



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

ADMINISTRATION

3200 East Highway 34
c/o 500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-5070
Phone: (605) 773-3478
Fax: (605) 773-3194
Website: <http://doc.sd.gov/>

March 23, 2020

An inmate at the Women's Prison in Pierre has tested positive for COVID-19 and has been placed in isolation. This is the first inmate in the SD DOC system to test positive. The SD DOC is focused on protecting all inmates and staff at every one of our facilities. If an inmate becomes symptomatic, we will follow the proper protocols from guidelines outlined by the CDC.

March 20, 2020

In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 2020-06, DOC offices will remain closed to the public through Saturday, March 28 at 11:59 p.m. Non-essential employees will continue to work remotely as it is possible. Essential staff shall report to work as scheduled and as directed by their supervisor. All work-related, out-of-state travel is prohibited.

DOC Operations staff continue to process vouchers and invoices, correspondence and inmate banking system matters. Staff are working remotely where possible. In cases where work must be completed in our offices, staff members are working in rotating shifts so as to limit the number of people in the office at a given time.

Parole and Juvenile field service staff are continuing to provide case management of parolees and juveniles. Staff in our field services offices are working remotely. In cases where work must be completed in our field services offices, staff members are working in rotating shifts so as to limit the number of people in the offices at a given time.

The DOC is continuing its restriction on sending inmates into the community in response to COVID-19. This impacts community service and work release inmates and Community Transition Program parolees. When the restriction is lifted, DOC will contact providers and employers.

The DOC continues to accept new inmates from county jails. New inmates continue to go through the Admissions and Orientation (A & O) process, including medical and other assessments and evaluations.

Inmates are being transferred between DOC facilities only if necessary and after appropriate medical screening.

DOC and the Bureau of Human Resources are continuing recruiting efforts and accepting applications for employment. Interviews will be conducted with the focus on security, food service, Correctional Health and Behavioral Health staff. Interviews may be conducted electronically when possible.

Staff members at the Board of Pardons and Paroles office are finalizing a schedule for the April Board hearings. Board hearings will remain open to the public, but telephonic or written testimony is preferred for those who wish to provide input.

March 19, 2020

Medical co-pay charges are being waived for any inmate attending sick call for respiratory complaints.

At this time, DOC has no plans to change inmate release dates due to COVID-19. Should something change, the offenders will be notified. Scheduled individual inmate releases are proceeding as usual. The Board of Pardons and Paroles held their March meeting last week and made decisions on parole violations, suspended sentence violations, non-compliance, discretionary parole, earned discharge, and rescission cases as prescribed by South Dakota Codified Law. A list of Board actions is available on the Boards and Commissions portal. There are state statutes and DOC policies in place that provide a means of early release for seriously ill or infirm inmates and aged inmates prior to their original parole eligibility date. Information on compassionate parole is available in SDCL 24-15A (55-68).

March 18, 2020

Because the situation with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) remains fluid, the South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC) is continuing to review and identify strategies to deal with the potential emergence of COVID-19 and ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and offenders in our custody and under our supervision.

We are following the guidance of the South Dakota Department of Health, our medical provider, in regard to precautions, practices and prevention methods for COVID-19.

The DOC has activated our Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), which establishes direct response and management ensuring that critical functions continue within our department. Our agency divisions and facilities have identified essential function staff and operations, with the primary focus on safety, sanitation, security and supervision. Essential services such as food, laundry, medical, behavioral health, and maintenance continue in our facilities.

DOC policies on inmate admission, assessments and releases remain in effect. DOC policies are accessible on the home page of the agency website at doc.sd.gov/ under the Resources heading.

As we have previously suspended in-person visitation, the DOC has worked with our phone service provider, GTL, who is offering two free, 5-minute phone calls per inmate each week from March 17-April 13.

March 17, 2020

As of March 17, work release inmates and Community Transition Program parolees housed in the various DOC community work centers (Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Pierre, Yankton) are no longer being allowed to leave the prison to work in the community.

Work release inmates will retain their work release status provided they do not forfeit that status due to disciplinary action. If the employer terminates employment, the impacted inmates will be

allowed to return to job search once the restriction is lifted. If an inmate is retained by the employer, the inmate will be allowed to return to work once the restriction is lifted.

March 12, 2020

Memo

To: All SDDOC staff and inmates

Re: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information

While there are no known cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) among staff members or inmates in our facilities at this time, the South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC) is continuing to monitor and prepare for the potential emergence of COVID-19.

Information on signs, symptoms and prevention measures for COVID-19 have been included on educational materials that are posted throughout our facilities and available to inmates on their tablets.

As of today, the DOC is suspending all in-person visitation within our facilities. Inmates can still access their family and friends via phone calls and video visits.

All volunteer activities within our facilities have been suspended as well.

The DOC will continue to work closely with DOH and others to monitor COVID-19 and take any additional precautions deemed necessary to keep our staff and inmate population safe.

Mike Leidholt
Cabinet Secretary
South Dakota Department of Corrections