



EOPSS



DOC

THE DOC'S PREPARATION AND RESPONSE TO COVID-19

MAY 2020

Since well before the first known case of COVID-19 in a Department of Correction (DOC) facility, the DOC's response to COVID-19 has included proactive changes to training, policy, and practice, consistent with and responsive to public health guidance from the Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control. Along with the continued core mission of the DOC to provide secure custody and appropriate care and programming for those under DOC supervision, the Department's response to COVID-19 has had three primary objectives: to minimize opportunities for the virus to enter state correctional facilities; to suppress its spread inside of those facilities; and to provide adequate testing to identify, and medical care to treat, inmates and staff who contract it.

ONLINE INFORMATION

Commonly-asked questions regarding the DOC's response to COVID-19 and preventative steps taken to help protect the health of employees and inmates can be found **here** or at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/covid-19-qa/download>

Preparation

In early March, well before the first known case of COVID-19 in a correctional facility, the DOC established a response plan to this viral threat. The DOC screened and surveyed all inmates and dramatically increased cleaning and sanitizing operations across all facilities – especially high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, handrails, and telephones. These elevated health and safety protocols remain in place at all DOC facilities.

To help prevent the introduction of the virus into facilities, access to DOC facilities is now through a single point of entry. With the assistance of the National Guard, the DOC established screening areas at each entry point where anyone entering is surveyed for CDC-designated risk factors and has their temperature taken.

Masks are mandatory for all staff working in Department facilities and any inmate who enters a facility is quarantined for fourteen days.

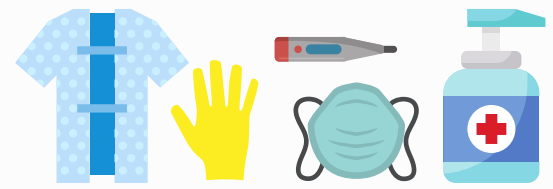
The DOC has offered guidance to all staff and inmates on preventing the spread of infectious disease, including COVID-19, by posting CDC recommendations throughout all facilities and issued a mandatory “read and sign” informational document on the DOC’s Intranet which houses a resource portal for staff to view all COVID-19-related notices and guidance.

Personnel have been instructed to report illness, exposure, and other risk factors, and to stay home if sick.

To promote social distancing and suppress the potential for the virus to spread, the DOC has dramatically curtailed intra-facility movement and congregate activities and suspended general visitation and facility tours.

In the past month alone, the DOC has received more than 175,000 pieces of personal protective equipment, including masks, gowns, coveralls, and more for distribution to every DOC facility statewide and Isopropanol-based hand sanitizer is now available to inmates and staff in dispensers across all DOC facilities.

Masks have been made available to all inmates, regardless of facility, testing status, or symptoms, and the DOC currently has 22,000 additional masks available for future distribution.



PPE

The DOC has distributed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to all of its facilities to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to staff and inmates. Between March 26, 2020 and April 27, 2020, the DOC has provided the following amounts of PPE including gowns, coveralls, masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, and thermometers to each facility:

- o Boston Pre-Release: 4,620 pcs of PPE
- o Bridgewater State Hospital: 1,795 pcs of PPE
- o Lemuel Shattuck Hospital: 4,548 pcs of PPE
- o MASAC Plymouth: 10,578 pcs of PPE
- o MCI-Cedar Junction: 9,731 pcs of PPE
- o MCI-Concord: 6,073 pcs of PPE
- o MCI Framingham: 17,895 pcs of PPE
- o MCI Norfolk: 12,114 pcs of PPE
- o MCI Shirley: 23,409 pcs of PPE
- o Massachusetts Treatment Center; 39,621 pcs of PPE
- o NCCI: 7,200 pcs of PPE
- o NECC: 3,953 pcs of PPE
- o OCCC: 17,738 pcs of PPE
- o Pondville: 3,887 pcs of PPE
- o SBCC: 8,103 pcs of PPE
- o SMCC: 3,746 pcs of PPE

**Please note these numbers do not include PPE that was already present at the facility prior to the above deliveries.*



**Entrance to SBCC- April 2020*

Continuing Services

The DOC has implemented many proactive and preventative measures to help minimize and suppress the potential spread of COVID-19 in DOC facilities while maintaining the Department's core functions and services. Inmate access to medical treatment, mental health programming, in-person attorney visits, mail, and laundry all remain in place. Meals and medication are delivered to inmates and inmates have, and have always had, access to soap and running water.

In light of the temporary limitations on visitors, which is necessary to combat the spread of COVID-19 in DOC facilities, the DOC is providing two free 20-minute telephone calls per week to all inmates.

Releases from custody continue as scheduled and the DOC has taken steps to continue to provide inmates an opportunity to earn good time credits. Additionally, the review process for inmates who have petitioned for medical parole continues in an expedited manner.

The Department's medical provider follows a COVID-19 pre-release protocol for all inmates approaching their discharge date that includes review and screening by medical staff and testing if clinically indicated.

Increased Testing

As with any patient, inmates who require a hospital-level of care are hospitalized and inmates who meet criteria for COVID-19 testing are tested.

The DOC has provided mobile testing for inmates at MCI-Framingham, South Middlesex Correctional Center, MCI-Shirley, and the Massachusetts Treatment Center. DOC, in partnership with its medical provider, continues to develop plans for further strategic testing at additional DOC facilities.

Testing is also offered to Department staff through those mobile sites, as well as at EOPSS's priority testing centers. These tests allow the Department to make intelligent and informed decisions to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to isolate healthy inmates and staff from the sick, and that adequate medical care continues to be available for those inmates who need it.

**DID YOU
KNOW ?**

DOC, through its MassCor Industries, is contributing to the fight against COVID-19 by producing personal protective equipment such as gowns and cloth masks and is repackaging large quantities of hand sanitizer into individual containers for distribution.



**Photo-MassCor equipment Sept. 2019*

While no part of life in Massachusetts has been untouched by this global public health crisis, the Department of Correction has taken unprecedented steps to confront it. We remain focused on reducing, to the greatest degree possible, the potential impact of this virus on our staff, our inmate population, and the community at large.