



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

November 10, 2020

TO: Work Release Residents

FROM: Melinda Kupers, Incident Commander
Reentry/CCD Unified Command

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Management

Effective immediately, the department is enhancing personal protective equipment (PPE) measures and requiring **all work release residents** to wear surgical masks. This action is due to the increased number of COVID-19 cases in communities across our state. This requirement will remain in place throughout the holiday season as an additional protective measure until mid-January.

The number of new cases of COVID-19 in Washington are rising. As a result, we are seeing more cases in our work release facilities as staff and residents interact with the surrounding communities. We all had hoped that COVID would be gone by now, but the pandemic is still here. We wanted to share with you some of the ways you can help prevent spread of the virus.

The main ways to prevent spread of COVID-19 are masking, distancing, and hand hygiene. We have also put in place protocols for active screening, and when necessary, isolation and quarantine. In the community, people wear a variety of face coverings.

- **Surgical masks**, per the Secretary's Memo dated 11/6/20, are required to be worn by all employees, including contract staff, as well as any other authorized persons entering the work release facility.
- In addition, effective immediately, all work release residents will also be given a surgical mask to be worn each day if they are outside of their room.

The surgical masks are good for one day, unless they are soiled, in which case a new mask will be issued. Each facility will be sent a supply of masks on a weekly basis.

Social distancing within a work release facility is difficult, but we should do our best to maintain a 6 foot distance between people in the facility anytime you are outside of your room.

- To maintain social distance, the facility will be marked to tell you where to stand or sit, especially in areas like the dining or TV room.

- Communal areas will also be limited to a certain number of people at any one time based on available space.
- Movement within the facility will be done in assigned groups (cohorts) to ensure social distancing and limit exposure.

Hand hygiene is another important way to prevent transmission of COVID-19. Hand sanitizer will be used whenever you enter and leave the facility. Hand hygiene with sanitizer or soap and water is also important before and after eating and before and after touching your mask or face.

Active screening helps to prevent COVID-19, from entering the facility. Every facility will actively screen anyone entering the facility once per day, including residents. The screening includes a temperature check in addition to the questions.

Residents will be placed on **medical isolation** if they develop any COVID-19 symptoms or have a test that is positive for COVID-19. The room will be identified as Isolation on the outside of the door. If you are in isolation, you are not to leave your assigned room, except to use the bathroom. Two people who both test positive for COVID-19 may sometimes be isolated together.

Residents will be placed on **quarantine** if they have had a close contact with someone who has COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19. The room will be identified as Quarantine on the outside of the door. People will usually be quarantined alone, but may be double-bunked if both residents are being quarantined for the same reason and were already sharing a room.

If you are isolated or quarantined:

- You will be restricted to your room, except to use the bathroom or for other emergencies.
- You must be wearing a surgical mask, anytime you open the door or leave the room.
- You will need to sanitize the bathroom after each use, before returning to your room.
- Your meals will be brought to you and left on a table or chair outside your door.
- You will be issued a cell phone to communicate your needs to staff, including when you are done eating.
- Laundry will be placed in a rice bag and then a yellow bag and collected by staff to be washed.

Taking steps to prevent COVID will be particularly important as flu and cold season approach. It is also really important to get vaccinated for flu if you haven't already.