

Local Family Council COVID-19 Informational Call Notes

Details

Facility: Monroe Correctional Complex

Date and Time: 02/5/2021, 1:00 pm

Attendees

Lynn Barker
David Bullard
Jody Bullard
Karen Cain
Felix D'allesandro
Caryl Darby
Dianna Durall
Laynara Ferriera
Angela Hinton
Josephine Johnson
Diana Knesek
Stephanie Meadows
Bridget Molina
Rob Tarver
Joanne Todd
Carol Welch
Dominica Campbell
Kaela Chong
Terry Cohn
Karen Hayden
Eric Jackson
Mark Miller
Page Perkinson
Jack Warner
Kristi Webb
Ina McNeese
Kathleen Bechler

Weekly Update

Monroe Correctional Complex (MCC)

- Number of new cases in last 30 days: 215
 - Number of confirmed cases to date: 419
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MCC WSRU A and B Units remain on Quarantine.

Please do not attempt to schedule a Video Visit for those on A and B units at WSR. We do not have the ability to manage cohorting, and facilitate Video Visiting at the same time.

Questions

Question 1

How many are quarantined in IMU? Who ends up there vs elsewhere while in quarantine? What alternatives are there? Can those in IMU solely for quarantine reasons be rotated into some other space after a specific length of time?

Answer

The IMU can house up to 200 Individuals. We are using this space to hold both Medical Isolation and Quarantine, in addition to the few remaining Maximum Custody Individuals. When there are no remaining quarantine beds available, we have to leave people in place and quarantine an entire unit.

We have also converted our Gym as alternate medical isolation for those that are not displaying symptoms, but are COVID positive and have added a 30 bed Rapid Deployment Care Facility to house those on medical isolation that may need extra care or treatment. Of course, if an individual is presenting with any life threatening symptoms, they are immediately sent to an outside hospital.

Question 2

Where are there HEPA filters at MCC to protect circulating air?

Answer

This question presumes that HEPA is a standard or a norm in commercial or living spaces or that it is a typical facility response to Covid neither of which is true.

Filters are rated by MERV (Minimum Efficiency Rating Value):

- Typical office filters range from MERV 5 to 8
- HEPA (high-efficiency particulate arrestance) is MERV 13 – 16
- As building codes are revised MERV requirements have slowly gone up
 - Current code standard for commercial buildings is MERV 8
 - MCC uses MERV 8 as our standard
 - There is an upper limit on what MERV is recommended (see below)
- EPA mandates a minimum of MERV 6 rated filters
- ANSI/ASHRAE 52.2 standard calls MERV 5-8 filters Commercial, “Better / Residential”

HEPA filters are classified for use in:

- General surgery, Hospitals/Healthcare, pharmaceuticals
- Clean rooms, nuclear industry
- Smoke removal, electronic manufacturing
- True HEPA filters require a pre-filter

Industry standards (ASHRAE, EPA) do not recommend HEPA filters for commercial HVAC units. There is a cost for what little gain you get from increased filtration.

HEPA filters / pre-filters cause higher pressure in the ducts which:

- Reduce air flow
- “Stresses” and shortens equipment life
- Increases energy use / cost

When talking about indoor air quality (IAQ) filtration is only one piece of the IAQ process.

Three steps to IAQ:

1. **Source control** (prevention) – clean, dry, low VOC*
2. **Ventilation** (dilution) - outside air mixed in, air changes per hour
3. **Air filters** (filtration) – remove particulates

So keeping the institution clean, having proper air flow, having proper outside air ratio and filtration.

Notes:

* VOC = volatile organic compounds, air fresheners, paints, glues compounds such as
ASHRAE = American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air conditioning Engineers

Question 3

In keeping with the intention of moving toward rewards instead of punishment as motivators, has there been any consideration of some kinds of rewards to those who have been in the most difficult circumstances (e.g., IMU)?

Answer

One incentive is participation in fund raisers where food items that they don't normally get can be purchased such as pizza, doughnuts.

Question 4

Is IMU where the troublemakers from A unit are? Do staff know which were there for that and which were there for purely covid reasons? Are there privileges that are different given different purposes of being there?

Answer

Yes, they may be in the same building, but those who are recovering from COVID are kept separated from those on Segregation and are treated completely differently. COVID Patients are not confined to their cells, can move around without restraints and are not subject to routine strip searches, which is not the case with Ad Seg/disciplinary segregation.

Question 6

Over the weekend I heard there are guys not wearing their mask because they said they have already been exposed and did their time in isolation. My husband said that he doesn't believe this is true because they get yelled at if they don't have their mask on when out and about.

Answer

All are required to wear their mask when outside of their cell. No exceptions have been made for COVID recovered individuals.

Question 7

Stimulus checks being taxed. The first round of stimulus checks were taxed prior to inmates having access to the balance. The second round of \$600 check were not taxed at all. There was something about "Federal Prison" rules that appeared to affect the not taxing of the second checks. Why was not the same applied to the first round of checks?

Answer

We received this from the AG's office-

AG office review has determined that this second round of EIP are NOT subject to Washington State deductions. Language was added to this second round that provides for this exemption. We will be updating the message that was sent to the incarcerated individuals.

Updated January 25, 2021:

When received on behalf of an incarcerated individual held in full or partial confinement, the EIPs are subject to Federal Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA) debts. Washington State deductions will not be taken.

Question 7

What is the difference between video visits and in-person visits, where if an individual has a visit in the visiting room they have been able to leave work or programming for their visit in the past?

Answer

With the outbreak, cohorts have been established for a safety measure and restrictions are made to avoid mixing cohorts and making individuals more at risk for infection.

Additional Questions

Question 1

You have cohorts in the kitchen, but are CI workers able to get to work?

Answer

Yes, but with delicacy. We are moving people in their cohorts, marking floors with tape and have worked out capacity to go to Education, programs and work. To go out to areas, they still sign up with call outs.

Question 2

Why the change in reporting numbers of COVID cases.

Answer

Numbers of cases are kept track of by Headquarters and those are the numbers I now report. I no longer have the time to break down the unit rosters to collate numbers for the all the areas different areas within MCC.

Question 3 - Comment

I find that the communication we have with the Family Council is excellent and we enjoy having each other's email addresses to stay in contact.

Answer

It's a difficult time for all so we have to be kind with each other.

Question 4

Do you have an update on Comfort kits for our loved ones?

Answer

A purchase request for comfort kits to everyone was submitted and should be here in about 3 weeks and will be distributed to everyone in the population. Also kits are being made up that will be delivered today or tomorrow to all isolated patients.

Question 5

What are the PPE protocols for staff? What about staff not following the rules?

Answer

Staff are required to wear at a minimum a surgical mask at all times. If staff are not wearing masks properly, progressive corrective action will be taken.

For quarantine units, a surgical mask, face shield, gown and gloves are to be worn. There are don and doff stations outside the quarantine/isolation units.

For Isolation units, staff are fit tested for N-95 masks with gown and gloves.

We are on Version 25 of the PPE Protocol. You can find this information on the website.

A porter is assigned on each shift who cleans the doors on a contestant basis.

Closing Comments

Secretary Sinclair and Deputy Secretary Rob Herzog are both retiring.

The Rapid Deployment Care Facility has patients housed in the facility.

Thank you everyone.