

COVID-19 Update - May 06, 2020

Hi all-

I've received a number of inquiries since the Governor's announcement about hazard pay. We've been working on this for over a month, and no one is more anxious than we are to get details shared out. The truth is we are still awaiting final details from the Division of Human Resources (DHR) but we expect to have that by Friday of this week. There are a couple other agencies looking at providing some form of hazard pay, and the concept is new to all of us. We're approved to do it, federal funding is approved, now we're awaiting word from DHR on the "how" part of the equation. As soon as we have the details, we'll make sure you have the details.

Corrections Professionals' Week: As I've been saying, the celebrations for corrections professionals' week are looking a little different this year. In the attached you'll see how SICI is getting it done safely. In the **first picture**, Daina Drake and Kelly Lodge demonstrate a COVID-friendly elbow bump and in the **second**, Brittney Crockett, Michelle Juarez, and Noel Barlow-Hust are masked and ready to work on food prep for a staff appreciation bbq. We may need to wear PPE this year, but even that can't dampen the gratitude we have for all of you! We appreciate each of you who is working to help to change lives and create opportunities for people to live crime-free in Idaho.

Thank you, Nurses: In addition to this week honoring corrections professionals and teachers, it also is a time to celebrate nurses and how they contribute to a happier, healthier world. It's a profession that holds a deeply special place in my heart. Shortly after my daughter was born, my wife and I found ourselves spending weeks at a time in the hospital with our little girl. That journey ultimately had us basically living in hospitals for the first year of our girl's life. While we were blessed with amazing doctors, surgeons and specialists, it was the nurses in Boise and the Seattle Children's Hospital who coordinated care, instilled confidence, and gave a worried mom and dad hope when it was desperately needed. So many talented people helped our girl, but it's the nurses who touched and healed our hearts. I know our story is shared by many, and the dedicated nurses working at IDOC provide the same important functions for the people in our custody. Thank you, nurses, for the grief you take to provide comfort and care to so many!

Staffing Updates: Our medical screening is working and to date: we've had 237 people opt to stay home or be sent home because they couldn't pass the screening. 191 have already returned to work. We've had 68 staff get tested so far. 60 were negative, 5 were positive and 3 are pending.

COVID-19 testing for our incarcerated population continues to go well. We've tested 40 people incarcerated in Idaho and all 40 have returned negative. 7 people in custody have been tested at Eagle Pass and all 7 returned negative as well.

Cloth Face Coverings: Our incarcerated population continues to crank out cloth masks, and as of this morning, we were at nearly 32,000! We're continuing to produce masks so that we can give back to the community. We've committed to providing several thousand for county jails and we have community-based non-profits also asking for our help. While we keep mask production going, two of our facilities are shifting to the production of cloth medical gowns.

Stay safe and enjoy your hard-earned (and socially-distanced) staff appreciation events.

Thanks-

Josh