



Oklahoma State Department of Health
Creating a State of Health

March 16, 2020

Letter: CCDF-2020-01

RE: COVID-19 Guidance for Detention Facilities

Dear Sheriff/Chief/Administrator:

The recent outbreak of the Corona virus, or COVID-19, is a major concern in areas where there are large groups of people in close contact, such as correctional facilities. Preventing exposure is the single most important thing that people can do. Pursuant to Governor Stitt's Executive Order 2020-06 and President Trump's declaration of a National Public Health Emergency, the Oklahoma State Department of Health is authorizing City and County detention facilities to restrict visitors as they deem necessary to protect those they serve. The Department has developed guidance to provide recommendations for your facilities without onsite medical care to assist in managing the impact of the disease. It is VERY important to note that the guidance is not standards or rules and many of the recommendations are based on current CDC guidelines.

We understand the challenges you face in the population you manage. The following are best practice recommendations that will need to be modified based on your circumstances.

Recommended steps to help prevent COVID-19:

- Assign one person to be responsible for Covid-19 preparedness.
- Educate your staff on signs and symptoms and consider implementing daily screening of staff.
- Visit resource websites regularly to stay informed of frequent changes:
 - CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>
 - List of County Health Departments: https://www.ok.gov/triton/modules/health/map/county_map.php
 - Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH): <https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov>
- Screen new inmate admissions during the booking intake process. We recommend the following:
 - Revise your screening tool to add new CDC guidance. We have included a sample tool for your convenience and it is linked here: <https://www.ok.gov/health2/documents/CORONAVIRUS%20SCREENING.pdf>
 - Inmates that do have symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing) with exposure risk factors are quarantined.
 - Inmates with the above symptoms and exposure risk factors are isolated and tested for COVID-19 per local health authority protocols.
- Place a surgical mask on any inmate arriving to the facility that has symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing.
- Have a means to accomplish hand hygiene upon arrival to the facility for officers and the arriving inmate.
- Activate an Infection Control Station/Area at facility entry points to screen staff and inmates.
- Review and update emergency staffing plans.

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- Post signs on entry to buildings and at reception areas regarding screening/limiting visitors.
- Instruct inmates to wash hands or use hand-gel frequently, before and after eating, blowing nose, or using restroom.
- Restrict inmates from visiting common areas; if visitation to common areas is allowed, limit the number of inmates at one time in these areas and instruct inmates to follow social distancing of maintaining a six-foot distance between each other.
- Perform routine environmental cleaning frequently (i.e., cells, common areas, etc.) In the common areas clean and disinfect between each group. The CDC recommends cleaning dirty areas and then follow-up with disinfecting with a bleach solution or disinfecting agent you may currently be using.

Recommendations for active or suspected cases of COVID-19:

- Affected inmates should have criminal case reviewed by the District Attorney for possible early release.
- Facilities should use predesignated isolation/quarantine areas for housing affected individuals.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (regular surgical masks, gloves, and gowns, if indicated) should be utilized by both staff and the affected inmate; If PPE is limited, the mask should be placed on the affected inmate to prevent cross-contamination and further spread of the virus.
- If an inmate becomes ill after incarceration, the cellmates of the affected inmate should also be isolated until determined they are free of symptoms. Consult with healthcare professionals for recommended quarantine intervals.
- Notifications regarding the infected inmate should first be made to your healthcare provider, and you may also contact the COVID-19 hotline at 877-215-8336.

COVID-19 Resources:

- American Jails Association:
<https://www.americanjail.org/content.asp?admin=Y&contentid=282>
- Federal Bureau of Prisons: https://www.bop.gov/resources/news/20200313_covid-19.jsp
- CDC Coronavirus Updates: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>
- Oklahoma State Department of Health: <https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov>
- CDC Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- American Correctional Association:
http://www.aca.org/ACA_Prod_IMIS/ACA_Member/Healthcare_Professional_Interest_Section/Copy_of_Coronavirus_COVID.aspx?New_ContentCollectionOrganizerCommon=1#New_ContentCollectionOrganizerCommon

I you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely



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