



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

ADMINISTRATION

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March 1, 2021

DOC is beginning a gradual return to in-person visitation at each of our facilities. In-person visitation will resume at the Jameson Annex and Sioux Falls Community Work Center on March 8, Mike Durfee State Prison, Yankton Community Work Center, Rapid City Community Work Center and Women's Prison on March 12 and at the State Penitentiary on March 15.

Visitation will include social distancing and several new restrictions are in place to protect the health and safety of offenders, staff members and visitors. These restrictions include:

- Fewer, shorter visitation sessions;
- A limit of two (2) visitors per offender (no minors under the age of 12 will be allowed to visit);
- Offenders will be allowed one visiting session per week;
- All visitors must pass COVID-19 screening with a temperature check prior to entering the check-in area and exhibit no signs of illness;
- Visitors must wear their own face covers when entering the building. Upon entry to the facility, visitors will be provided a new face mask which must be worn in the visiting area;
- Offenders and visitors will be required to use hand sanitizer prior to the visit; and
- No contact between the visitor and the offender will be allowed.

Visit rooms are set up for social distancing and will be sanitized prior to and following each visitation period.

Prospective visitors at all DOC facilities must be on the inmate's approved visit list and must schedule a visit online at <https://sddoc.gtlvisitme.com/app>. Visits can be scheduled as much as two weeks in advance, but must be scheduled no later than 72 hours prior to desired visit session. Visit times are posted on the DOC website at <https://doc.sd.gov/about/faq/visitation.aspx>.

Visitation will be monitored and evaluated to determine if less restrictive means are feasible. Conversely, if circumstances require, more restrictive means may be implemented, up to and including, halting of visitation until it can safely be resumed.

Additional information on visitation has been provided to the inmates via their tablets. That information will be posted at each facility and on the DOC website at <https://doc.sd.gov/about/faq/visitation.aspx>.

October 28, 2020

Discretionary/Presumptive Parole Releases

All parole releases from facilities and/or units impacted by positive COVID-19 cases that have been identified through mass testing efforts have been temporarily suspended. Parole releases are continuing at units/facilities that are not impacted by an increase in COVID-19 numbers. The DOC understands that this is frustrating to not only the offenders, but also their families; however, the DOC is committed to reducing the potential spread of COVID-19 and ensure the safety of offenders, their families, and the community.

All suspended releases are being tracked by case management and transition staff to ensure the earliest possible release dates are established when releases are resumed in conjunction with the applicable quarantine/isolation periods at the impacted units/facilities. Once releases are resumed from the affected units, consideration will be given based upon several factors including, but not limited to the individual living situation/residence plans and transportation arrangements.

Discharges/Suspended Sentence Releases

The DOC has no legal authority to hold offenders who have reached their expiration date of sentence or the suspended sentence release date as determined by the court. These cases have been identified by DOC staff in advance of those dates for many months. Case management staff attempt to work with individual offenders prior to discharge with the goal of a safe transition back into the community. DOH staff complete a rapid COVID-19 test just prior to release to determine the offender's COVID-19 status. DOH provides the offenders with appropriate COVID-19 information if necessary. DOC, in conjunction with DOH, have assisted discharging offenders with transportation or temporary housing arrangements if the offender does not have other viable options.

Facility Positive COVID-19 Protocols

When inmates test positive for COVID-19, we isolate them from non-positive inmates and quarantine those identified as close contacts. That requires moving inmates and their allowable property to different housing units, changing schedules for programming, meals and recreation in addition to adjusting how we handle inmate movement. We have made modifications to our physical plant operations, implemented new protocols and developed strategies to deal with the various challenges of responding to a public health crisis.

Facility COVID-19 Mitigation Efforts

At the beginning of the pandemic, the DOC identified essential function staff and operations, with the primary focus on safety, sanitation, security, and supervision. The DOC has implemented regular symptom screening for both staff and inmates, developed isolation and quarantine plans for all facilities, restricted inmates access to community work programs, suspended in-person visitation and volunteer activities, revised schedules to increase social distancing, bolstered disinfection efforts and laundry services, implemented physical plant changes, and adjusted admission and intake processes, and all inmates and staff are wearing masks.

October 22, 2020

The South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC) and Department of Health are continuing to conduct mass testing at all DOC facilities, with sentinel testing to follow.

Testing began this week for inmates at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls and continued for inmates at the Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield. Additional testing will occur at both facilities through the week.

Testing numbers will continue to be reflected in the daily tally that is updated Monday-Friday on the DOC website at <https://doc.sd.gov/about/Coronavirus.aspx>.

DOH and DOC are developing a plan to sentinel test 5-percent of the asymptomatic inmates and staff in the DOC facilities each month. Testing would be done on a weekly basis in order to reach the desired number. Staff members and inmates that previously tested positive would not be included in the sentinel testing.

October 16, 2020

The South Dakota Department of Corrections and Department of Health are continuing to mass test facilities.

To date, 249 inmates and staff members at the Women's facility in Pierre have recovered. There are just 10 remaining active cases. Three rounds of mass testing were conducted last month at the facility in Pierre.

Mass testing was also conducted at the Mike Durfee State Prison (MDSP) in Springfield this week. A total of 127 inmates tested positive for COVID-19 with 22 inmates testing negative. The inmates who tested positive have been isolated.

All education, inmate skills training and work programs on the MDSP campus have been temporarily suspended. All inmate transfers to and from the facility are also temporarily suspended at this time.

Testing numbers will be reflected in the tally that is updated on the DOC website at doc.sd.gov/about/Coronavirus.aspx.

October 1, 2020

The Department of Corrections in conjunction with the Department of Health conducted a third mass testing event at the South Dakota Women's Prison. This week, one housing unit consisting of 87 inmates was tested.

A total of 29 inmates in Unit E of the Women's Prison tested positive for COVID-19. The other 58 inmates in that housing unit tested negative.

There remains only one active case among the inmates that tested positive during the first round of mass testing at the Pierre Community Work Center last month. The rest of the inmates have since recovered.

The inmates that tested positive during the second round of mass testing in housing units C and D remain on isolation status.

In total, 216 inmates in Pierre have tested positive, there have been 253 negative tests, and 117 have recovered. The majority of the positive cases have experienced only mild symptoms. One inmate was hospitalized and has since recovered.

There are currently 402 female inmates housed in the multiple housing units for females in Pierre.

September 25, 2020

The Department of Corrections in conjunction with the Department of Health conducted another mass testing event at the South Dakota Women's Prison. This week, two housing units consisting of 112 inmates were tested.

A total of 51 inmates in the C and D housing units of the Women's Prison tested positive for COVID-19. The other 61 inmates in those housing units tested negative.

Ninety-two inmates housed at the Pierre Community Work Center who tested positive are now considered to be recovered.

In total, 172 inmates in Pierre have tested positive, 19 have been symptomatic, 178 have tested negative, and 93 have recovered.

DOH and DOC staff are continuing with the screening of inmates, including regular temperature checks. All inmates and staff are required to wear masks in the facilities. Inmates are encouraged to practice proper hygiene and hand washing. Cleaning and disinfecting practices are continuing.

Staff who interact directly with inmates who have tested positive are wearing personal protective equipment, including masks, gowns, gloves, and face shields/goggles.

There are multiple housing units for females in Pierre. The Women's Prison consists of housing units or cell blocks A, B, C and D. Unit E is a separate building located behind the Women's Prison. The Pierre Community Work Center is located east of the main prison and the National Guard Armory.

September 17, 2020

The Department of Corrections (DOC) conducted a mass-testing event at the Pierre Community Work Center (PCWC) under the Department of Health's guidance on Sept. 14. Following the results of that testing, we were able to identify a number of cases and get those individuals into isolation.

Because of the number of positive cases, those inmates who had previously tested positive and those who tested positive during the mass testing were moved to the PCWC, which is located east of the Women's Prison. Inmates at PCWC who did not test positive were moved to the Women's Prison. Those inmates who were identified as close contacts to those who tested positive are on quarantine status at the Women's Prison.

As of Sept. 17, there are 102 inmates housed at PCWC and 307 inmates housed in the Women's Prison and Unit E.

Inmates in Pierre are not being allowed to go out into the community for work release or community service projects. Visitation, programming and contact with volunteers is suspended.

Inmates do have access to their inmate tablets for phone calls and messaging. Each inmate has been provided with two additional free phone calls per week. Video visitation is continuing.

May 19, 2020

Pheasantland Industries has completed production of personal protective equipment (PPE) for DOC and DOH staff, inmates and other state and local government agencies. PI produced a total of 32,170 masks, 5,999 gowns and 3,355 face shields.

May 15, 2020

While many educational and vocational programs were put on hold at the onset of the pandemic, we have begun to phase in more of those programs in our institutions with precautionary measures in place such as smaller class sizes and social distancing in the classroom.

May 1, 2020

We are adjusting admission and intake processes to ensure individual assessment, separation and cohorting of new admissions for their first 14 days in the facility.

In addition to the Centers for Disease Control guidelines for correctional facilities, DOC will begin regularly taking every inmate's temperature. If an inmate has a temperature of 100.4 or above, DOC staff will refer them to Correctional Health for an assessment. If an inmate is experiencing symptoms (fever, new onset of shortness of breath or a new onset cough), they are expected to report this to staff.

Inmates working in Pheasantland Industries have produced enough masks so that each inmate in the state prison system has three. Inmates who are releasing back into the community are also provided with a mask. Inmates have begun producing protective gowns for correctional and medical staff.

April 27, 2020

Two employees at the South Dakota State Penitentiary have tested positive for COVID-19. The employees last reported to work on 4/24/2020. DOC is working closely with DOH to help determine any close contact the staff members may have had with others.

Information on staff and inmate testing is available on the DOC website at: doc.sd.gov/about/Coronavirus.aspx.

The inmate at the Jameson Annex to the South Dakota State Penitentiary who earlier tested positive for COVID-19 is no longer in isolation and is considered to be recovered.

April 23, 2020

Masks that are produced by Pheasantland Industries are being distributed to inmates in each of the DOC facilities. The inmates have been instructed to wear the masks anytime they are out of their cells at the higher security facilities or out of their bunks at the minimum security units, with the exception of when they are eating or showering or have more than 6 feet of separation during recreation time.

Hand sanitizer is provided to inmates under staff supervision in the facility dining halls and recreation areas.

April 15, 2020

An inmate at the Jameson Annex to the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls has tested positive for COVID-19 and has been placed in isolation. He indicated that he was in close contact with someone who may have been positive. He remains in isolation and has not had contact with other inmates. This is the second inmate in the SD DOC system to test positive. The SD DOC remains focused on protecting all inmates and staff at every one of our facilities. When an inmate becomes symptomatic, we will follow the proper protocols from guidelines outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Health.

April 9, 2020

Included in Governor Noem's [Executive Order 2020-14](#) is a temporary suspension of South Dakota Codified Law 16-22-28, which is the statutory provision requiring the Department of Corrections to impose certain sanctions for parole violations regarding a positive urinalysis test for a controlled substance. This will allow the department to institute a policy which may include an alternative sanction or deferment of the sanction. Parole is still responding to positive UAs through another high-level sanction and working with community treatment providers. Other high-level sanctions include referrals to drug/alcohol treatment, cognitive based therapy, increased contacts with agent, house arrest, continuous/increased drug testing, electronic monitoring, and placement in the Community Transition Program or Halfway House (if assessed as needing that placement). When parole agents are informed of use of illicit substances, they also contact the offender's current CD counselor so the offender can receive guidance from the CD professional and to determine if the offender needs a higher level of treatment. The detainment can also be deferred to a later date as well.

April 8, 2020

While the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has changed their guidance to the general public to wear cloth masks while in public places, their guidance for correctional facilities has not been changed to recommend wholesale issuance and wearing of face masks in the prison setting. However, out of an abundance of caution, we will be implementing a phased approach to the issuance and use of cloth face masks by employees of DOC. Staff will be issued cloth masks made by Pheasantland Industries. Each employee will be required to wear the mask anytime they are inside a facility. The greatest risk to introducing the virus into our facilities is from people coming in from the outside, which is why staff will be wearing them.

April 7, 2020

The inmate at the Women's Prison that tested positive has recovered. The other inmates at the Pierre Community Work Center have been released from quarantine.

April 3, 2020

State prison inmates are producing utility personal protective equipment (PPE) for Department of Corrections and Correctional Health staff members.

Inmates in the Pheasantland Industries (PI) Garment Shop at the Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield are producing cotton jersey face masks and nylon gowns. Inmates in several PI shops at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls are producing reusable and disposable face shields. Inmates in the Print Shop laser cut clear plastic sheets to size for the face shields, the Upholstery Shop inmates make the elastic bands with foam and the Metal Shop workers apply the metal and rivets to the shields.

PI ordered enough materials to produce approximately 3,000 gowns, 6,000 masks, 300 reusable face shields and 1,000 disposable face shields, Production has begun on the masks and face shields. The material for the gowns is expected to arrive soon.

While PI is not classified as a producer of medical equipment and the masks are not approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the items can be utilized for emergency situations when no other option is available. While the DOC has supplies of equipment for staff, there are national shortages of personal protective equipment, which makes acquiring additional items difficult. Medical grade equipment needs to be reserved for medical staff for treatment and emergencies.

Utility PPE items produced by Pheasantland Industries will also be made available to other governmental agencies.

Photos and a video of the items being produced are available on our social media accounts: Twitter: @SouthDakotaDOC and Instagram: sdcorrections

April 1, 2020

GTL, our phone service and video visit provider, has extended their free offerings to inmates because of the suspension of in-person visits due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each inmate receives two free, 5-minute phone calls per week and one free video visit each week through April 30.

March 26, 2020

The inmate at the Women's Prison who tested positive for COVID-19 remains in isolation. No additional inmates in the state prison system have tested positive. We continue to work closely with DOH to ensure proper protocols are being followed to ensure the health and safety of our staff and the men and women in custody.

Because of potential exposure to the inmate who tested positive for COVID-19, there are 155 inmates in the Pierre Community Work Center who are under observation. We have suspended all transfers and parole releases from PCWC at this time.

DOC is following the Department of Health directives and Center for Disease Control guidelines for protecting inmates and staff. The DOC has also:

- instituted staff screening, including answering questions and taking temperature;
- provided educational materials on precautions and prevention measures to staff and inmates;
- added extra handwashing stations in our facilities;
- waived inmate co-pays for medical review;
- reduced dental services;
- increased our order for essential medications so that we have enough to treat the inmates;
- developed isolation and quarantine plans for all of our facilities;
- continued a 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);
- adjusted schedules to reduce contacts;
- increased disinfecting efforts around the facilities and increased laundry services;
- limiting the size of inmate groups for meals and other activities as possible;
- and suspended visitation and volunteer activities.

The Parole Board has scheduled their April hearings. A weekly schedule and agenda are posted on the Boards and Commission portal (<https://boardsandcommissions.sd.gov/>). If you plan on attending any of these hearings, please contact the Parole Board Office at 605.367.5040 for the most current information and instructions.

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