

COVID-19 Update 07.30.2020

Hello everyone,

I have a brief update for you tonight.

Staff testing – Good news today in that we didn't have any new positive staff cases. We received the results from the second half of our ISCI staff testing and had ZERO positives! That brings our total number of staff positives to 90. Today, we tested 116 staff from SBWCC and IMSI and will continue testing the balance of those staffs on Tuesday.

Incarcerated population testing – Today, Saltzer Health conducted retesting of everyone in ISCC's H-block. The decision to retest this group, before testing others, is due to the medical vulnerability of those living in that housing area and the fact that Mr. Conover was living there prior to his hospitalization and ultimate death. You've probably all heard by now, but the risk that COVID presents to someone with underlying health problems is several times what it is for healthy individuals, necessitating a retesting of those with identified serious medical conditions.

Priorities for testing next week include the Nampa CRC, RDU at ISCI, and the remaining blocks at ISCC. As of today, we've conducted 2,167 tests, have 148 pending, 1,231 negative, 67 positive with symptoms, 218 asymptomatic positive, and 503 who have been medically-cleared or have left IDOC custody.

Masks – I want to reiterate the importance of everyone transitioning to wearing medical masks. I've heard from a number of people that the medical masks are less comfortable and seem less durable; however, our state epidemiologists and the CDC are recommending this to keep people safer. Here's the why: The virus that causes COVID-19 appears to be transmitted primarily through large respiratory droplets (from sneezing, coughing, talking) and medical masks provide more protection against respiratory droplet spread. Cloth masks allow droplets to penetrate. We understand that there will be conditions in some facilities that may contribute to masks becoming soiled or wet. If this is the case, we will provide additional masks. Please do not reuse soiled masks. While our mask supply is not endless, we do have a large quantity on-hand and are prepared to order more should the need arise.

Please take care of yourselves and each other,

Bree

Bree E. Derrick

Deputy Director

Idaho Dept. of Corrections