



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
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January 14, 2021

TO: All Incarcerated Individuals
FROM: James Key, Superintendent
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Update and Compliance with Protocols

Over this past week we made a number of housing moves in an effort to establish living units that are not housing individuals on medical isolation or quarantined status. As a result of these moves and work from our Health Services staff, the following areas have been designated as cleared of medical isolation or quarantine individuals:

- AHCC Minimum Security Unit (MSU) Unit:
 - C-4, and
 - C-5
- AHCC Main Facility:
 - L-Unit,
 - M-Unit,
 - R-Unit B-side, and
 - T-Unit.

Also occurring this past week, a number of staff have walked through the different areas of the facility assessing our compliance with COVID-19 protocols. I am disappointed to hear that there is currently a level of non-compliance to basic COVID-19 guidelines, specifically in the areas of mandatory face mask wearing, social distancing and cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. As a reminder, none of our previous standards have changed in these areas. It is still a mandatory requirement that our incarcerated population wear face masks, social distance, and clean, sanitize and disinfect all areas frequently throughout the day. Additionally, the following protocols remain in effect:

- No more than two (2) persons per dayroom table,
- No playing cards,
- No eating in the dayroom,
- No sharing food,
- All game pieces should be sanitized after each game,
- Tables and high traffic areas cleaned and disinfected after each use or at a minimum once per hour.

I have asked our CUS Group to conduct enforcement of these areas due to my concerns around these issues and compliance with these standards.

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Every month AHCC is audited for our compliance with seven (7) COVID-19 Response Standards. The Quality Assurance (QA) Review process includes the assessment of the following seven (7) areas:

- Cleaning and disinfecting,
- Medical isolation and quarantine PPE use,
- Mandatory face coverings for all persons,
- Contact mapping and case reporting,
- Screening, testing and infection control,
- Social distancing, and
- Transportation of patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

Many of these audit compliance areas are directly related to our incarcerated population and how our living areas are in compliance with these standards. These QA reviews are completed to ensure that COVID-19 response and safety standards are being met. These standards are not flexible, nor are they considered optional. All facilities undergo audits to ensure they are following COVID-19 compliant processes to keep both staff and our incarcerated populations safe.

I know that many of you have made statements such as, “I’m immune” or “I’ve already had COVID-19, so I can’t get it again”. I want to make sure that each of you understand why it is important that we continue our response to COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), recommends that people who have had COVID-19 and those who have received the vaccine, continue to wear a mask, socially distance, and practice proper hand washing.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of compliance with COVID-19 protocols so we can move forward with other activities in the facility. As more areas of our facility are cleared of medical isolation and quarantine status, we will start to have discussions about next steps in the areas of regular grab-and-go meals and outside recreation activities. These are all activities that I would like to see us do, but we cannot safely initiate them due to non-compliance around our basic COVID-19 standards of mandatory mask wearing, social distancing and cleaning. The management team will review our prior practices for dayroom cohort schedules and evaluate if we can achieve better compliance with social distancing and cleaning if we revert back these practices. We must continue to be diligent in our efforts mitigate the spread of COVID-19 out of our facility because the reality of another outbreak is a reality that we have to face.

As we move towards better compliance around these areas it is my hope that we can safely move past our outbreak status and get to an operational status that will allow for pre-outbreak activities and programming. Thank you.