FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: FDC Communications (mailto:PublicAffairs@fdc.myflorida.com)
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FDC Suspends Visitation at Correctional Institutions Statewide

Officials exercise abundance of caution to protect inmates and staff from exposure to COVID-19

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Following the State of Emergency issued in response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Florida, the Florida Department of Corrections (FDC) has suspended visitation at all correctional institutions statewide. FDC has no known or suspected cases of COVID-19 at this time.

"Every month FDC is fortunate to have more than 30,000 visitors from across the country enter our correctional institutions to visit their loved ones," said Secretary Mark Inch. "During this State of Emergency, it's critical we take all precautions necessary to minimize the potential risk to the inmate population and staff charged with their care and custody. This decision has been made in close consultation with our partners at the Florida Department of Health and with correctional best practices being reviewed nationwide. We look forward to resuming normal visitation as soon as possible."

The visitation suspension will be in effect through April 5, 2020. The decision to reinstate the normal visitation schedule will be evaluated in consultation with the Department of Health.

Inmates will continue to have access to their loved ones through mail, phone calls and video visitation. Legal visits will not be impacted.

Illnesses that spread from person to person can develop quickly in a correctional environment. Anyone entering a correctional institution will be screened, and entrance will be restricted if they:

- Have traveled and returned from China, Iran, Italy or South Korea within the last 14 days

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- Have signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection such as fever, cough, shortness of breath
- Have had contact with someone who has or is under investigation for COVID-19

For more information on the steps FDC is taking to prepare for COVID-19, please visit www.dc.state.fl.us/comm/index.html (http://www.dc.state.fl.us/comm/index.html).

(http://www.floridahealth.gov/covid-19)

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As Florida's largest state agency, and the third largest state prison system in the country, FDC employs 24,000 members, incarcerates approximately 90,000 inmates and supervises nearly 155,000 offenders in the community.

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