

COVID-19 Update - April 29, 2020

Hi all-

Tomorrow morning, Governor Little will address the Stay-Home Order set to expire and announce what's next for reopening Idaho's economy. I know it won't be part of the announcement tomorrow, but I can't be alone in longing to go to a restaurant again! It's a little odd when you think about it. I've been craving eating a meal outside of my home in the vicinity of strangers to whom I won't speak. A month ago, that wasn't on the list of things I thought I'd miss. . . but enough about me. Let's get to the updates.

Coronavirus Funding Committee Meets: Earlier today, the Coronavirus Financial Advisory Committee (CFAC) appointed by Governor Little met to begin allocating the \$1.25 billion Idaho received as part of the federal stimulus package. It's worth noting the funding comes with some pretty significant strings attached. The money is intended to help states respond to the continuing public health crisis so it has to be used to reimburse costs directly attributed to combating COVID-19. IDOC participated in today's meeting where they took up direct cost requests from state agencies. IDOC was approved to seek reimbursement for up to \$12.7 million in costs that might arise as a result of the crisis. IDOC's proposal included direct costs like PPE and other COVID-related expenses for operating and capital outlay. Our proposal also included funding for increased costs resulting from the new operating environment. For example, we obtained approval and funding to significantly expand our electronic monitoring contract as an alternative to incarceration. We'll have a lot more on this in the days ahead.

In the next couple weeks, CFAC will take up additional agency requests geared towards strategic investments. We also submitted a proposal for the committee's consideration that would make considerable investments in our technological infrastructure and automate a number of processes. Our request also makes targeted investments in reentry services and increases capacity in the Connection and Intervention Stations slated to come online this summer. We'll keep you posted as the request receives consideration.

5th Staff Member Tests Positive: We received word late this afternoon that a 5th staff member tested positive for COVID-19. The staff member works at ISCI and last worked on 4/23. Once again, we believe there was minimal risk of exposure to other staff and one staff member has been directed to self-isolate for a period of time to check for symptoms. The staff member who tested positive is recovering, and I hope you'll join me in wishing them a fast and full recovery!

Happy Trails, Pat Donaldson: Pat Donaldson, Chief of Management Services, recently accepted an offer to be the head of the Division of Public Works at the Department of Administration. He'll start his new position on May 17th. Pat joined IDOC in 1997 and served in several capacities before spending the past 7 years as Chief of Management Services. Pat is going to be missed at IDOC, but all of Idaho will benefit from him in his new position. For those of you who know Pat well, you know how much he despises public fanfare and being the center of attention. That is PRECISELY why I'm doing this! We think the world of you, Pat, and wish you the best on your new adventure!

Across the country, 38 state correctional systems have at least one positive case of COVID-19 in their systems. Whether we're lucky or good, we're fortunate we haven't yet had to confront that situation. But I think another adage applies here: the harder we work, the luckier we get! I'm appreciative of how

hard everyone has worked to keep us in a good position. Let's keep after it! Stay safe, take care of yourself, and keep looking out for each other.

Thanks-
Josh