

Local Family Council COVID-19 Informational Call Notes

Call Details

Facility: WSP / Teleconference

Date and Time: 8/11/2020, 1:00PM

Attendees

- Prisons Director-Robert Herzog, Associate Supt. Steve Barker, AA3 Carrie Meyer, SFC Rep Wendy Dubinsky, LFC Co-Chair Loretta Pederson, Dean Dubinsky, Tina Wright, OCO Caitlin Robertson, Family Services-Bill Copland, LFC Secretary-Danita Parkins, Karen Cain, Office of the Secretary-Paige Perkinson, Hattie wolf, Anna Ivanov, Tinisha Ferguson

Weekly Update

- COVID Informational

Pre-Submitted Questions

Question 1

Please provide the most up-to-date stats:

of men in quarantine? The East Complex

of men in isolation? 60

of men tested positive? 67

of staff screened out at this time? Between 45 - 50

of staff tested positive? 8

- Seven incarcerated individuals, who were showing symptoms have been transferred to AHCC.
- The first round of test that were administered in Unit 10 were ALL negative.
- UPDATE: As of this morning (08/12/20) the first round of the tests that were administered in Unit-8 came back negative. Unit-8 and Unit-10 were retested on 08/11/20. Unit-6 will be retested on 08/13/20.

There were no official questions submitted

Robert Herzog joined the group today to touch base with the members of Local Family Council and to thank them to their hard work and patience. Mr. Herzog also reports in the last 5 months since the COVID 19 hit Washington State and protocols went into place, DOC started at Version 1 and we are now at version 20. This is a positive and shows the determination in our group to stay ahead of this and be flexible to make changes. We will continue to change and grow as needed.

DOC has made adjustments in wearing masks, both staff and incarcerated population. We have made changes in small groups of gatherings and social distancing. We have made changes in Transportation.

DOC's first case and outbreak was at Monroe. The first death of a Correctional Officer due to COVID 19 happened at Monroe.

The second outbreak for DOC was at CRCC. This facility was isolated and quarantined. Staff from other facilities stepped up to the plate and volunteered to assist at CRCC, helping them get through this time. The National Guard was called in to assist with testing, tents were set up on the grounds, within the perimeter to help with separations. There were 261 positive COVID cases at CRCC, 70 positive staff member cases and 2 incarcerated individuals who passed away due to COVID 19.

Mr. Herzog was able to visit WSP last week. He commended them on their efforts and dedication. He was able to witness the hard work so many are putting in. Due to mapping and furloughs staff have been putting in extra hours and assisting in positions they don't usually work.

Due to the deficit this State of Washington is in, we have had to make drastic cuts; a 15% reduction at the prison level. When the deficit is \$180,000,000 the cuts are too deep to cover easily. There may be some reduction in the population, though this will have to be done at State level and policies changed.

I am extremely proud of DOC! We have been able to adjust to changes in operations, programming, Recreation, Feeding, changes in transportation and scheduling. There has been no increase in the violence rate. This says so much for DOC as a whole.

Roundtable Questions

Question 1

By changing protocols of not doing pat searches and strip searches at this time, will this change the direction of searches in the future to save the incarcerated the humiliation of these searches?

Answer

This is something that may be assessed. This would involve policy change.

Question 2

Has DOC considered how they could save money by introducing new technologies?

Answer

There are many things that we do as an agency to trim extra spending and create savings. New technologies is always something that we consider and look at. We also maintain a vacancy rate. Since 2009 when we were forced to make large cuts we never filled many of these positions. We have completed 4 furloughs and will complete at least 4 more before the end of the year, both non-represented and represented will be doing these furloughs. We have suspended all Annual In-Service and a lot of other training. There is a hiring freeze at this time and we have greatly reduced travel.

Question 3

What does returning to visiting look like? Skype? Zoom? Possible outdoor visiting?

Answer

We have formed a group at HQ, which also includes visiting Sgt.'s and others from around the state to start looking at processes. All things are being considered but safety and security will need to come first. There are many things to consider; children? Toys for children? Cleaning? No contact? What size of groups?

Question 4

Exercise equipment? Will this recreation activity be open to the population soon? Can't they clean equipment in between use?

Answer

Yes. This is something that is being looked at. We are doing the best we can to open programming and recreation.

Question 5

Are transfers between facilities still happening? Are they being transferred due to punishment?

Answer

Yes, we are still transferring, but not due to punishment. It is a necessary with the need for different security levels, or due to separatees but they are far fewer.

Question 6

The mail is being used so much more due to no visiting, but things are very backed up, why is this?

Answer

We will look into this. At WSP in particular, we have had staff out due to mapping and also a couple on vacation, we just lost a position in the mailroom, therefore they may be a bit behind. We will follow up with staff.

UPDATE: The physical mail is being processed the same day as it arrives. The JPAY is a constant battle because the volume is enormous and we have yet to adjust the staffing to come into compliance with policy. Also, I was informed by the mailroom sergeant that they had a mail processing driver quit and the position has not been filled because of the temporary hiring freeze. The position was deemed "non-essential" so it has to be left open for a minimum of 30 days before we can ask to fill it.

Question 7

Is laundry being done once a week? Is there any chance that they could get extra boxers and socks?

Answer

There is a plan to do Laundry once a week. This is temporary due to incarcerated laundry work force being quarantined. Other staff around the facility have stepped up and are assisting in these areas. Yes, we will look into issuing extra clothing.

Question 8

Are they only showering once a week?

Answer

If they are in isolation, yes, they are only able to shower once a week and using the portable phone once a week. (The phone is cleaned between each use.) For all other population they are on a rotation for showers.