



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
P.O. Box 41101 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1101

May 18, 2020

TO: All DOC Staff

FROM: Stephen Sinclair, Secretary

SUBJECT: First Line of Duty Death from COVID-19

Our agency was notified today that Correctional Officer Berisford Anthony Morse of the Monroe Correctional Complex passed away on Sunday, May 17, 2020 from complications of COVID-19.

It is a tragedy to lose a member of our public safety community and correctional family. It is with deep sadness that we announce the loss of Correctional Officer Berisford Morse due to COVID-19. Our hearts go out to Officer Morse's grieving family and the sacrifice they have made.

Officer Morse, 65 years of age, had worked for the Department since October 2003. During his over 16 year career with Corrections, Mr. Morse worked as a correctional officer at Monroe Correctional Complex and as a non-permanent community corrections officer for seven months in 2013.

Officer Morse worked in the Minimum Security Unit (MSU) of the Monroe Correctional Complex. The MSU has had 14 positive cases of COVID-19 in the incarcerated population.

Officer Morse last worked at the facility on the morning of April 24. Mr. Morse contacted the shift commander on the evening of April 24 to report he had symptoms of COVID-19, was going to seek medical attention and get tested. The facility was notified on April 27 that Morse had tested positive for COVID-19.

Corrections conducted contact tracing and notified any individuals who were determined to be close contacts. On April 12, Officer Morse was identified as part of contact tracing for a COVID-19 positive incarcerated male at the Minimum Security Unit.

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The Department will consult with the following entities: Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program, National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, Washington State Law Enforcement Memorial-Behind the Badge Foundation and the Department of Labor & Industries.

We are honoring Officer Morse's death as a line of duty death. I'm authorizing the wearing of a mourning badge until Friday, May 29, 2020.

Please continue to take care of yourselves and each other. Please know that you make a difference to us and all Washingtonians we serve. I appreciate you and thank you for your service.