



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
PRISONS DIVISION

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April 13, 2020

TO: All Prisons Staff
All Health Services Staff

FROM: Julie Martin, Deputy Secretary *J. Martin*
Robert Herzog, Assistant Secretary *R. Herzog*

SUBJECT: Increasing Abilities for Social Distancing

The ability to manage social distancing in our camps presents unique challenges especially in our dormitory style tiers within these units. Plans for increasing the capability to social distance has begun in our stand alone and co-located camp facilities. Simply put, this means we will be repurposing locations within these facilities to further socially distance incarcerated persons.

Prisons is working to protect our employees and incarcerated persons by decreasing the density of persons in living areas. We learned at the Monroe Correctional Complex that many of the incarcerated men did not want to move due to understandable various fears, to include being separated from others. Ultimately we learned through collaboration with the population that repurposing areas of the camp at MCC to decrease density helped reduce their fear while still enhancing social distancing.

Every person in the country is having to modify and change how they live and adjust to new behaviors such as social distancing to protect themselves and others from COVID-19. The temporary loss of typical comforts to further advance protective measures is an unselfish act that every incarcerated person is capable of making and we should be encouraging their cooperation in this protective action. We understand the disruption and anxiousness this may create for individuals, but we are committed to finding ways to help mitigate the disruption to normal activities.

What can you do? Continued and frequent communication with the population at the line level provides the best opportunity to help the incarcerated by acknowledging their fears, and assuring them we have their best interests at heart. The diligence and commitment at the line level is truly what makes everything work.

To help flatten the curve in regards to the spread of COVID-19, this implementation will be swift. Health Services and Prisons staff will be working in a unified manner in order to collaborate with incarcerated individuals to activate this plan.

“Working Together for SAFE Communities”

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Those being relocated to other areas will be allowed to take their personal property with them. We understand this may create some issues; however, facilities are working to find solutions to make the moves as comfortable as possible.

Please run any need for clarification through your local Incident Command Post. And again, thank you for all that you are doing.

JM/RB:jmc