MDOC Puts Screening Measures in Place to Protect Facilities

Contact: Chris Gautz, Public Information Officer

517-241-0363, GautzC@michigan.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MDOC Puts Screening Measures in Place to Protect Facilities

Lansing, Mich. - The Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) is taking a series of measures to protect its staff, the prison population and the community as the first presumptive positive cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) have been identified in the state. These are community cases and there is no known connection between these cases and the MDOC.

Until further notice, anyone coming into a prison facility will be asked a series of screening questions and may have their temperature checked before being allowed entrance into a prison. This includes all staff, visitors, volunteers and contractors.

On Tuesday night, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer declared a state of emergency after announcing two Michigan residents have tested presumptive positive for COVID-19.

“Our primary focus is on public safety,” said MDOC Dir. Heidi Washington. “We take this issue seriously and we will do all we can to keep the public safe, as well as those we supervise across this state.”

In communities where there are outbreaks, the department will consult with the local health department and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and will potentially disallow all visits and outside contact from anyone other than MDOC personnel.

If visits are cancelled, prisoners will have increased time for phone calls and for sending electronic messages to family and friends.

Information on prevention is being provided to the prison population and MDOC staff. For the past week, facilities have undergone additional and more frequent cleaning of all facilities.

The department is also reviewing all previously scheduled large events including graduations, corrections officer training academies and other training events.

Staff and visitors can also access information about their facility by signing up for Nixle alerts.

To sign up for Nixle alerts, go to www.michigan.gov/corrections and select the page for the correctional facility in your area to register via the Nixle Widget, or text the zip code of the facility you would like to receive updates from to 888777.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

Copyright 2021 State of Michigan