



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1100

June 15, 2020

TO: All Work Release Residents and staff

FROM: Susie Leavell, Senior Administrator, Reentry Division 

SUBJECT: Corrections health protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19

We know the COVID-19 pandemic has created a lot of fear and concerns in the community, especially with all the information on the news, social media and the ever-changing recommendations you receive from a variety of sources. I would like to clear up any confusion around the protocols Corrections is implementing in response to actual or potential COVID-19 cases within our system.

Overall, Corrections has chosen to be more careful in our management of this health crisis than the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Washington State Department of Health (DOH) given our environment. The safety of our residents and staff is our top priority.

What happens when someone has symptoms for COVID-19?

Per protocol, when someone presents with any COVID-19 symptoms (new cough, shortness of breath, body aches, sore throat, fever, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, etc. that cannot be attributed to another diagnosed medical condition), we will require them to wear a mask and place them into isolation to begin medical evaluation and prevent the virus from spreading to others. We will arrange for a COVID-19 test as soon as possible.

When do we quarantine?

We will place anyone who had “close contact” with the symptomatic individual in quarantine. We will closely monitor them and place them into isolation if COVID-19 symptoms develop. Corrections medical staff determines who is a close contact based on CDC criteria. CDC considers a close contact to be someone who has been within six feet of a symptomatic individual for 10 minutes or longer without the proper personal protective equipment (PPE).

Testing

If the COVID-19 test comes back POSITIVE for the isolated person, then that individual is kept in isolation until they are asymptomatic (no symptoms) for 14 days. We will also keep close contacts in quarantine for a total of 14 days.

Removal from isolation/quarantine

If the isolated person has two negative tests, administered at least 48 hours apart, we can remove them from isolation once they show no symptoms for 72 hours. We may also remove anyone from quarantine who was in quarantine due to close contact after the symptomatic individual receives the two negative COVID-19 tests.

What happens if you have no symptoms, no “close contact?”

Individuals without symptoms who have not been in close contact with a symptomatic individual, and those in close contact with proper PPE, should NOT be quarantined and do not require viral testing.

All work release residents and staff must wear appropriate PPE when required and residents must wear face coverings any time they are outside of their rooms and within six feet of others.

I want to express my appreciation to all of you who have followed the proper protocols. Thank you!

Please know we are all feeling the effects of the pandemic and we are learning together how to safely manage and assimilate into a new way of existing. Working together during this time will make the greatest impact and keep us safe.

Please reach out to staff or your chain-of-command if you have any questions. Remember to wash your hands, practice social distancing, give grace to each other and be kind!