



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Governor Tony Evers / Secretary Kevin A. Carr

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DOC Communications, 608-240-5060

DOCMedia@wisconsin.gov

Second Round of Mass Testing Underway At Green Bay Correctional Institution

Cases at the Facility have Risen to 57 in the Past Week

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC), in collaboration with the Wisconsin National Guard, began a second round of comprehensive testing for COVID-19 at Green Bay Correctional Institution on Tuesday.

Members of the National Guard plan to test every staff member and person living in the institution, as the number of cases there has grown in the past week. There were 57 reported positive cases among people housed at Green Bay Correctional Institution when the comprehensive testing began on Tuesday.

“As we’ve all learned about COVID-19, due to asymptomatic cases, mass testing is the only way for us to identify all persons in our care infected and isolate them from the uninfected,” said DOC Secretary Kevin Carr.

The DOC worked with the National Guard and Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) to complete comprehensive testing at all DOC institutions earlier this summer. Testing at Green Bay over the next two days is part of a second round of testing, prioritizing facilities with higher case numbers and those in communities with an elevated number of cases.

In between the first and second rounds of mass testing, Green Bay Correctional Institution has also been testing those with symptoms and those directly exposed to an infected person. Once results from this week’s tests are returned, the facility will move persons in their care, as needed, to isolate the infected from the rest of the population.

“Through a combination of good fortune and careful decisions based on the expertise of the CDC and DHS, we have seen [fewer cases than our neighboring states](#). However, we have worked hard to prepare for an increase in positive cases,” said DOC Division of Adult Institutions Administrator Makda Fessahaye. “And Waupun provides a good guide for how to respond.”

Fessahaye is referring to Waupun Correctional Institution (WCI), where mass testing confirmed an elevated number of cases in late spring. The number of positive cases among those living at Waupun eventually reached 228 people, all of which are now recovered. Steps the DOC took helped keep the virus from spreading to the rest of the roughly 1,000 people at WCI, and a second round of mass testing in late July found zero positive cases among staff and those living at the facility.

There were as few as nine combined active cases of COVID-19 among those under DOC care earlier this month before cases began to climb, primarily at Green Bay Correctional Institution. The agency has taken numerous steps to keep the

virus from spreading in its facilities, including enhanced cleaning and sanitation efforts, replacing visitation with virtual visits, and imposing mask mandates.

Green Bay Correctional Institution was among the first DOC institutions to require masks on May 15. Those living there are required to wear a mask in common spaces. DOC staff are currently required to wear masks except when they are eating or drinking, and when they are alone in an office.