

Local Family Council COVID -19 Teleconference

Larch Corrections Center (LCC)

April 16, 2020

Time: 1400 -1428

Facilitator: James C. Miller Jr. (Superintendent of LCC)

Assistant Facilitator: Jason Richer (Corrections Unit Supervisor for Elkhorn Unit)

Attendance: Caroline Melhuish--Family Services
Matthias Gyde --OCO
Stephanie Sanderson
LaQuesha "Q" Turner – OCO
Molly Hunter

Purpose: Update on LCC/COVID-19

THINGS THAT WE ARE DOING--Supt. Miller: It has been a very busy week.

Moves:

- On April 15th, we have moved 18 residents out of the living units (They were volunteers).
 - 6 in EFVs
 - 12 in Visiting room
 - Moved cots in these areas (they are using their mattresses in the visiting room).
 - Built partitions, so they can have privacy.
 - There is a television (TV) in the Visiting Room (we are trying to add additional TVs).
 - We will speak to the phone company to see if we can have phones in there.
 - We are also trying to place a JPAY machine in these areas as well.
 - Trying to make it as comfortable as possible.
 - It is a possibility that we may place residents in the recreation (REC) building.
 - Wanting to spread the residents out to keep in compliance with social distancing.

Masks: As of April 16th, everyone (staff and residents) are to wear protection over their mouth and nose.

- We have the bandanas and we showed everyone how to make the coverings.
 - Some residents were asking if they had to sleep in the masks. I do not have the answer to that question, but as soon as we find out, we will pass on the information to you.
- Staff was already wearing face masks. However, we received clearance since there was some uncertainty as to when you should wear them.
 - The information is now clear that masks are to be worn at all times while on Department of Corrections (DOC) property.

Free Phone Calls:

- Free phone call were to stop on April 14th. However, because we are still in the pandemic, the phone company that we are working with has extended the time and the free phone calls will continue.

Water/Microwaves:

- Residents in the Visiting room and EVF were also given bottled water so that they can put those in the refrigerator. We will continue to supply them with water.
- They also have microwaves.

Update—CUS Richer:

- Preparing for moves to REC.
- Will be ordering 3-4 more TVs.
- Ordering more DVD players.
- Will be making a purchase requests for some of the newer movies again. Will have someone pick those up from Walmart probably tomorrow.
- We are looking for ways to always improve and make things better up here at LCC and we will get through this.

Questions

1. **Stephanie Sanderson** -- At the State wide meeting family council meeting, people were asking about yard time for our loved ones. Some people were concerned that they were not getting enough yard time. I know that statewide there is no set limit in how much yard time an inmate is supposed to get. From my understanding they are only getting 40 minutes a day. Is that correct.
 - a. **Supt. Miller's response** – That is not correct at all. Probably earlier the time was somewhat limited, but because we realized that it was a problem like you heard, we put CUS Richer on it and he came up with some amazing things and now everyone seems to be happy.
 - b. **CUS Richer's response** -- To minimize the amount of people, we divided the yard in half. One half of the yard has the ball field as well as the greater portion of the track. The other half has the basketball court, along with some horseshoe pits out there. They also have some room where they can run and do other types of things. We have one floor (because we send them to yard by floors) go out to the ballfield and the other floor from the other unit would go out to the basketball court. To divide it up, there are tables on each side 20 feet apart and we also have some yellow tape. Individuals can sit at those tables but they cannot cross over into the middle section, so that we keep those barriers in between and it keeps those numbers down. At this time I am thinking that they have approximately 3-5 hours a day (an hour each time they go down there). They can also go to recreation, hobby shop (based on the movements). It is not 40 minutes a day. It is 3-5 hours (depending on the movement schedule). We have approximately just under 12 hours of movement time, where residents are moving to the yard during the day.
 - c. **Supt. Miller's response** -- The reason we are doing that is because if they are sitting in their pod going stir crazy, then it would not be beneficial to the residents/staff/anyone. Since the weather has been favorable to us lately, we are trying to get them out there and doing something as often as they can. So splitting the yard in half so that more people can go out has been a God sent for us. Stephanie, speak to your loved one to find out how the REC time has been working for them.
2. **LaQuesha "Q" Turner (OCO)** – I think that it is really great what you staff is doing up there. Every time that we sat in on these calls, you are wither doing something for your staff or running to do something for the population to ease the tension. For everyone involve this is really great. Just wanted to point out that I get more on your calls than any other calls. I had a question about the EFVs. For the 18 that volunteered to move to the EFVs, do they get to use the phone? Are there phones out there?
 - a. **Supt. Miller's response** – No there are no phones out there 'Q', but here's what they are doing. Actually they are only 6 in the EFVs, the other 12 are in the Visiting room. What we are doing right now is: OCC has gotten in contact with the GTL and so they are trying to look into getting additional phones put in. If they are able to do it at OCC, we maybe a little bit higher in altitude, they should be able to do it here. I had one of my Sergeants call up to OCC today and we are looking into getting a Point of Contact. What I am considering doing is even in the Visiting room

having a couple of phones put in there. As long as we have a switch to turn the phones off after this is over or turn them off a night, then we are going with it.

- i. Also until we get those in, on their normal movement schedule, they can go back to the REC department or their units to use the phone for 2 hours and shower.
- ii. In the Visiting room, we've had another shower put in and they should be finishing that up today. The Maintenance staff bought another shower and installed it and they would be able to shower there. They also can go back to REC/Units, use the phone, shower, and use JPay. We will try to send some pictures out and also put them on our website because, I am proud of the showers and the cubicles that they have in the Visiting room. Obviously it is a change for everyone, but we are trying to make them as comfortable as possible.