



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

February 19, 2021

TO: All AHCC Staff
From: James Key, Superintendent
Subject: AHCC COVID-19 Update

As we continue our response to the facility outbreak it is encouraging to see some relief in sight. Although we have had some setbacks, it is our hope that sometime next week the facility will be removed from outbreak status and restricted movement will be lifted. So, what does that mean to our operations? Initially you will not see a great deal of change, but there will be some. Starting next week the gym area will be opened for recreation activities and In-Cell Curio processing. The gym capacity will be limited to 25 individuals and will continue to have equipment restrictions due to the current statewide phased response to COVID-19. We will also resume limited callouts for Health Services starting on Monday, February 22, 2021. I want to stress the fact that regardless of whether the facility is in outbreak/restricted movement status, we will continue to actively enforce social distancing, mask wearing, cohorted movement, and our cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting standards. These efforts are all preventative in nature and are an important part of mitigating future outbreaks from occurring at AHCC.

Our program providers in SOTP, Education, and Chemical Dependency (CD) are all continuing their work to develop unit cohort groups in preparation for the resumption of programming. In preparation for some of these services and programs, we will be ordering and installing portable barriers that will allow for the separation of individuals in classroom settings that cannot provide services at a unit cohort level. We will also be revisiting our movement control process in order to more effectively manage the types of movements necessary for unit cohorts. Many of these efforts will take some time to put in place, so I would ask everyone to be patient with us as we move forward with these new initiatives.

Starting next week we will begin the process of initiating an incarcerated individual COVID-19 vaccine clinic. A vaccine survey will be sent to all of our incarcerated individuals from our Health Services Department, asking if individuals are interested in participating in the vaccine program. The vaccine program is voluntary only and it will be an individual choice to participate in it. As supply allows, the facility will provide vaccines to individuals who meet the requirements for [Phase 1A and 1B Tier 1](#), as defined by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). Our Health Services Department has been working on the priority list and will have this finalized by early next week. The incarcerated individuals vaccine survey will help identify those individuals that will be given a priority for vaccines next week and for any future vaccines that we receive in the future.

These past few months have been very difficult and we have learned a great deal about how to manage future outbreaks. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of these basics of COVID-19 response. I know that everyone is tired of hearing "Put your mask on" or "Six feet", and any number of other reminders about these issues. Unfortunately, each of you will continue to have these reminders coming up over and over again due to the fact that we still do not have a definitive end in sight. As we approach our one year anniversary of the Department's response to COVID-19, I would like to focus on all the hard work that each of you have had in our response to COVID-19. I know that we've had difficult times and had to make many sacrifices along the way, but I also feel that we are that much stronger for it. Thank you.