

## **The full Wisconsin Department of Corrections Statement to WUWM:**

Each division maintains well established pandemic plans that outline protocols and isolation procedures on what to do if someone was infected. Individuals who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 would be sent to a medical professional for further assessment and determination on testing. DOC continues to work with DHS and the State Lab of Hygiene on best practices for testing. DOC has implemented a tiered system of testing for persons in our care that places them into a high priority category, knowing testing results are incredibly important for the health of the individual being tested, as well as staff and the entire incarcerated population at that facility. Because of these actions, testing results are returning sooner and we are able to take actions quickly and appropriately. Medical professionals will determine any additional medical care that may be needed.

Included in our preparations, sites have established ongoing sanitizing and disinfectant strategies to routinely clean work areas with an emphasis on critical and high traffic areas (i.e. entries, visiting and intake areas, common areas in housing units, etc.). Additionally, DOC acted swiftly to implement several preemptive and precautionary measures as part of its ongoing COVID-19 management strategy to ensure the health, safety and security of those living and working in its facilities. Several preventative measures have been put in place to mitigate risk, which include but are not limited to:

- Implementing medical screening protocols for employees entering adult or juvenile correctional facilities.
- Directing staff who do not feel well to stay home.
- Enhancing sanitation and cleaning protocols in facilities, field offices and transportation vehicles. Increasing quantities of cleaning supplies, hand soap and hand sanitizer for use by staff and persons in DOC's care.
- Frequent communication with staff and persons in DOC's care to provide accurate and up-to-date public health information including basic health guidance and precautions to prevent the spread of the virus, such as encouraging frequent and thorough handwashing.

Educating staff and persons in DOC's care about the virus and following guidelines consistent with DHS and encouraging persons in DOC's care to alert Health Services staff immediately if they experience any symptoms related to COVID-19.

- Enhancing purchasing efforts for pandemic emergency supplies and personal protective equipment.
- Implemented social distancing practices during dining, recreation and wherever else possible
- Utilizing technology in place of face to face interactions through the use of video applications wherever possible.
- Several operational changes to include: the suspension of non-professional and non-essential visits, volunteers, contracted activities, most programming, work release for persons in DOC's care in the private sector, inter-facility and non-essential internal transfer, admissions to state prisons and juvenile facilities, non-essential staff travel and training, and most face-to-face contact visits in Community Corrections.

While most programming has been suspended, early release programming such as the Earned Release Program have continued, utilizing social distancing recommendations and guidance.

Each institution is working to provide 2 reusable masks for staff and persons in our care. Ear loop masks that are paid for by the institutions, not by persons in our care are beginning to be disseminated to all persons in our care. A person in our care's ability to pay is not a factor. Cloth masks are being distributed as they become available. Many staff have been issued protective masks. Certain positions within our facilities receive PPE to fulfill their job duties. Additionally, all

institution staff will receive cloth masks as they become available.. Tens of thousands of masks have already been issued for staff use, with more being delivered every day.

To support adults in custody, additional measures have been taken to improve the climate of an institution, including but not limited to the increase of television channels and movies, and the availability of two free 15 minute phone calls per week. Activities such as these are essential to maintaining a healthy and positive institutional climate and the DOC makes every effort to provide such accommodations regardless of a person's health condition.