

## COVID-19 Update 7.16.2020

Hello everyone,

I'm pinch-hitting for Josh again, and although he told you to expect a long update today, this one is also relatively brief.

**Staff testing** – We received results from Tuesday's staff testing event today and had 8 staff test positive so far, but 2 people had previously been diagnosed and quarantined so we only identified 6 new cases. Several samples had to be retested so we don't have all 96 results in yet. These numbers are demonstrating that the testing, tracing, and quarantining people is helping us limiting spread. Thank you to HR for all the hard work they have done to help with tracing and providing important information to help those who have been impacted. We currently have 74 staff who are out of work due to COVID.

Today, we held our first mass testing event for staff at SICI and tested 83 people. We'll be testing the remainder of SICI staff next Tuesday. We've been getting a lot of questions about staff testing so here's what you need to know:

1. If you are IDOC staff and work in one of the south Boise facilities, you will receive an email telling you when your testing dates are and what the hours of testing will be.
2. Testing is mandatory for all IDOC staff.
3. Please fill out your consent form before you arrive.
4. If you are not IDOC staff, but you work in the south Boise facilities, we are working to make arrangements for your testing. Please do not come to a testing event until you've received direction to do so.
5. We plan to test all IDOC staff across the state but are focusing first on south Boise due to the number of known cases in this area.

**Incarcerated population** – As Josh said in his email yesterday, we are still working to finalize our schedule for mass testing and that means balancing testing dates with lab capacity to quickly process tests. Since these tests are "point-in-time" tests, it doesn't help us to conduct mass testing and then have to wait days or weeks for results. Over days or weeks, someone's COVID status could have changed. Until the next mass testing, we will continue to immediately test anyone who presents with symptoms or anyone who is about to be released from one of our facilities.

We've tested 1,686 people and at the time of testing found 846 negative, 129 pending, 61 positive with symptoms, 633 asymptomatic positive, and 17 have become inactive.

We are also recognize that being on secure status is especially difficult for the people living in our facilities. Getting people out of cells and exercising is good for everyone so we are gradually reintroducing recreation into facilities. While weights and shared workout equipment have largely been removed to reduce shared surfaces, we will be providing options for walking and outdoor access in small groups.

These are stressful times for everyone, so please be sure you're taking care of yourselves and finding time to reenergize. COVID is going to be around a while longer so we have to be prepared to sustain the effort.

Please take care of yourselves and each other.

Best,  
Bree

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