



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

January 8, 2021

TO: All Incarcerated Individuals

FROM: James Key, Superintendent

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Update

I want to take the time to give an update on the status of our response to the COVID-19 outbreak at AHCC. As we move into our second month of response to this outbreak we continue to see positive test results coming in for different areas of the facility. The most recent series of positive test results have come from K-Unit. Additionally, we continue to manage medical isolation and quarantine status individuals in the Minimum Security Unit.

I have received feedback from staff that indicates that we have areas of our incarcerated population that have not been following the mandatory use of face masks, social distancing and other COVID-19 requirements that have been put in place. I want to remind everyone that these standards have not changed and it is important that we be just as diligent in following these expectations as we have prior to the outbreak.

Some of the reasons for our continued diligence in following these standards is to make sure that we do not present the opportunity for others to be exposed to COVID-19. The fact is that we are still currently dealing with an outbreak of COVID-19 at AHCC. Individuals who are not using proper PPE presents a safety risk to staff and those they come into contact with, which can also impact the status of entire living units. As much as we would like to have the flexibility in how we manage this incident, we don't have the space capacity or resources to do so.

Over the course of this next week you will see a number of moves taking place. These moves are being done to accomplish a number of goals, which include putting medium custody and MI3 custody individuals back into custody appropriate housing and in preparation for what we hope will be a return to more normal operations. We will also move recovered individuals out of the gym area and into vacant bunk areas in R-Unit A-side and K-Unit. This is being done to create space in the gym for positive patients from K-Unit. Once this is complete, we will be able to move all positive patients from recovered units and transition the unit back to full recovered status again. We will be working on this process throughout the weekend after we have received enough volunteers from the Recreation area.

This has been a very difficult time for all of us and I know that there have been a great deal

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of frustrations that have been expressed recently. Our hope is that after we have made all of the above listed changes that we will be able to move forward with plans to allow limited outside yard access and move back towards grab-and-go mainline. In order to meet these goals we also have to see compliance in the areas of social distancing and the mandatory wearing of face masks. We cannot continue to see non-compliance in these areas and safely open up areas of the institution because it would not be safe to do so. I am asking for your help in getting back to following these standards in all areas of the facility. When I see that these changes are made I will feel more comfortable with moving forward with the proposals for outside yard and grab and go meals.

It is my sincere hope that in the near future we will be in a better place to see some normalization of our operations at AHCC. It is my goal to be able to move to a place in which we can have the restricted movement lifted, and resume work programs and other programming opportunities. We can only get to this point by working together and being committed to the same goals. Thank you for your compliance and understanding.