

Local Family Council COVID-19 Informational Call Notes

Call Details

Facility: Coyote Ridge Corrections Center

Date and Time: 12/17/2020 @ 0900

Attendees

- **Local Family Council Members**
- **DOC Staff:**

Ken Jennings, Health Services Manager	Paige Perkinson, Engagement and Outreach
Kate Jansen, Administrative Assistant	Jeff Uttecht, Superintendent
Bill Copeland, Family Services	Michelle Duncan, Associate Superintendent
- **OMBUDS**

Caitlyn Robertson, OCO	Stella Spracklin, OCO
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- Please note:
 - Questions for upcoming meetings are to be emailed to Kate Jansen at catherine.jansen@doc1.wa.gov no later than 8:00 am Wednesday. It is important that we received questions in advance to provide us time to research the answer. Not receiving questions may create a delay in a response.
 - All questions received afterwards will be held over to the next week or if time allows asked during the end of the conference call.
 - All questions sent to our staff before the informational sharing phone call during the week, will be answered on the Friday phone calls or forwarded onto DOCCOVID19@DOC.WA.GOV for appropriate response.
- Additional guidelines:
 - Meeting time will be one (1) hour.
 - We will answer all the questions first and open up for questions/comments afterwards.
 - If any questions are left unanswered at the end of the meeting, we will add them to the next meeting.
 - Please ensure your phones are on mute.
 - Please provide your name before asking a question or responding.
- **Please do not share COVID-19 informational call phone-In Information with others, especially via social media.**
- If you, or you know someone that has a loved one at CRCC and would like to be added to the LFC list to receive call in information, meeting minutes and other correspondence the facility may send out please send an email to catherine.jansen@doc1.wa.gov or miduncan@doc1.wa.gov.

Weekly Update

Testing

Staff – 131

Incarcerated Individuals:

CRCC – MSC: 234

CRCC – MSU: 115

In hospital: 0

Isolation: 12

Quarantine: 268

MSU Unit Operations:

MSU operations continue to be restricted as we work towards stopping the spread of this virus at MSU. We have had several individuals complete the required time and has been moved back to the unit. They are now being used to as workers. There is still several individuals in quarantine at the camp.

MSC Unit Operations

There have been no changes to the operation of the MSC living units. C unit A pod has been placed on quarantine status and are being tested.

Safe Start

WA DOC remains in Phase 1 of the Safe Start Initiative.

Questions

Question 1

Why is it that CRCC does not continue to test for COVID once the staff have tested positive and come back to work?

Answer

Science shows that you can show a positive test result for up to 90 days, without actually being contagious and shedding the virus. This is why individuals who have previously tested positive and completed the steps to return to work, and is NOT showing symptoms is not required to immediately return to serial testing. They are required, however, to answer the screening questions and continue to do daily temperature checks. If individuals become symptomatic they will not be allowed to re-enter the facility.

Question 2

Why does CRCC state that staff can come back after only two days of quarantine when the staff person has been quarantined due to being exposed to a positive case? If it is safe, why then is the staff required to wear goggles and a robe in addition to a mask and gloves? Mr. Uttecht states in a response to a grievance that it is because “all staff are being tested as required and anyone returning to work is following medically approved protocols”. We would like further clarification. What and whose medical approval is being followed? CDC states 8-10 days quarantine after exposure to a positive case.

Why have you required staff to sign a waiver and come to work who could not pass the screener at the door?

Answer

In an effort to appropriately and safely staff the state's correctional facilities, the agency has updated the critical staffing protocols in June 2020 pertaining to facilities identified as having critical shortages in either correctional custody or health services positions.

What this means is that certain individuals, who may have been previously screened out of the facility due to self-reporting or being identified via the COVID-19 staff-mapping process as a close contact, may return to work with extra precautionary measures in place. Some things to note when this protocol is implemented:

- Only individuals with no symptoms, who have been screened out of the facility due to self-reporting or being mapped as a close contact, are considered for return to work. No individuals who have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or are presenting symptoms consistent with COVID-19, are considered.
- Once the list of eligible individuals has been created, a team (that includes an Occupational Health Nurse) then analyzes the list and evaluates the amount of reported close contact to assess possible individual risk associated with contracting COVID-19.
 - Many individuals are not able to return to work after the list has been analyzed for risk assessment and those who are not able to return to work then do not return to work until they've completed the COVID-19 return to work program.
- If an individual has been identified as a low-risk close contact, with no known failure to abide by COVID-19 protocols to include use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and is confirmed as not having symptoms, they are then asked to return to work wearing enhanced Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), to include a face shield, in addition to the already required surgical mask and other required PPE for their area of work.
- These individuals are also required to do symptom checks three times per shift, which are recorded with the screening team, to ensure that symptoms do not begin to present themselves. If ANY symptoms related to COVID-19 are recorded, the staff member is immediately sent home.
- Any individual asked to return to work, wearing appropriate PPE and participating in required symptom checks, is also required to continue to submit to the testing requirements in their facility, which means taking a COVID-19 test weekly as part of staff serial testing already occurring at the facility. If the individual returns a positive test, they are immediately sent home from the facility and the close-contact mapping process will begin.

The department has referenced the [Critical Infrastructure Response Planning](#) guide as published by the Center for Disease Control, and is confident in the measures being taken to ensure the health and safety of the incarcerated population as well as staff. This protocol is not a blanket protocol, and is not in effect permanently at any facility. This protocol is a resource with appropriate precautionary measures in place to ensure that during times of low staffing levels, the facilities can continue to run a safe, healthy and stable daily operation.

Question 3

If you can require staff to sign a waiver and come back to work before the quarantine time is up, which is against the CDC recommendations, are you going to again force men into isolation in the hole where they get no showers (reports up to 3 weeks before the first one) and are subject to horrible conditions?

Answer

I have provide the link to the CDC's Critical Infrastructure Response Planning. This was also provided on the 12/03/20 call. Also as a reminder this process is not a blanket protocol and doesn't happen continuously. Only when critical staffing protocols are approved for the facility. In addition restricted housing is still being used as

an isolation/quarantine area under the approved protocol. In an individual is placed in isolation, protocol provides for a shower after 7 days to reduce the risk of continued spread. After 7 days they will resume with the unit showing schedule.

Question 4

What exactly is the waiver you force staff to sign in order to return back to work before quarantine is over? What does it say?

Answer

The form goes over the requirement of the staff members to return to work to include:

1. Requirement to wear a surgical mask and eye protection at entry and at all times while in the facility.
2. Self-monitor for symptoms and perform a temperature check at least **twice daily, every day, at least 8 hours apart for 14 days from the time of the COVID19 exposure**
 - Signs/Symptoms of COVID-19:
 - Subjective fever and/or measured temperature ≥100.0
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Sore throat
 - Malaise/Fatigue
 - Muscle aches
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Runny nose or nasal congestion
 - Diarrhea
 - Vomiting
3. If any of the above signs/symptoms develop, then the correctional officer shall not come to work and will call their supervisor or Shift for notification.
4. When reporting for work:
 - One temperature check should be taken immediately before reporting to work
 - A second temperature will be taken at the entry point by the facility screeners after the staff member is masked
 - If staff are working a double, they must re-check signs/symptoms before the next shift starts
 - If symptoms develop at work, the correctional officer **MUST immediately** leave work and notify the supervisor by phone

This form is discussed with the employee by the Occupational Nurse Consultant.

Question 4

Are we going to mass test the population so we get a handle on this this time?

Answer

Broad based testing is determined by a multi-disciplinary team to include clinical leadership, prisons health services unified command, facility leadership, facility health services staff, facility incident command, and others. If this team determines it is medically necessary to implement broad based testing, the facility will begin to take steps to implement this precautionary measure.

Question 5

Can the Statewide Family Council notes be posted on the kiosk for the men to have, please? Notes being sent in are being rejected by the mailroom.

Can the OCO report on CRCC be posted on the kiosk, please? They have been rejected by the mailroom and the men have a right to know what was said about how they have been horribly treated and what the recommendations are moving forward.

Answer

We have work with Headquarters and the mailroom staff to ensure that the OCO reports, and the SFC/LFC meeting minutes will no longer be rejected.

Question 7

Can you please ask Headquarters or the Command Post, or whoever it may concern, to please start rapid testing the staff that enter to work the prison? Your questions and once a week testing is not working! You need to stop the virus from entering. Testing weekly then waiting three more days for results before knowing your staff is sick running around the prison is not okay. We need to stop it before it enters!

Answer:

Rapid testing procedures are not proving to be a resource that is reliable at this time. Clinical leadership and the HQ EOC has been having many meetings discussing these tests and will continue to discuss the implementation of these measures as science shows the reliability improves. A majority of DOC staff that are getting positive results through broad based testing are proving to be asymptomatic, or showing no symptoms. As DOH states in their [FAQ's webpage](#) the antigen (rapid test) are only approved to be used for individuals who are currently showing COVID-19 symptoms.

Question 8

Is there any estimation when the prison population will be getting the COVBID vaccine?

Answer:

The Washington Department of Corrections is in ongoing communication with the Washington Department of Health regarding distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Although the Department does not yet know when it will receive the first doses, it is preparing for that to occur soon. Once received by Corrections, the COVID-19 vaccination will be offered and administered by the Department in accordance with the approved criteria outlined by the Department of Health.

Question 11

If the individual refuses the vaccine, would there be repercussions?

Answer:

I don't believe any discussion has been made. In the memo that went out, it does say that there has been talks with incarcerated individuals to discuss their readiness to take a COVID vaccine.

Question 12

Is the Medium side still going to get their fundraiser this month?

Answer:

The medium unit fundraiser will be scheduled for January.

- Thank you for joining us. Next week's call will be Thursday December 24, 2020 @0900.