

COVID-19 Update - November 17, 2020

Hi All-

It's been more than a minute since the last update from Bree, Christine or me. There's a lot to report, so I'll get right to it.

COVID-related Death: Sadly, we announced another COVID-related death of a person in our custody last Friday. An 88-year-old incarcerated man who tested positive for COVID-19 died at a Boise hospital. He was transferred from Idaho State Correctional Institution to a Boise hospital on Oct. 31, 2020. He was pronounced dead at 3:57 a.m. Friday. The man was the fifth person incarcerated under the jurisdiction of the Idaho Department of Correction to die after testing positive for COVID-19. Our hearts go out to this gentleman's family, friends and loved ones.

Governor's Modified Stage 2 Announcement: Also on Friday, Governor Little issued a new Executive Order in recognition of an alarming spike in COVID-19 cases across Idaho. The Executive Order mobilizes 100 troops from the Guard to provide a host of capabilities where they are needed, potentially including mobile testing support, medical facility decontamination, or COVID-19 screenings, in addition to ongoing planning and logistics support.

Under the new statewide Stage 2 public health order:

- Gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited. This does not pertain to religious or political expression. Physical distancing is required for all gatherings.
- At-risk Idahoans should self-isolate.
- All Idahoans are encouraged to telework whenever possible and feasible with business operations.
- Masks continue to be required at long-term care facilities.
- Bars, nightclubs, and restaurants continue to operate with seating only.

This order is going to change some things for us, especially as it relates to trainings and group sizes. We are fortunate in that we've been mindful that COVID-19 would impact our operations for a significant period of time, so we've avoided the urge to rush back to old ways of operating. It'll serve us well as we attempt to weather another storm. But all of us should remain mindful of how our actions outside of work can have consequences for our peers and people under our jurisdiction. Wear a mask when outside of your immediate household, wash your hands frequently and practice appropriate safety measures.

Symptomatic Staff Testing: We are very excited to share with you that rapid COVID-19 testing is now available to **symptomatic IDOC staff** statewide. Thanks to the Division of Public Health, we received an allocation of the BinaxNow™ rapid antigen tests for our staff and residents. The BinaxNow™ is a point of care test that will give a result in approximately 15 minutes. You can review the patient fact-sheet by clicking [here](#). The test is very easy, all you have to do is provide a nasal swab and wait for the results. We appreciate that our facility Health Care provider, Corizon, has agreed to help facilitate staff testing as long as staff provide a signed consent form (attached). Please see the information below to properly access a test.

Staff Who Become Symptomatic While on Shift:

1. If you become symptomatic while working your shift, please put on an N95 mask and notify your supervisor immediately.
2. Staff who have Corizon providers in their facilities 24/7 may contact the Director of Nursing (DON) or the Health Services Administrator (HSA) and request a test prior to leaving the facility.
3. If adequate Corizon staff are available to facilitate a test, complete the consent form and take it and your IDOC ID with you to the area designated by Corizon medical personnel.
4. If Corizon does not have adequate staff to fulfill the request, a different time can be set for you to provide a sample.
5. Once a sample has been collected you should go home and wait for a designated Human Resources (HR) representative to contact you.
6. The HR representative will provide you with the test result and assist you with any time keeping or quarantine questions you may have.

Off Shift South Boise Complex, Central Office, D3, and D4 Staff:

1. Testing will continue to be conducted Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the ISCI testing tent by appointment.
2. If you are experiencing symptoms please do not report to work. Instead, contact your supervisor and HR to let them know you are seeking COVID-19 testing.
3. Call 208.331.1195 to set up a test time.
4. Print/fill out the consent form and take it with you to the testing tent at ISCI, along with your IDOC ID card.
5. Park your car next to the testing tent and stay in the car. A Corizon staff member will come to your window to collect a sample.
6. Once the sample is collected you can return home. A designated HR representative will contact you with the test result and answer questions you may have related to time keeping and quarantine.

PWCC, IF CRC, SAWC, D6, & D7 Staff:

1. Testing will be available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. by appointment.
2. Call 208.234.9124 ext. 253 to set up an appointment with the HSA at PWCC.
3. Arrive at PWCC at the designated time and park in the parking spot marked "Supervisor of the Quarter."
4. Same as steps 4-6 above, except park in the designated parking spot instead of the by the tent.

ICIO, NICI, D1, D2, & D3 Staff:

1. Testing will be available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. by appointment.
2. Call 208.962.7220 to set up an appointment at NICI or 208.476.4365 to set up an appointment at ICIO.
3. The HSA will provide instructions on where to park.
4. Same steps identified above.

CRCs & SAWC Staff:

1. If a Corizon staff member is available at a particular time at your facility, you may request to be tested during that time.
2. The Corizon staff member may or may not be able to facilitate your request. If the Corizon staff member does not have the capacity to fulfill your request, you can seek testing at a larger facility close to you.

I realize that for some of you the testing options are not super close to where you live, but we still wanted you to have the option of driving a little for a test that will give you a quick result. Please note, if you are symptomatic and get a negative BinaxNow™ test result, you will need to follow up with your health care provider to obtain confirmatory PCR testing.

Close Contact Quarantines: As most of you know, the CDC has revised its guidance on what constitutes “close contact” to being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for longer than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period. Quarantines are determined by a number of factors including what type of PPE was worn and whether you are in an essential function position at IDOC. There are many instances that can result in a quarantine and the time frames for the quarantine depend on the circumstances. We thought it would be helpful to provide the attached chart explaining how IDOC implements staff quarantines. If you are experiencing symptoms or know you have been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual, please notify your supervisor and HR immediately. Do not report to work until you have been given guidance to do so. If you have questions, please don’t hesitate to contact our quarantine expert, Mike Evans, in *Human Resources*.

If you’ve survived this long in the email, I hope you’ll stick with me just a little longer. The past 8 months have been crazy, and admittedly, I’ve gone through the full range of emotions trying to process everything going on. I’ve made the mistake, at times, of fixating on the problems and challenges that come across my desk at the expense of a lot of really amazing things taking place in our agency right now. Think about this, in the past 8 months, we’ve facilitated the successful completion of over 1,550 Riders! That’s more than were completed over the same time period in 2019, and it simply doesn’t happen if people are standing around waiting for the other shoe to drop. At the same time, with all the uncertainty going on in our communities, our P&P staff have managed to interact in new ways with their clients. You would expect, at a time where the deck is stacked against people trying to reestablish themselves and our staff trying to help them be successful, that we’d see an increase in new crimes. It hasn’t happened, and that’s no small feat largely due to people going above and beyond to help.

The Orchard Extension is another example where we started the conversation about using the barracks in late June, had a contract in place by mid-July, and had people moving in by the 1st of August. Not only did it provide critical space in the S. Boise Complex, but all but 4 of the gentlemen there earned placement opportunities in CRC’s, SICI or SAWC. It was a resounding success.

I could go on and on. My point is this: there’s no shortage of challenges and disruptions that can consume our thoughts. They warrant our attention and action. But perspective matters. At a time where a lot of people/organizations are sitting idle or simply trying to hang on, we continue to move forward! We’re moving the needle in a lot of key areas, and we’re getting better. That simply doesn’t happen without all of you. I’m so grateful for your continued effort, and I’m proud of you.

Stay safe and keep looking out for each other!

Thanks-
Josh