May 26, 2022

TO: All DOC Staff  
    All Incarcerated Individuals  
    All Interested Parties

FROM: Sean Murphy, Deputy Secretary

SUBJECT: Corrections revises COVID protocols

As the clinical severity of COVID-19 infection decreases and the number of fully vaccinated individuals increases, the Washington State Department of Corrections has updated its COVID protocols in coordination with the Washington State Department of Health (DOH).

Corrections will continue to monitor the COVID situation in coordination with DOH, and if there is an increase in community deaths and hospitalizations due to COVID-19, there may be a need to revert back to prior more restrictive COVID-19 strategies for the safety of the prison population and staff.

The changes to COVID protocols will be included in the next updated version of the WA State DOC COVID-19 Screening, Testing, and Infection Control Guidelines and will apply to any outbreaks that occur after these protocols become effective. For those facilities currently experiencing outbreaks, clinical leadership will work with you to determine which protocols, if any, can be adapted for your facility.

Effective Thursday May 26, 2022:

- Prior to an outbreak and/or at the time of an outbreak in a prison living unit or work release, everyone in the unit/work release will be offered the opportunity by clinical staff to individually quarantine outside the outbreak area to help mitigate COVID-19 transmission.
  - It is recommended that individuals who are considered high-risk for severe COVID-19 (e.g. unvaccinated or co-morbid risk factor) individually quarantine, but can opt out of moving to another unit by signing a refusal form.
  - Anyone else in the unit/work release can choose to individually quarantine upon request.
  - The decision on whether to individually quarantine or quarantine in a unit/work release cohort will follow an individual regardless of location within prison/work release. However, an individual can opt to change their decision about how they want to quarantine at any time as per the clinical protocol.

- For those persons who desire to be individually quarantined when an outbreak occurs:
  - PRISONS: Individuals will be transferred out of the unit on outbreak to a single cell whenever possible
  - WORK RELEASE: they will either be transferred out of the work release, if possible, or placed in a single room within the work release.

  Individuals on quarantine will have access to yard, clean clothes, showers, property,
medical, and other appropriate liberties to the greatest extent possible within their unit. Meals will be delivered to the cell/room.

- During a unit/work release outbreak, those individuals who do not choose to quarantine individually, will remain in the unit/work release and will quarantine as a unit/work release cohort.

- A quarantined unit/work release cohort:
  - Should not mix with individuals from other units/work releases
  - Should have normal movement within the unit/work release
  - Should access the yard as a unit or per normal work release protocol

- During an outbreak, testing during unit/work release cohorted quarantine will occur every 3-4 days for the first week and then every 7 days thereafter until cleared from quarantine.

- Clearing an individual or unit from quarantine still requires that all test results be negative for 10-14 days.

- During an outbreak, medical Isolation is still necessary outside the unit in a designated isolation area; however, the 10-day isolation period will change to a 7-day isolation period with a negative antigen test to exit isolation.

- No changes are occurring to Isolation outside of an outbreak, testing will occur at day 10 prior and require a negative antigen test to clear from isolation.

These changes are a result of the declining severity of COVID-19 cases and the lower hospitalization rates across the state and a need to consider negative impact restrictions have on whole person health and wellness of staff and incarcerated individuals. DOC will continue working closely with the Washington State Department of Health to evaluate COVID-19 impacts and will continue to adjust protocols when necessary.