FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

April 10, 2020

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DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS — COVID-19 RESPONSE: APRIL 2020

Department of Corrections Response. The following information outlines the steps taken by the Department of Corrections (DOC) to prepare for and mitigate the impact of COVID-19. The information is current as of April 8, 2020.[1]

Master Action Plan. In addition to the DOC Pandemic Response Plan/Policy, the Department is also operating from a regularly updated document called the Master Action Plan (MAP). This offers guidance on all issues/topics related to COVID-19 and is available to all staff.

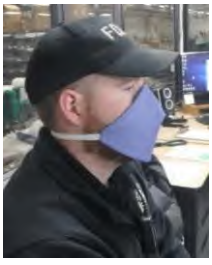
DOC/Iowa Prison Industries (IPI) Supply Production. Currently, through IPI and partners such as the Renewable Fuel Association, more than 75 inmates are making vital supplies in multiple facilities. Items produced include two types of masks, gowns, face shields, and hand sanitizer. IPI has prioritized delivery of products to the DOC, the Department of Human Services, and the Iowa Veterans Home first as tier one agencies with vulnerable populations. As needs are met for these three agencies, deliveries will be shifted to the State stockpile for distribution to hospitals and first responders. The following chart shows the number of items produced by IPI as of April 7, 2020.

IPI Production — April 7, 2020

Facility	Item Produced	Total Produced
Fort Dodge Correctional Facility	Masks (2 types)	25,662
Fort Dodge Correctional Facility	Gowns	3,139
Anamosa State Penitentiary	Face Shields	5,660
Iowa Correctional Institution for Women	Hand Sanitizer	7,148

For media coverage of the production, articles are being updated frequently at: doc.iowa.gov/in-the-news.

Mask Requirements and Usage. The DOC has distributed Olson masks to all staff. On April 10, two Olson masks were provided to each of the Community-Based Corrections (CBC) and prison staff members. The staff have been required to wear masks since April 11. As of April 13, 2020, all CBC and prison staff have three Olson masks each.



The DOC is also distributing IPI sneeze guards/face shields in a similar manner. Each inmate will have three sneeze guard masks and may be required to wear sneeze guards once a case is confirmed in a prison. The masks are currently optional for inmates.

[1] This article is an update of the *Fiscal Update Article* *Department of Corrections — COVID19 Response: March 2020* published on March 20, 2020.

Though limited, the current DOC supply of N95 respirator masks is sufficient at this time as long as the supplies are only used when necessary. Any staff working with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patient are issued full personal protective equipment (PPE) with an N95 mask.

COVID-19 Testing. As of April 8, 2020, there have been no positive tests for staff or inmates. Testing statistics are updated daily at: doc.iowa.gov/covid19. The DOC has the following protocols for staff and inmates to mitigate and prevent a symptomatic person from spreading COVID-19:

- Staff — All staff are screened prior to starting their shift. If a staff member identifies that the staff member is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, immediate action steps are taken and the staff member is relieved of duty and instructed to contact a medical provider for testing and care.
- Inmates — If an inmate identifies that the inmate is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, a test is administered immediately by facility medical staff. When a sample is collected, it is driven to the State Hygienic Lab for priority testing. The copayment for inmates to see medical staff for symptoms consistent with COVID-19 has been waived.

Communication and Visitation. The DOC has suspended all in-person visiting until further notice. To support communication between inmates and families, the DOC is working with its vendor partners to offer one free five-minute phone call anywhere in the U.S. and four free O-mails (monitored offender email system) to each offender every week. O-mail is ordinarily 25 cents each.

A partnership between the DOC and Google has also made video visitations possible. The DOC is still in the process of implementing and expanding the video visitation pilot program. As of April 8, 2020, 700 video visits have already taken place.

Prison Population Levels. The DOC continues to work with the Iowa Board of Parole (BOP) and the eight CBC Districts to safely transition as many inmates as possible to community supervision. As part of the DOC's submission of candidates to the BOP, priority is being given to those who are nearing discharge, are lower risk, and/or have a suitable living arrangement upon reentry. Currently, the prisons are approximately 20.0% above designed capacity. By reducing the overpopulation, prison staff would have more room to maneuver inside prisons when an outbreak occurs. In the last week, prison population has decreased by 26. As of April 8, 2020, the prison population is 8,496.

Additional Information. Further information and any updates regarding the DOC COVID-19 response are available on the DOC website.

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