



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
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May 3, 2021

TO: All DOC Staff

FROM: 
Julie Martin, Deputy Secretary

SUBJECT: DOC Reopens In-Person Visitation

The Washington State Department of Corrections is pleased to announce that Safe Start Corrections Visitation is moving forward, with first visit sessions occurring on May 9, 2021.

When the COVID-19 outbreak hit the country in March 2020, the department was forced to temporarily close in person visitation for safety reasons and to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in its facilities. With the number of vaccinations rising the department has finalized months of planning for operations to safely reopen structured in-person visitation.

Approved visitors are now able to access an [online scheduling form](#), to schedule their visit, with first visit sessions beginning for those age 16 and older, on May 9, 2021. Visits will occur once a month, for one hour, to equitably allow time for as many individuals as possible to have time to visit, while ensuring COVID-19 safety and sanitation protocols are followed. Although in-person visitation is designed as no-contact, it allows incarcerated individuals and their visitors to safely spend time together in person.

Visits will be scheduled by cohort, an outbreak mitigation strategy where incarcerated individuals are grouped together based on assigned living unit and programs. After utilizing the new online visitation scheduling tool, all visitors must pass an in-person COVID-19 screening to include screening questions and have their temperature checked. Visiting stations will be sanitized in between each visit session.

Facilities under outbreak status, will not be open for visitation.

The pandemic has been hard on many people, including family members—spouses, parents, and children--of incarcerated individuals who have not been able to visit in person for over a year. We're eager to re-open visitation safely to protect visitors, incarcerated individuals, and staff, especially on Mother's Day.

The department remains committed to mitigating the spread of COVID-19 while finding ways to resume positive activities that provide beneficial pro-social opportunities, such as in-person visitation.

For more information on the resumption of in-person visitation, please visit our [COVID-19 Visitation Frequently Asked Questions](#).

"Working Together for SAFER Communities"