corrections leaders became responsible for implementing programming—including finding the funds, staff and technology to support it—that would translate into lower rates of reincarceration. Since the Act's passage, three-quarters of states have seen a drop; nine states have seen double-digit declines.

These gains were made possible in part by the by the hard work and creativity of corrections professionals and other experts who deliver cognitive behavioral therapy, detainee education and job-skill development, substance abuse treatment, and other evidence-based programming.

This is just one powerful reminder that even the best technology will never replace people. Supporting staff and detainees to ensure their mental and physical well-being is certainly something tech can help with, but there will always be a role for old-school solutions, such as interpersonal communication training. The human element in corrections remains critical.



FINDING YOUR TECHNOLOGY PARTNER

In addition to asking for references and learning as much as you can about a vendor's products and services, answers to these questions will help you determine whether a provider is the right fit for you:

- 1 How long have you been developing software and hardware for corrections?
- 2 Tell me about your process for developing technology and how you test it. Who do you work with to test and improve your products?
- 3 Interoperability is important to us. How does your solution(s) work with other vendors' solutions? Are you willing to share data with another vendor to help us perform frequent tasks more easily and for reporting and data analysis?
- 4 We're based in *[name of state]*. Do you have experience working with corrections or law enforcement in our state? Are you familiar with our state's requirements for corrections agencies?
- 5 Our resources are limited. We know we need *[most urgent solution]* now, but we also know we'll need *[second-tier solution(s)]* at some point. How would you approach working with us to meet these needs, even with our limited budget?

III. Transformative Corrections Technology in Action

Now that you know what to look for in the technical solutions you choose and what to ask of the people you're thinking of working with, it's important to get a feel for what transformative corrections technology actually looks like in the real world.

We've already mentioned that every corrections facility is unique, with different needs, limitations, challenges, compliance requirements and more. But jails and prisons have a lot in common, too, of course. The graphic shown on the next page makes it easier to see exactly how and where the right technology can help corrections leaders meet their most pressing needs and overcome (or at least shrink) their biggest challenges, all while staying compliant, cost-effective and efficient. In our opinion, that's *truly* transformative technology.

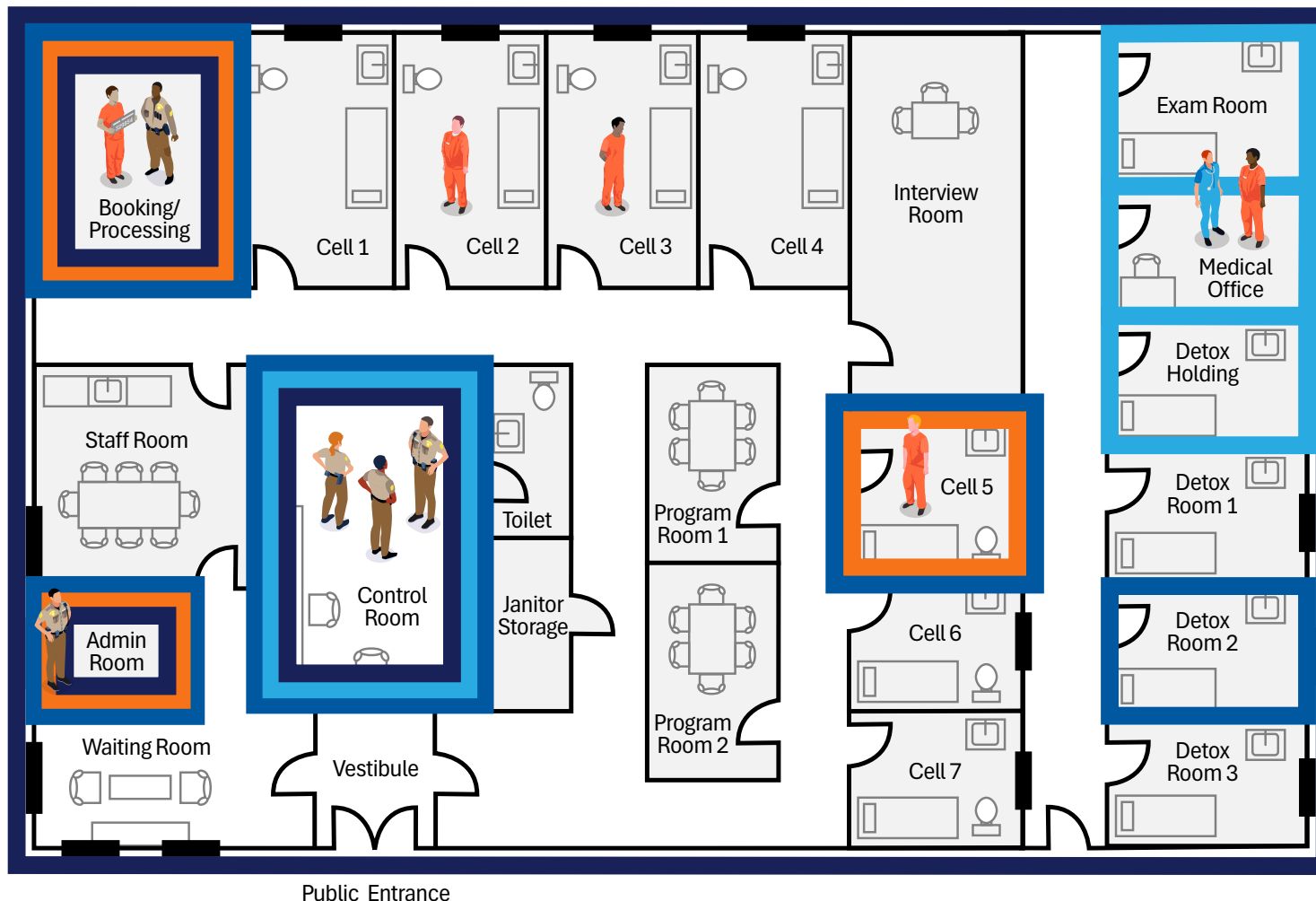
As you look over the infographic, keep in mind that technology isn't the only place where transformation happens or where you can stretch your budget. Sometimes the right solution requires out-of-the-box thinking that comes from decades of experience working with customers a lot like you. Sometimes it happens while sitting around a table talking through a range of possibilities that will allow your agency to upgrade without breaking the bank. Sometimes the solution isn't technology at all.

As you figure out who you want to provide your agency's next security control system, detainee and staff monitoring platform or JMS, be sure to choose a team who brings a long history of understanding and improving corrections, a can-do attitude, and, most of all, honesty.



4 WAYS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORMS CORRECTIONS

Tech can't solve every problem, but the right solutions make a facility safer and more compliant and efficient.



1 MANAGE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Wearable devices that monitor heart rate, oxygen and body temperature help ensure detainee well-being while personal safety devices for staff can send instant duress alerts.

2 LIMIT LIABILITY

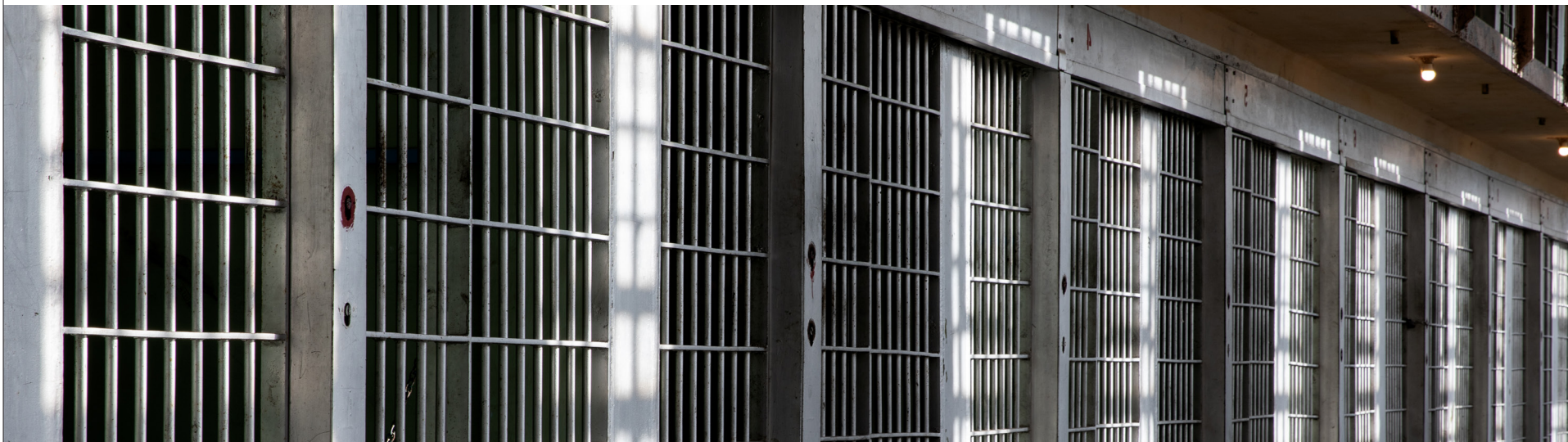
A well-being monitoring system notifies staff sooner of a medical issue or staff assault and gives the precise location, reducing the risk of a death in custody or a medical neglect claim.

3 IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

AI-enabled cameras can track an entire facility 24/7, detainee monitoring reduces the need for wellness checks and a single platform eliminates siloed systems and simplifies operations.

4 ENSURE COMPLIANCE

A JMS eliminates fragmented documentation, making it simpler to complete compliance reports, prepare for inspections and retrieve a wide range of records and analytics.



IV. Getting Approval & Moving to Implementation

With local detention facilities chronically underfunded, securing approval for the budget to pay for new or upgraded technology is rarely an easy or quick process. But if there's one piece of advice we can offer to smooth your path, it's this:

BRING *ALL* YOUR STAKEHOLDERS TOGETHER AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

County executives, the county treasurer, procurement professionals, the folks who handle IT for the county, law enforcement—everyone, in short, who can weigh in with relevant expertise, not just those who will ultimately approve the cost of the project.

Your goal is to make sure that everyone involved, at whatever level, understands what you're planning, why you're doing this, and what their role or responsibility will be. Whether your JMS is on life support (or you don't even have a JMS), deaths-in-custody are an increasing concern or staff turnover has hit a new high, explaining clearly why you need new technology and the specific help you need from each person will streamline every stage of your project.

Do your best to tell a compelling story about the problems that must be solved, the solutions that will get you there and the impact these solutions will have on detainees, staff and the broader community. An engaging story that includes data and real-world examples can go a long way in moving you closer to approval.

Kicking off your technology implementation

You've gotten approval on your project and you've chosen your technology partner and solutions that are right for your agency. Congratulations!

Now the real work begins. Though this may be hard to hear, it's important to know there will be problems and glitches as you go. (Anyone who tells you differently isn't being truthful.)

Third-party vendors may balk at working together. Other entities you need help from might, say, raise concerns about security, present obstacles as you work to retrofit an existing building, or simply be slow to respond.

Oh, and then there's dealing with fellow staff who are resistant to change. Sound familiar? Complacency about "the way it's always been" can be hard to overcome. Colleagues may not be ready to accept that they'll need to learn a new tool. They may also feel loyalty to a previous vendor, even if their offering is no longer the best fit for your facility.

Know that these obstacles are waiting. To help meet them, be prepared to:

- Offer a lot of training, even repeat training.

- Articulate the benefits of adoption, both the obvious upsides as well as benefits that may not be as apparent. Paint a picture of how their daily work will improve after the solution is in place. This will make it easier for colleagues to see and share your vision.
- Assure staff that any new technology is not meant to replace them but to help them.
- Reinforce to IT team members why a tool is in the best interest of your facility. You're likely to find that they favor cloud-based systems since these require fewer servers and less maintenance. But, as mentioned, cloud-based solutions present vulnerabilities in a corrections environment.

Finally, be aware that older buildings can be an impediment to implementing new technology. Lack of WiFi, difficulty running new cabling for network and CCTV cameras can all slow down even the best project plan.

This is all normal. When you have a great partner, you can and will meet these and any other hurdles that arise.



LET'S START A CONVERSATION

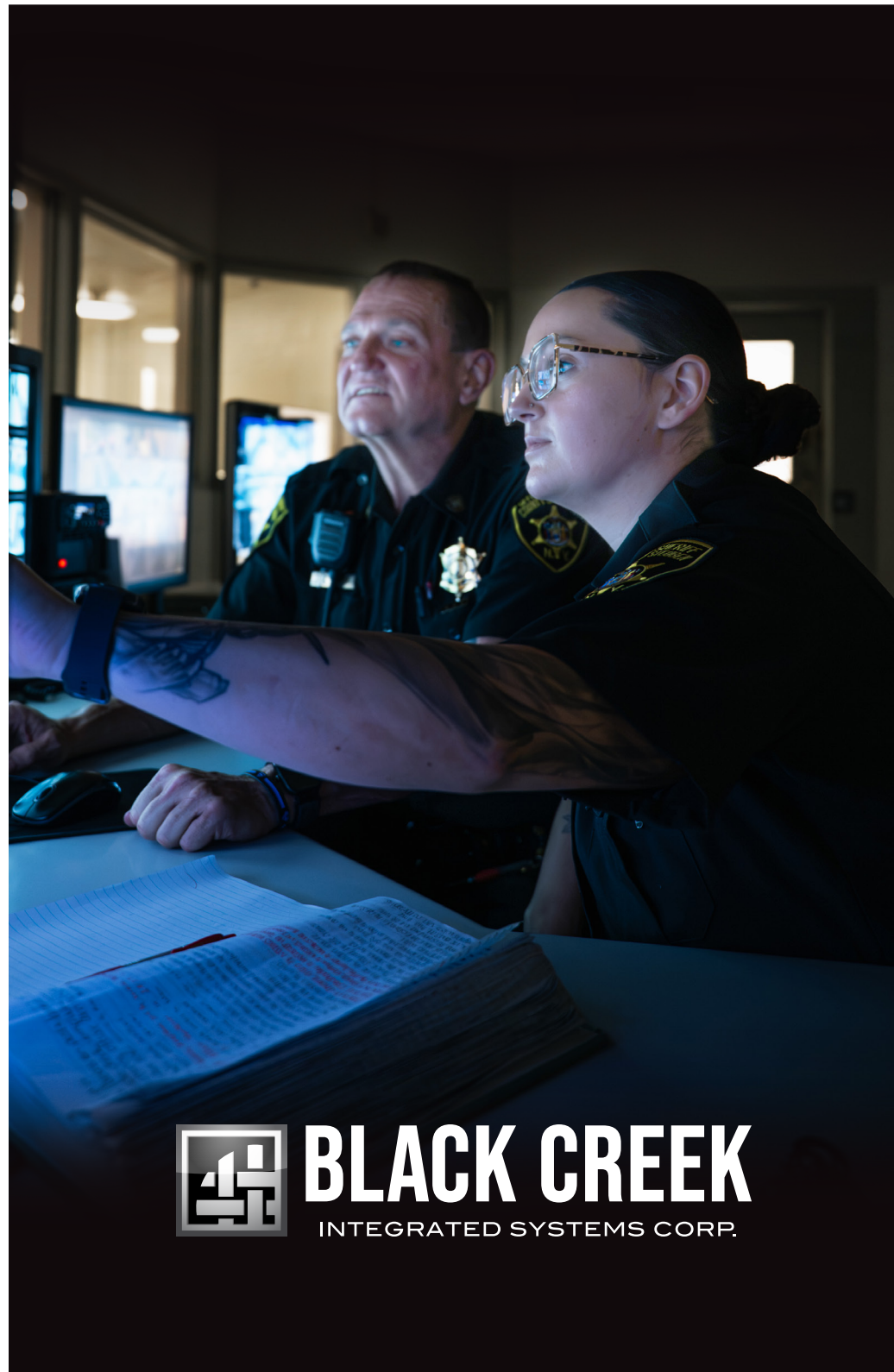
Since 1978, [Black Creek](#) has been leading the way in providing cutting-edge technology for corrections. Our [suite of configurable solutions](#) helps jails, prisons and detention centers tackle challenges ranging from staff and detainee safety to facility operations. The result? Less risk. More efficiency.

Our best-in-class products are created by a [team](#) with a wealth of experience in corrections and technology and are backed by exceptional support that provides our customers with a level of service they can't stop talking about.

WE'D LOVE TO TALK.

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