



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
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November 10, 2020

TO: All Work/Training Release Supervisors

FROM: Melinda Kupers, Incident Commander *Melinda Kupers*
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 is rising. As a result, we are seeing more cases in our work releases 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. In response, DOC has established the Reentry Command/CCD Unified Command in Tumwater to help support each of you. We encourage you to review all of the protocols and procedures that are already in place in our agency (see links below). We will be working closely with Health Services to ensure that these protocols address the unique issues that you face in the work release setting.

We know how to prevent spread of this virus, and will support you in your efforts to continue to practice masking, distancing, hand hygiene, 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 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 or used as part of PPE during close contact with a quarantined/isolated resident, 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 whenever residents are out of their rooms and between staff.

- To maintain social distance, the facility will be marked to cue residents and staff 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 with signage to communicate this maximum occupancy.
- Movement within the facility will be done in cohorts to ensure social distancing and limit exposure.
- If you are a smoking facility, you will need to determine a procedure. The restrictions are:
 - You must provide separate locations/times for residents to smoke outside at least 6 feet apart from anyone
 - Smoking will occur no more than once per hour
 - Residents must be told they are not to share cigarettes

Hand hygiene is one of the most important ways to prevent transmission of COVID-19. It is important that soap dispensers are kept filled and that hand sanitizer is available in visualized areas. Hand sanitizer will be used whenever you enter and leave the facility. It should be used before and after putting on gloves or full PPE. Hand hygiene is also important before and after eating and before and after touching your mask or face. Gloves do not replace the need for proper hand hygiene.

Active screening helps to prevent COVID-19, from entering the facility. Every facility will actively screen anyone entering the facility at the front door, including staff, residents, external DOC staff, and authorized persons, once per day. Anyone who fails to pass the screening, will not be allowed to enter the facility, unless they are being escorted directly to medical isolation.

Residents will be placed on **medical isolation** immediately if they develop any COVID-19 symptoms or have a test that is positive for COVID-19. The symptoms of COVID-19 are listed in Question 1 of the Active Screening Questionnaire. Two people who both have confirmed positive COVID-19 may sometimes be isolated together **after** discussion with the medical COVID-19 duty officer.

Residents will be placed on **quarantine** if they have had a close contact with someone who has COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19. This may be determined by answering yes to Question 2 of the Active Screening Questionnaire or by contact tracing. People will usually be quarantined alone, but may be double-bunked if both residents are being quarantined due to the same exposure at same time and were already sharing a room.

- Isolated and quarantined residents will be restricted to their rooms, except to use the bathroom or for other emergencies.
- Rooms should have signs to clearly indicate if it is for isolation or quarantine and if it is “occupied” or “vacant”.
- When the room door is opened or when the resident is outside their room, they will wear a surgical mask.
- Residents will be issued a cell phone to communicate their needs to staff for the duration of quarantine/isolation.
- Meal trays will be left outside the door for each resident on a table or chair, not the floor, for them to retrieve. Disposable food containers and utensils will be used when available.
- Laundry will be placed in a rice bag and then a yellow bag by the resident and collected by staff to be washed.
- The designated bathroom will need to be sanitized after each use, which will be completed by the resident before returning to their room.
- Staff will wear proper PPE when interacting with a person on quarantine or isolation.

Details about how to isolate and quarantine individuals are in the COVID-19 guideline below. However, situations often arise that the protocol does not address. Please contact the medical COVID-19 duty officer if you have questions.

We really appreciate your work and dedication during these trying times. Preventing COVID-19 will be particularly important as flu and cold season approach as is getting vaccinated for influenza. Please get your flu shot!

COVID-19 Protocols and Documents For Work Release

Screening, Testing, and Infection Control Guideline v22: This guideline is the main protocol and contains information on how to handle most COVID-19 related situations. As noted above, we will be adding additional wording to help clarify how to apply some of these recommendations in a work release setting. However, in general, this should be your go to document for COVID-19 infection prevention and management, including screening, testing, medical isolation of a person who is symptomatic or tests positive for COVID-19, quarantine of an asymptomatic close contact to a person with COVID-19, PPE (use and reuse), cleaning and disinfection, outbreak management, transportation, mapping/tracing, and case reporting.

WA DOC COVID-19 Active Screening Questionnaire: Active screening should be done for anyone entering the front door of the facility, including once per day for all residents. Hand sanitizer should be used after screening, prior to entry of the facility.

Checklist for COVID-19 Symptomatic Patients: This checklist is for any work release resident that presents with COVID-19 like symptoms. Remember to put signage outside the door of rooms to identify whether it is for isolation or quarantine.

PPE Matrix: This document tells you what PPE is necessary for different situations. Please remember that your face covering or every day surgical mask is not the same as PPE. Any mask worn around someone in isolation or quarantine needs to be immediately discarded or placed in a bag to be washed later once your contact with them has ended.

Proper Use of PPE Video: Although this video was made in a prison setting, the principles of how to put on and take off PPE still apply when entering/exiting resident rooms or the building, depending on the situation.

PPE Spotter Guide: This documents outlines the steps for putting on and taking off PPE as shown in the video above. A copy of this document should be easily visible in all PPE donning/doffing areas.

Pamphlet for release to the Community in English and in Spanish: This provides information for the resident if they are releasing back to the community while still on isolation or quarantine. This process requires that the medical COVID-19 duty officer is notified.