




STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
**AIRWAY HEIGHTS CORRECTIONS CENTER**  
P.O. Box 1899, Airway Heights, WA 99001

December 6, 2020

**TO:** All Airway Heights Incarcerated Individuals  
**FROM:** James Key, Superintendent   
**SUBJECT:** Airway Heights Update re: COVID-19 Outbreak

I want to thank our incarcerated population at AHCC for their cooperation, patience and understanding during this difficult time. On Sunday, November 29, 2020 AHCC had its first confirmed case of COVID-19 within our incarcerated population. Over the last week, additional positive COVID-19 cases have been identified.

As you are aware all living units in the main institution are on restricted movement. There is a cohorting schedule for dayroom, shower/bathroom access and phones. These efforts are meant to minimize the short and long-term impact to our operations and mitigate the spread of the disease.

We have also relocated general population individuals to the recreation building in order to create the space necessary for the management of isolation/quarantine beds in N-Unit. While doing this we identified a growing need to create additional alternate housing areas for our COVID-19 positive patients. To address this need we transformed the gym and weight deck into an alternate housing area for asymptomatic COVID-19 positive patients. The Regional Care Facility (RCF) will continue to house symptomatic COVID-19 positive patients.

Following DOC Screening, Testing, and Infection Control Guidelines, we have been COVID-19 testing incarcerated individuals in the main institution. We expect to complete testing of remaining individuals by December 6, 2020. After receiving the results from the first series of tests, a second round of testing will begin.

Another challenge we have faced is the loss of incarcerated workers in our Correctional Industries (CI) areas due to restricted movement. AHCC CI plays a significant role in the manufacturing and distribution of food and distribution of commissary statewide, along with providing laundry and food service locally. In order to maintain these operations, MSU workers from various areas, including Department of Natural Resources workers are working in CI work areas. These efforts have allowed us to continue with sustainable worker levels to maintain CI operations.

As we move forward with our response to the current COVID-19 outbreak we will continue to keep you informed about changes in operations. I ask each of you to continue to social distance, practice good hand hygiene and wear your masks, even in your cells when possible. Committing to these efforts will help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the amount of time it will take to get back to a new normal with our operations.