MDOC Halts All Visits at State Prisons

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LANSING, MICH. The Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) will cease in-person visiting of prisoners effective immediately for the safety of staff, prisoners and the public. This will also include outside volunteers and other tours and groups who routinely come into the prisons.

There are now 12 cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the state, and in seven counties. These are community cases and there is no known connection between these cases and the MDOC.

“This was not a decision we arrived at lightly, as we understand and recognize the importance of family contact with the prison population,” said MDOC Director Heidi Washington. “Our primary concern has to be public safety and reducing the number of people who enter our facilities is a key factor in limiting the potential spread of this illness into our prisoner population.”

The department will monitor the situation to determine when visits will be restored.

During the period without visits, the department is working with its vendors that provide communication services to the prison population on enhanced services that may be able to be offered.

For staff working in the facilities, all will be asked a series of screening questions and will have their temperature checked before being allowed entrance into the prison. For those with a temperature above 100.4, they will not be allowed to work.
Information on prevention has been provided to the prison population and MDOC staff. For the past week, facilities have undergone additional and more frequent cleaning of the prisons.

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 NixleWidget, 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**.

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