

COVID-19 Update 11.06.2020

Hello everyone,

Next week, we celebrate Veteran's Day on Wednesday, November 11th. I'd like to take a moment to thank the nearly 300 veterans in our ranks who have served in the armed forces. We appreciate your dedicated service to our country!

On to the business of COVID-19...

Statewide cases and the flu – the number of COVID-19 cases in our state continues to climb, with more than 1,200 cases reported each of the last two days. For perspective, back in April when we thought we were in the thick of things, the state was seeing about 200 cases a day. As the weather gets colder and we hunker down for the holiday season, health experts are warning that COVID-19 cases could continue to rise and it could be exasperated by the flu. Please do what you can to protect yourself from the "twindemic" by getting a flu shot. As a reminder, our insurance *covers the cost of a flu shot* and many markets offer them with no appointment (e.g., Fred Meyer and Albertson's).

OREX facility – we are actively working to draw down the population at the OREX facility. We have 35 people left to be transferred out, before turning the facility back over to the National Guard next week. It is a pretty remarkable feat to have stood up a temporary facility so quickly and seamlessly, and then to draw it back down just as quickly. Huge shout out to the folks who helped make it happen, Bret Kimmel, Bob Morlan, Randy Valley, Brian Crowl, and all the staff who volunteered to work there!!

IDOC testing – testing this week covered staff at ISCC and the Idaho Correctional Industries, as well as residents in ISCC's G block and the incoming/outgoing Reception and Diagnostic Unit (RDU) at ISCI. In G Block we had 44 positive, 188 negative, and 3 inconclusive residents.

We have had 207 staff test positive for COVID-19 at some point in the pandemic, including 10 new cases this week. While we are still awaiting for some results on the resident side, as of now, we have had 16 other new positive cases this week. It's worth noting that each week, included in our positive numbers are people who have recently transferred in from county jails statewide and are in our RDU. Those people are quarantined before being moved to any of our other facilities.

Next week, testing will be focused on staff and residents at East Boise CRC, Treasure Valley CRC, and Nampa CRC, as well as the incoming/outgoing RDU residents.

Random audits – Due to the seriousness of COVID-19 and the host of protocols that have been implemented to ensure the health and safety of staff, residents, and those on supervision, we have begun having Incident Command Staff conduct random audits of facilities and office locations. The point of these audits is to see how well information is being disseminated and how closely guidance is being followed, so that we can continue to ensure we're doing everything possible to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Please take care of yourself and each other.

Bree

Bree E. Derrick
Deputy Director
Idaho Dept. of Corrections