



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

April 27, 2021

**TO:** All Incarcerated Individuals  
**FROM:** Robert Herzog, Assistant Secretary  
Prisons Division

**SUBJECT: Resuming Routine Searches**

Due to significant increases in the discovery of intoxicated individuals, alcohol (pruno), drugs, and weapons in prison facilities, the Department of Corrections will resume routine searches, effective immediately. As you are aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused temporary changes and modifications to normal search practices.

Presently, searches are primarily conducted based on suspicion and may have resumed in certain areas of facilities. Resuming routine searches will include pat searches, cell searches, strip searches and staff searches.

The Department is committed to minimizing the chances of COVID-19 transmission. Correctional staff conducting searches will wear proper personal protective equipment (PPE) as the department's Clinical Team has defined in the department's COVID-19 PPE Matrix. In some cases, officers will complete donning/doffing procedures before and after the search and in other cases they will utilize hand sanitizer on the gloves in between searches. Officers will use their discretion as to which of the two options they will utilize.

Thank you for your patience and understanding while we continue to work through this pandemic in as safe a manner as possible.