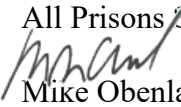




STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1100

August 30, 2021

TO: All Prisons Staff
FROM:  Mike Obenland, COVID-19 Prisons Liaison
SUBJECT: Pausing Annual In-Service

First, I would like to thank you for the continued work you do in our Prisons each and every day. This pandemic has been exhausting, relentless and unprecedented.

In the recent weeks, we have observed a significant increase in COVID-19 positive employee cases within the Prisons Division. The Safe Start Corrections Plan stated that while some activities would resume, they may be paused again if COVID-19 cases increase. Providing for staff safety has always been and will continue to be a primary focus.

Because of the increase in cases across the state, it is imperative that we once again pause in-person annual in-service training with the anticipation of resuming November 1, 2021. An assessment of COVID-19 conditions will be done mid to late October to determine if November 1 is an appropriate time to resume.

Special Teams training will continue with some adjustments. All training for special teams will need to occur outdoors and in smaller numbers if needed to sustain facility operations. Team Leaders can work with the Roster Manager, Facility Performance Coordinator, and the Emergency Management Coordinator at their facility to identify operational capacity to support team training. Team Leaders and Members will need to ensure all COVID-19 mitigation options are in place and used. For special team training topics that do not require in person training, virtual training should occur.

We will continue to make your safety a priority and again, thank you.