



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
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March 19, 2021

**TO:** All DOC Staff

**FROM:** Julie Martin, Deputy Secretary

**SUBJECT:** Continued Corrections' COVID-19 Protocols

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to update COVID-19 guidance and on March 8, 2021, they released updated recommendations related to [fully vaccinated people](#). Additionally, Governor Inslee has [announced](#) that effective March 22, 2021 all counties will progress to Phase 3 of the Healthy Washington: Roadmap to Recovery. While these changes are encouraging, we must remain cautious and continue to follow our protocols to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within Corrections.

A conservative approach to COVID-19 safety protocols and guidelines is necessary due to the congregate settings within corrections. As such, the [mandatory](#) wearing of surgical masks for all departmental staff, contract staff, persons entering all department locations, and all residents and incarcerated individuals will remain in effect until further notice and applies to all people in our facilities, regardless of vaccination or COVID-19 recovered status.

Further mitigation efforts will also continue, to include:

- Practicing social distancing and frequent hand hygiene,
- Conducting staff serial testing,
- Performing active screening,
- Isolating (mapping out) symptomatic and/or individuals who test positive for COVID-19,
- Following quarantine and testing [guidelines](#) for all individuals identified as close contact, and
- Cohorting movements of the incarcerated population as possible.

Providing a healthy and safe environment remains our priority. You are encouraged to receive the vaccine when eligible and as supply allows. Vaccinations are part of the solution and will be considered in assessing future changes to agency COVID-19 protocols and guidelines. The agency and our medical team remain committed to the systematic resumption of operations while protecting the health and safety of our staff, and resident and incarcerated populations. Future changes to protocols, to include any reduction of requirements, will be shared as the agency moves forward in our response.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the health and safety of your co-workers and everyone in our facilities. Remember to continue to socially distance, mask up, maintain hand hygiene, get vaccinated when available, and stay home if sick.

***“Working Together for SAFER Communities”***