





STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1110

April 3, 2020

TO: All Incarcerated Individuals

FROM: Julie Martin, Deputy Secretary 
Robert Herzog, Assistant Secretary 

RE: Issuance of N95 Respirators to Correctional Staff

The Washington Department of Corrections has begun to issue expired N95 respirators to staff who work closely with you who are housed in our state's correctional facilities and work release centers.

To date, there have been no positive test results for COVID-19 among those housed in Washington state correctional facilities and work release centers. One incarcerated individual who was housed in a community hospital contracted COVID-19 while housed outside the state correctional facility and has remained in the community hospital since that time. Currently, nine department staff have tested positive since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The department understands that staff represent a point of vulnerability in potentially bringing COVID-19 within a correctional facility. The purpose of providing the N95 respirators is to reduce the chances for bringing COVID-19 into state correctional facilities and work release centers. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Department has implemented screening for all persons entering facilities, implemented social distancing protocols, increased cleaning and disinfecting of all areas and limited visitor and volunteer access to facilities.

Today, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommended face coverings in settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Today's action by the Department represents the latest preventative and protective effort for all individuals.

The wearing of N95 respirators is for general use and is voluntary to staff at this time.

JM/RH/SS:jmc

cc: DOC COVID-19