



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

May 5, 2021

TO: Interested Parties

FROM:  Julie Martin, Acting Secretary of Corrections

SUBJECT: Updated COVID-19 Outbreak Definitions

Since March, 2020, the Washington State Department of Corrections has continuously evaluated and updated its protocols and response to COVID-19. The health and safety of our staff, those in our custody and the community continues to be our priority.

Earlier this week, [Corrections announced the opening](#) of pre-approved appointment scheduling for no-contact visitation in prisons, with the first no-contact visitation opportunity being Sunday, May 9, 2021. In this message it was shared that facilities on outbreak status would not be eligible to have visitation.

The department recognizes that the existing definition of an outbreak could mean that if there are cases of COVID-19 limited to one unit/area of the facility, visitation would be restricted for the entire facility. As a result, Corrections is defining this type of instance as a Limited Area Outbreak. In a situation like this, visitation may not need to be paused for the entire facility.

These determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the facility, Headquarters Clinical Leadership and Prisons Operations Leadership, to make an informed decision with the safety of all involved as the priority.

The definitions for Limited Area Outbreak** and Facility Wide Outbreak* will be updated in the next version of the department's COVID-19 protocols ([link](#)).

The Department values the importance of visitation to incarcerated individuals' wellbeing and is committed to providing visitation opportunities when it is safe to do so and will continue to communicate changes as they occur.

**Corrections defines a Limited Area Outbreak in a prison facility as:

- Two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in incarcerated individuals occurring within 14 days who reside in the same living area OR
- One or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in an incarcerated individual AND
- One or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in DOC staff working in proximity to the incarcerated individual case/cases occurring within 14 days

*Corrections defines a Facility Wide Outbreak in a prison facility as:

- Two or more Limited Area Outbreaks that are connected, occurring simultaneously in the same facility.