



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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April 16, 2020

TO: All DOC Staff

FROM: Stephen Sinclair, Secretary

SUBJECT: Upcoming Transfer of Individuals Back to the Community

The Washington Department of Corrections is planning for the transfer of incarcerated individuals back to their communities. The goal in transferring a limited number of individuals to the community is to provide more physical distancing within the state's correctional facilities.

The Department is implementing strategies to reduce the population in state correctional facilities, while also considering public safety. The strategies focus on individuals who are not currently incarcerated for violent or sex offenses and nearing the end of their incarceration.

It will be confirmed by correctional staff that individuals transferring to the community will have an established address and a current Washington state identification, and that the current sentence being served is for non-violent or drug/alcohol related offenses.

On April 15, 2020, Governor Inslee issued an [emergency commutation](#) to allow for the release of incarcerated individuals. The [commutation](#) is specific to those in custody whose judgment and sentences include only non-violent offenses or drug or alcohol offenses and whose projected release date (PRD) is prior to or on June 29, 2020. It authorizes their transfer from confinement within seven days of the order, or as soon as can be reasonably achieved thereafter.

In addition to the Governor's commutation, based on [Governor's Proclamation 20-50 Reducing Prison Population](#), Secretary Sinclair will take additional measures to provide more physical distancing. The [Rapid Reentry program](#) allows incarcerated individuals an

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opportunity to serve an expanded portion of their sentence of confinement in the community on electronic monitoring (up to six months). Individuals are subject to conditions and, if they violate those conditions, could be returned to confinement.

Within the Secretary's authority, he has waived certain policy restrictions. Individuals are included who meet the [Centers for Disease Control guidelines](#) of those at higher risk for health complications related to COVID-19. The following restrictions are among those that remain in place:

- Felony Detainer/Felony Warrants
- Sex Offenses
- Violent Offenses

By the statutory furlough authority granted to Secretary Sinclair, he will be granting [emergency furloughs](#) to those incarcerated individuals in work release settings, as established through careful legal advisement and statutory reviews. Furlough means an authorized leave of absence for an eligible individual, without any requirement that the individual be accompanied by, or be in the custody of, any corrections official while on such leave. Furloughed individuals are subject to their conditions of furlough and, if they violate those conditions, could be returned to confinement.

Since the beginning of March, the Department has developed and implemented new protocols and directives specifically to [combat the COVID-19 pandemic](#). The steps being taken this week represent the latest work in the agency's diligent efforts to preserve the health of institutions and all people – staff and incarcerated individuals.

SS:jb