



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
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May 21, 2020

TO: All Work Release Residents

FROM: Susie Leavell, Senior Administrator 

Subject: **Phased Approach to Resume Visitation/Social Outings in Work Release**

The department understands the importance of family relationships and the challenges presented with staying connected to your loved ones through this difficult time that the visitation program is suspended. Understandably many of you have inquired when visitation and social outings can resume.

DOC is aligned with Governor Inslee's Stay Home, Stay Healthy Order and is managing DOC locations according to the guidance provided by the Washington State Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control. This approach reduces the risk for incarcerated people who are at high risk for transmission of COVID-19 linked to congregate living conditions presented in correctional facilities.

Unfortunately, the implementation of social distancing and suspension of visitation/social outings has resulted in communicating less with the people who are most important to us. We recognize how difficult it is to have limited contact with loved ones. DOC is committed to resuming statewide visitation/social outings carefully and will utilize an informed approach in order to maintain the safety and welfare of incarcerated individuals by limiting in person contact with the public.

The timeline for reopening visitation/social outings will be partly informed by [Safe Start Washington](#). This recovery plan determines when distancing measures can be lifted and involves assessing COVID-19 activity in the state along with health care system readiness, testing capacity and availability, case and contact investigation and the ability to protect high risk populations.

Visitation/social outings will resume in a phased approach after Washington State has lifted restrictions to public interactions and internal processes are in place to offset risks associated with correctional and congregate living conditions. Careful consideration must be taken to protect the health and safety of incarcerated individuals as well as employees and members of the general public who work in and visit Washington work release facilities.

DOC is committed to re-establishing a normal routine and will continue to closely monitor the progress of the State's phased reopening plan. Because work release environments are unique, there may be additional considerations as we begin moving through the phased reopening plan.

"Working Together for SAFER Communities"