



Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Governor Tony Evers | Secretary Kevin A. Carr

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WISCONSIN DOC INCREASING COVID-19 TESTING FOR PERSONS IN OUR CARE AND STAFF

The Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) in collaboration with the Department of Health Services and State Emergency Operations Center will test all persons in our care and staff at Felmers O. Chaney Correctional Center (FCCC) and Marshall E. Sherrer Correctional Center (MSCC) for COVID 19 on Tuesday, May 12, 2020. The Wisconsin National Guard will assist DOC with the testing.

The DOC has been working tirelessly to keep those in our care safe during this pandemic. To date, testing has occurred for all persons in our care who have displayed symptoms consistent with the COVID-19 virus. As of May 7, 2020, 20 persons in our care across four facilities have tested positive for COVID-19. Of the 20 confirmed positive cases, 14 have fully recovered. Four (4) of the positive cases were confirmed at MSCC and six (6) of the positive cases were confirmed at FCCC. Expanding testing at these two centers is the first step in DOC's expansive testing plan to more broadly test staff and persons in our care throughout the institutions.

While DOC has already instituted various protocols to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, this step is being taken to continue prioritizing the health and safety of staff, persons in our care, and the community. Because of the unique nature of FCCC and MSCC as minimum-security facilities with small populations in dormitory-style living, and the recent surge in cases at both FCCC and MSCC, the decision was made to first conduct mandatory testing for staff and persons in our care at those sites. This increase in testing may increase the number of confirmed positive cases within our agency, just as it does in the community, but will enable us to identify asymptomatic carriers, which is crucial to reducing spread.

The Department will continue to follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Persons in our care with positive test results will be medically isolated, where staff are required to use full PPE when having direct contact. All staff with positive test results will be directed to self-quarantine at home for 14 days. All facilities continue to follow their emergency preparedness plans, and persons in our care and staff are provided with the necessary PPE at all times, including medical-grade PPE, such as N-95 masks, when appropriate.

We will continue to be as transparent as possible as we increase our efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 across our agency. Efforts related to the department's response to the COVID-19 health crisis can be found on our website: www.doc.wi.gov/covid19