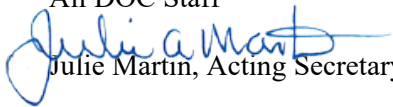




STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
P.O. Box 41101 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1101

May 14, 2021

TO: All DOC Staff
FROM:  Julie Martin, Acting Secretary
SUBJECT: Continue Following Required COVID-19 Safety Practices

Throughout the pandemic [many communications](#) have been provided regarding expectations and directives for all staff to follow required protocols on proper wearing of masks, staying six feet from others and practicing hand hygiene. The transmission of COVID-19 continues to be a safety risk for all. Educational posters regarding mask wear, social distancing and hand hygiene have been provided along with numerous resources.

COVID-19 cases in our communities continue to ebb and flow with new variants of this disease presenting further risks. Congregate living conditions such as jails, prisons, work releases and any other area in which people are in close quarters are the most difficult to manage from an infectious disease prevention perspective.

We are now in the fourth surge, and continually see Quality Assurance reports identifying staff and incarcerated individuals not properly wearing masks or socially distancing. There are so many staff who are working hard to hold themselves accountable as well as others, and we thank you for your efforts in mitigating the spread of COVID-19. Unfortunately, there are some staff who fail to follow the protocol direction, this is unacceptable and is creating unnecessary risks.

The most recent news from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) does not impact congregate settings such as jails and prisons. At this time, all staff in all work areas, incarcerated individuals and work release residents are all expected to continue to follow the workplace guidance regardless of relaxed restrictions elsewhere. We will continue to work with the Washington State Department of Health and Corrections' clinical team to determine when Corrections' restrictions might be eased.

For those who continue to uphold the expectations, thank you. Supervisors across our agency have the responsibility to work with employees to meet this expectation. For those who are not following the protocols and directives, you can anticipate that corrective and/or disciplinary action will follow as [previously advised](#).

JM:apm

cc: Robert Herzog, Assistant Secretary, Prisons Division
Daniel Johnson, Assistant Secretary, Health Services Division
Jeannie Miller, Assistant Secretary, Administrative Operations
Danielle Armbruster, Assistant Secretary, Reentry Division
Mac Pevey, Assistant Secretary, Community Corrections Division
Michael Obenland, Prisons Deputy Director, Command A
Jeneva Cotton, Prisons Deputy Director, Command B
Tomas Fithian, Prisons Deputy Director, Command C
Scott Russell, Health Services Deputy Director

“Working Together for SAFER Communities”