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Secretary James M. Le Blanc

DOC Suspends Visitation, Tours, & Volunteering at Louisiana's State-Run Prisons

Angola's Spring Rodeo postponed indefinitely

BATON ROUGE, La. – Out of an abundance of caution concerning COVID-19, commonly known as coronavirus, the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections has suspended prisoner visitation, tours, and volunteering for 30 days at Louisiana's eight state-run prisons, and has indefinitely postponed Angola's spring rodeo. While there have been no confirmed cases COVID-19 inside of these institutions, the Department has made this decision to protect the vulnerable incarcerated populations, staff, and to help reduce the spread of this disease. The Department will reevaluate in 30 days visitation, volunteers, tours and the spring rodeo.

In lieu of visitation, the Department is working to expand access to telephone services to ensure inmates have continued connection to family and friends during this event.

To help prevent the spread of this disease within Louisiana's eight state-run prisons,the DOC has implemented a screening criteria with questions for anyone entering the state's prisons, including staff and vendors.

The DOC has educated its staff and inmates on social distancing and hand washing practices to reduce the potential spread of coronavirus. Staff who are sick with symptoms consistent with the flu or coronavirus have been asked to stay home. Disinfection recommendations have been ramped up to include more frequent sanitizing of frequently-touched surfaces, hand soap and paper towels are frequently restocked in the bathrooms, and hand sanitizer is available at the institutions.

Each state prison has identified areas to quarantine DOC's incarcerated population, if the need arises, and plans are in place should a large number of inmates need to be quarantined or isolated.

Department leaders have met with the Louisiana Sheriff's Association and shared with its members the procedures and protocols being taken by DOC to reduce the risk.

The DOC, in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Sheriff's Association, is following CDC guidance, and continues to monitor the situation and update its

response as necessary.

Stay informed on decisions affecting the state's prisons by visiting the Department's website at **doc.la.gov**.

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