



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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March 15, 2020

TO: All DOC Staff

FROM: Stephen Sinclair, Secretary

SUBJECT: DOC COVID-19 Response – March 15: 2nd DOC case, enhanced screening, telework

Late on March 13, a second Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) employee reported they had tested positive for COVID-19. The employee, who works on the third floor of DOC Headquarters in Tumwater, was last in the office on Wednesday, March 11 and will remain isolated at home until they recover.

When the employee first reported symptoms, Corrections identified employees considered to be in close contact with the employee and notified them. Anyone confirmed to have been in close contact was asked to self-quarantine at home and monitor for symptoms until the suggested 14-day quarantine period ends.

According to DOH, close contact includes:

- Living in the same household as a sick person with COVID-19;
- Caring for a sick person with COVID-19
- Being within 6 feet of a sick person with COVID-19 for about 10 minutes; OR
- Being in direct contact with secretions from a sick person with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils, etc.).

If you have not been in close contact with a sick person with COVID-19, you are considered to be at low risk for infection. You can continue to go to work and school, but should monitor your health for 14 days and stay away from others if you get sick.

If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 due to symptoms like fever, cough and shortness of breath, follow the steps in this handout to prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.

Please also notify your supervisor and/or Human Resources so the agency can take any necessary steps.

This is a rapidly evolving situation and I appreciate how difficult and scary this can be. We encourage you to please practice compassion and respect for the privacy of our affected employees and others who may be self-quarantined.

Enhanced screening

Effective immediately, all facilities and offices within the Department, will be implementing enhanced screening protocols to the degree possible with available onsite equipment. At a minimum, the following will be established:

- Access to the facility/office will be controlled
- Prior to entry all individuals (staff, visitors, vendors, contractors, etc.) must complete the mandatory screening questionnaires and have their temperature taken;
- Individuals who fail any portion of the enhanced screening protocol or refuse to participate in the screening process will be denied access to the facility/office and a supervisor should be contacted for further direction.

Those denied access will be encouraged to consult with their health care provider and follow up with human resources. Refusing to participate in the screening process will result in assignment to home pending investigation.

Telework encouraged

As the state and national efforts to mitigate spread of COVID-19 continue, we are expanding our telework direction for all eligible staff beginning on Monday, March 16, until further notice. Please refer to the message sent out regarding teleworking.

This is a continuation of our efforts to slow the potential spread of the virus through social distancing and in recognition that all school systems across the state have closed, which we know affects many of you.

We are highly encouraging working remotely. If you are eligible to telework and have a teleworking agreement in place, please work with your supervisor to begin teleworking effective immediately, if possible.

Updated resources on iDOC and DOC.WA.GOV

Corrections has updated both iDOC and DOC.WA.GOV with enhanced resources, including: frequently asked questions (FAQs) for both internal and external audiences, links to the COVID-19 Situation Report and Communications (pdf) and other helpful information.

Additional Details and Resources

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. Remember that if this is a

stressful time for you, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or Staff Psychologists are available. These are free and confidential services. It's important to take care of yourself.

- DOH COVID-19 Information Center
- King County COVID-19 Fact Sheet (pdf)
- EAP: Coping with Stress During an Infection Disease Outbreak (pdf)

Thank you to everyone involved in responding to COVID-19 at Corrections. Please take care of yourselves, your co-workers and those in our care.