



# FAMILY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Location: Virtual Teams Meeting Date: March 27, 2021 Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Teleconference details: Virtual Teams Meeting

<b>Meeting Attendees</b>
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Department/facility co-chair: Captain Ina McNeese Family co-chair: Joanne Todd

Facility/council secretary: Kathleen Bechler Family secretary, Josephine Johnson

Members present: Michele Aceto; Lynn Barker; Karen Cain, Emily Cox; Felix D'Allesandro; Caryl Darby; Dianne Durall; Katherine Falla; Laynara Ferriera; Bruce Glant; Joanne Glant; Rebecca Heredia; Josephine Johnson; Dana Malaha; Stephanie Meadows, Ron O'Neil, Diane Pasta; Rob Tarver; Joanne Todd, Michelle Wallig; Carol Welch; and Danielle White.

Non-council member attendees: Byron Coates; Dr. Marc Stern; Karen Haydon; Eric Jackson; George Turcin, Kaela Chong; Lee Stemler; Ian McNeese; Kathleen Bechler

<b>Agenda</b>
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Old business

Topic	Discussion/Key Points (questions)	Next Steps (responses)
Safe Start Captain McNeese	Updates on DOC Safe Start & reopening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Barbers shops should be reopening next week. Need to hire barbers for each unit.</li> <li>- Headquarters (HQ) is working on a plan to reopen and adjust the safe start plan.</li> <li>- April 7, last adjustments for barriers will happen, along with Visiting Room (VR) porters being hired to be ready when visiting starts.</li> <li>- Visiting will be limited to 1 hour per month with an adult visitor per Incarcerated Individual (I/I). No minors.</li> <li>- No date on when the suspension of EFV application process will be lifted</li> </ul>
Family Guideline Booklets & Policy Updates Joanne Todd	Update on members of the group who are working on the family guideline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Send any suggestions to Dawn Taylor. Several suggestions have been sent already, including a policy for a pandemic.</li> <li>- Also recommend family services to have a welcoming committee at each facility.</li> <li>- Suggested that the booklet should automatically be sent to all incoming families new to the system instead of having to look for it online.</li> </ul>
Family Services George Turcin	Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family Services is working fulltime telecommute, and continuing to answer questions &amp; concerns for families and I/I.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If you need to reach George Turcin, call him at 509-990-3906 or email at <a href="mailto:gturcin@doc1.wa.gov">gturcin@doc1.wa.gov</a>.</li> <li>- Still in the process of hiring a new service manager. Lisa Flynn is the temporary supervisor of Family Services.</li> <li>- Attending weekly meetings to update the service policy and guideline booklet to be more inclusive and detailed. If you want to be involved contact Dawn Taylor at <a href="mailto:dmtaylor@doc1.wa.gov">dmtaylor@doc1.wa.gov</a>.</li> <li>- Family Services will be updated on the DOC website when it's complete.</li> </ul>
Community Partnership Kaela Chong	<p>Incarcerated Individual Betterment Fund (IIBF) Report</p> <p>Lodging assistance</p> <p>Avery Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IIBF February's report was emailed out to the LFC members.</li> <li>- Two local hotels have agreed to participate in the lodging assistance program to give a \$50 discount for visitors traveling more than 150 miles to visit their loved one.</li> <li>The process &amp; paperwork is in being worked on.</li> <li>- The Avery Program is a nationwide program for children ages 10-15 to meet with other children their age who also have parents incarcerated. They can move into a leadership position and help with the program if they stay with it. Information on both these topics were sent by email.</li> <li>- Full Time Employee (FTE) budget transferred to the general fund, not signed by the governor yet but in the process.</li> </ul>

New business

Topic	Discussion/Key Points (questions)	Next Steps (responses)
COVID Conference calls	When is the next COVID call?	We are having COVID conference calls bi-weekly, so the next call will be Friday, April 9 <sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm. An email will go out to the LFC.
LFC Distribution List	Private LFC Distribution list for Family Members	LFC Chair Joanne Todd has developed a private email list which will Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) anyone who does not want their email showing for privacy. DOC Staff will continue to send all emails BCC as directed.
Statewide Family Council Felix D'Allesandro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Funding Request was sent to upgrade cable equipment. It was discussed, voted on and approved at the January LFC meeting. Money was spent, but reception seems the same.</li> <li>- Issue with timing of the turnaround of Jpay messages being sent/delivered. DOC shares information on their website related to this, which is supposed to be no more than 7 days. MCC is at the bottom of the stack as</li> </ul>	<p>Issue arose due to COVID delays and staffing. Staff are expected back next week and the process should be completed in a few weeks.</p> <p>Captain McNeese mentioned possibly contacting other facilities and seeing how their process is run, and that CPM Miller has authorized overtime (OT) every week. Flagged word list has been reduced also.</p>

	<p>processing time with 8 days processing incoming and 4 days outgoing. Similar sized facilities have a much faster turn around.</p> <p>- Statewide Agenda - survey of what is important to discuss at meetings and who to be invited: Staff from medical &amp; mental health, Family Services, Mailroom Sergeant. Working groups to report on staff accountability &amp; medical/mental health, human living situations and improvement of education access.</p> <p>Including what the LFC hears from staff at MCC and a way to facilitate this.</p>	<p>A calendar invitation is sent out to the MCC Leadership Team, when a particular topic comes up on the schedule, the Captain's Office will make sure to contact those with oversight of the area of concern. Captain McNeese is open to extending additional invitations.</p> <p>Big thanks to Felix for nominating Dr. Stern to present COVID-19 vaccination information.</p>
<p>Resolution Specialist CS Lee Stemler</p>	<p>Resolution Department (Formerly Grievance Program)</p>	<p>There were many reasons for updating and restructuring our former Grievance Program. Many incarcerated felt it was a waste of time because grievances didn't get resolved, further delays occurred when the Grievance Coordinator would return a Grievance for re-write or clarification. The new Resolution Program will provide additional transparency and ease of process for all involved.</p> <p>Example: to get lab results can just kite provider, and it's given directly to who it needs to go to and have an answer within 3 days, compared to getting a complaint, having it typed out which takes longer. This has resulted in less medical investigations. COVID has increased the number of complaints. Lee Stemler is proud of how MCC handled COVID compared to other facilities or the state.</p> <p>If a rewrite is needed for medical, it has a process it has to go through and approve from HQ before it can be requested.</p> <p>Make sure it's one request per form, keep a copy of the form and will get a response when the matter is resolved.</p> <p>Program Manager Carol Smith at HQ has more empathy. To contact Resolution Specialist Lee Stemler email at <a href="mailto:lmstemler@doc1.wa.gov">lmstemler@doc1.wa.gov</a>.</p>
<p>Blake vs State Cpt. McNeese</p>	<p>Update</p>	<p>There is a Rumor about an attempt to get this ruling thrown out of court. Captain McNeese reached out to the Records Supervisor at MCC and they have no information on this being rescinded. There have been 2 individuals already released</p>

		from MCC due to this ruling. DOC is working with the Attorney General's Office who in turn is working with local, City, County and State Prosecutors' Offices to identify those impacted.
Information on COVID & Vaccinations Dr Marc Stern MD, MPH	Information on why I/I should get the vaccines and why I/I may not want them.	<p>Videos and pamphlets be being made to get information to the population explain the COVID vaccinations.</p> <p>Dr. Stern feels all I/I should get the vaccine due to being at a higher risk than the public due to confinement, transfers and have more of a struggle with preventive care, social distancing and washing hands.</p> <p>After interviewing 5,000 people who are incarcerated in prisons and jails about why they may not want the vaccine, responses were a mistrust of DOC, they felt not at risk, vaccine itself wasn't safe, and family members aren't getting them.</p> <p>Many rely on what family members tell them and it's important to give them correct information. I hope you will encourage your loved ones to get the vaccine.</p> <p>Even if a loved one has tested positive for COVID, it's unsure how long the infection provides protection. Those known to have contracted the virus are likely protected for the first 3 months. CDC states with the new variants it's still important to get the vaccine.</p> <p>We will try to get information sent out to the I/I through jpay if it is approved.</p> <p>Washington DOC was one of the latest in the country to see outbreaks. This was because of the job WA DOC did, as an outside observer they took all the precautions.</p>
Family Member Concerns & Questions	Food Packages	Union Supply Food Packages moving from quarterly to a Bi-monthly 6 month pilot program starting in June. Weight limit will stay 20 pounds for now, but will be monitored to ensure there is not a problem with storage in cells.
	Musical Instruments	Asked if there had been any progress toward family members being authorized to purchase musical instruments rather than being purchased by the incarcerated. This is required by policy.
	Medical Complaints when loved ones were in IMU for COVID	Several family members report their loved ones heard negative comments from the officers while they were in Medical isolation at IMU.
	Medical & Vaccine questions	- <b>Family member with a loved one reported having a reaction to the vaccine.</b> Dr Stern stated having some reaction is good, but to have them follow up with medical to be sure.

		<p><b>- Family member reported a loved one was in IMU under quarantine and missed getting his vaccine by one day. Also was denied current results of COVID test.</b></p> <p>The individual should submit a medical kite requesting the vaccine.</p> <p><b>- Will someone be able to get the vaccine if they change their mind later, and how would they go about doing this?</b></p> <p>There will be another chance to get the Vaccine. Those who wish to have the vaccine should send a kite to Medical.</p> <p><b>-No antibody testing being done. Everyone should be vaccinated regardless if they had COVID or not. Better to be safe.</b></p> <p>Captain. McNeese stated vaccines were for targeted groups at first working in dining halls &amp; kitchens, IMU and high risk. Now anyone who wants the vaccine can sign up for it.</p> <p><b>- Family member stated her loved one was transferred to MCC in November for medical reasons, as of this meeting still has been unable to see a provider or get any medical attention.</b> Please send an email to Captain McNeese to look into.</p> <p><b>Family member discussed loved ones' issue with mouth guard being approved at other facilities but refusing to let him have it at MCC.</b> Please send an email with the details so we can find an answer.</p>
	Cohorting & Movements	<p><b>I/I are frustrated with cohorts &amp; scheduling. With cohorts every movement is 12-45 minutes late whether it is to go to programming, work, rec etc,</b></p> <p>Cpt McNeese stated yes movement takes time, recreation movement is called then 5 minutes later work program movement. She can see the movement from her office window.</p> <p>Dr Stern commented things are different on the outside and have more options for public health. Prisons and Jails spread COVID easier so cohorts &amp; restrictions are important and hope to see them continue along with the lag between the public opening and the prisons opening.</p>
	Rapid Deployment Care Facility (RDCF) at TRU	<p>MCC is waiting for word from headquarters as to where the RDCF at TRU can be moved to instead of being taken down. Once removed, the yard will be able to open again.</p> <p>Update: the RDCF has been dismantled.</p>
	Staff & I/I COVID testing	<p>There is no change in protocol regarding testing or any I/I being symptomatic.</p>

		<p>Mandatory weekly serial COVID testing for staff is still happening.</p> <p>If an I/I shows symptoms they will be taken to medical isolation and tested again.</p> <p>If a staff member has tested positive, they will not be tested again, but will still be screened everyday.</p>
	Mattresses	<p>Is there an option to get new mattresses?</p> <p>This is an ongoing topic, they are expensive. There is approval to order 10 new replacement mattresses per month per unit.</p>

Roundtable open discussion: Discussion about the perspective of how the LFC collaborate and work together as a team, even though there are disagreements in email threads and struggles related to different experiences.

Next meeting location: Virtual Teams Meeting Date: May 22, 2021 Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Comments: Special thank you to Dr. Marc Stern, MD, MPH for joining our meeting and for sharing insight into COVID – 19 Vaccine and for answering questions from our family members.

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Distribution: **ORIGINAL** - Family council co-chairs