

How the Delaware Department of Correction is containing COVID-19

June 3, 2020

Test/Screen
Isolate
Treat
Clean
Trace



COVID-19 presents a once-in-a-century public health and safety challenge to correctional systems across the country, and the Delaware DOC is meeting that challenge by rigorous cleaning, screening, testing, isolating, tracing and treating.

Over the past 12 weeks the Delaware DOC has:

- ✓ Implemented extensive screening procedures for officers and staff to mitigate the risk of the virus entering facilities;
- ✓ Implemented screenings for inmates, including daily temperature checks in every DOC facility;
- ✓ Invested in high-tech decontamination equipment specifically certified to disinfect for COVID-19, deploying these fogger machines to over 100 locations and in every DOC facility and Probation and Parole office.

COVID-19 SNAPSHOT June 3, 2020

- ✓ **4,350 inmates statewide**
- ✓ **148 inmate COVID cases since March**
- ✓ **Only 4 current inmate cases – all from state's largest prison in Smyrna**
 - **2 symptomatic**
 - **2 asymptomatic**
- ✓ **137 inmate recoveries**
- ✓ **7 deaths (primarily older inmates with chronic health conditions)**

Deliberate and sustained actions have helped mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in Delaware's correctional system. While numerous correctional systems across the country have had hundreds, even thousands, of COVID-positive inmates, in the first 12 weeks, Delaware has had fewer than 150 inmate COVID cases. DOC will continue to aggressively monitor and test correctional employees and inmates to stay ahead of this invisible threat.



✓ SCREEN & MONITOR

Combatting COVID begins at our door:

- **January, 2020:** DOC began inmate screening for COVID symptoms and travel to hotspots, and isolation.
- **February, 2020:** Screening expanded to staff.
- **March, 2020:** Temperature checks started for all who enter DOC facilities. Staff with symptoms sent home to self-quarantine and consult with doctor. Symptomatic inmates isolated and tested.
- **Since March:** All inmates have been isolated upon arrival and closely monitored for 14 days for signs of illness.
- **Since March:** Most probationer visits transitioned to phone.
- **Since March:** All probationers and staff have been screened, including temperature check, at arrival to Probation offices.

Face masks are worn by all Correctional Officers and contract healthcare workers as a protection for inmates, Officers and other employees.

- **April, 2020:** Face masks became mandatory for all Correctional Officers (correctional healthcare staff and some Officers had been wearing face masks for weeks).
- **March - June:** More than half of all inmates were provided face masks, including those in infirmaries, those with compromised immune systems, those with certain institutional jobs, and all inmates at multiple facilities.
- ✓ **2,600 inmates issued face masks to-date**
- **March, 2020:** JTVCC garment shop begins producing cloth face masks to help ensure steady supply for correctional employees and inmates.

✓ TEST & TRACE

- **March, 2020:** COVID testing began for inmates with symptoms of respiratory infection/illness (shortness of breath, fever, coughing); proactive testing began for asymptomatic inmates. Tests sent offsite for processing.
- **March, 2020:** Start of contact tracing to identify/isolate inmates and staff exposed to suspected/confirmed cases.
- **April, 2020:** DOC/DPH brought **RAPID COVID TESTING** to JTVCC. Results are returned within 30 minutes, facilitating immediate isolation of even asymptomatic inmates.
- ✓ **280 inmate tests completed to-date**
- ✓ **Rapid COVID testing at JTVCC**
- ✓ **100+ proactive tests of asymptomatic inmates completed to-date**





✓ ISOLATE & TREAT

- **February, 2020:** Every correctional facility established quarantine tiers in preparation for COVID.
- **March - April, 2020:** DOC leveraged lower prison population (25%+ decrease since 2013) to spread out vulnerable inmates.
- **March, 2020:** Vacant building at JTVCC converted into COVID Treatment Center, staffed 24 hours/day with medical professionals.

March – June:

- ✓ **137 inmate recoveries**
- ✓ **COVID contained to just 4 housing units (of hundreds statewide) in 3 facilities**
- ✓ **More than half of all COVID-positive inmates remain asymptomatic**



✓ CLEAN

- **March, 2020:** DOC doubled cleaning of every facility to twice each day. High traffic areas are sanitized even more frequently.
- **March, 2020:** DOC purchased and deployed specialized fogging machines that spray a disinfecting mist to sanitize entire rooms of common areas, housing units and workspaces.
- **At all times:** Inmates are issued cleaning supplies to sanitize cell areas.
- **March, 2020:** DOC launched education effort to enlist all correctional employees and inmates to prevent infection and spread of COVID through personal hygiene practices, including the CDC's preferred method of frequent hand washing with soap and water.
- **At all times:** Inmates have 24/7 access to soap and water. Wall-mounted hand sanitizers in hallways and infirmaries are frequently used by inmates and staff when moving between prison areas.



✓ CONNECT & LEARN

Visitation has been temporarily suspended since March and in-person programming since April as a precaution to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection.

- **March, 2020:** Access to phone and video visitation increased to facilitate family and community support; DOC began providing two free five-minute phone calls per week to all inmates.
- **April, 2020:** Substance abuse treatment transitioned to video and written instruction to facilitate continued treatment and earning of good-time credit.
- **April, 2020:** Education programs in work release and treatment centers transitioned to distance learning and virtual video instruction.
- **May, 2020:** Video visitation expanded to HRYCI.
- **At all times:** Mental health counseling remains available at all facilities via video technology.

