

Morrison, Tessa PSSG:EX

From: Garvin, Alisha PSSG:EX
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2020 4:44 PM
To: PSSG ADM HQ Staff; PSSG CB Capital Division HQ Staff
Cc: Crossman, Julie PSSG:EX; Crozier, Giuliana PSSG:EX; Gao, Christy PSSG:EX; Laursen, Shawna PSSG:EX; Morrison, Tessa PSSG:EX; Trigg, Willow PSSG:EX
Subject: ADM Update on COVID-19

Admin – please distribute branch wide:

Good afternoon,

As promised, since the COVID-19 outbreak, we have been continuing to monitor the development and overall risk that this situation poses to all of you, and the clients and individuals in our care.

To help ensure you have access to the most up to date information, we have created a [COVID-19 landing page](#) on CorrPoint for related memos, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents and links to other reliable information sources to help keep you and your family safe.

The response to COVID-19 remains a complex and rapidly changing situation that reminds us we are all part of a broader global community with a responsibility to look out for each other. It is for that reason that the Federal and Provincial Health Officers across the nation continue to make recommendations on how and when to practice [social distancing](#) and [self-isolation](#).

We play a valuable role in public safety. Provincial directors will be reaching out soon with more details on new operational measures to ensure the safe supervision of individuals in custody and under community supervision to best support our [Provincial Health Officer's direction](#) and do our part as global citizens to help slow the spread of this virus. All COVID-19 related memos will also be available to everyone on the COVID-19 CorrPoint landing page.

Many of you heard the news today that all Canadians have been asked to stay home as much as possible and avoid any unnecessary social interaction to help [flatten the curve](#) of this pandemic. These measures are to support individuals whose work requires them to be in public and reduce their risk of exposure. Many of our staff delivering direct services in our centres and community offices are among those whose work requires them to be in public, making all of the measures we are taking vitally important.

Please be patient with conflicting and shifting information and/or direction. Because of how quickly things continue to evolve, the [Public Service Agency FAQs](#) and others will be frequently updated and posted to our COVID-19 page as soon as they are received. In the meantime, this may mean that some of your questions will be considered by your supervisors on a case-by-case basis and may take time to answer. This also means that what is recommended one day might change and/or quickly become a requirement the next.

This situation has presented all of us with a number of challenges and I want to thank you for your continued patience during this time and for doing your part to protect yourselves, your colleagues, families, clients and individuals in custody, and communities. I am confident that with your support we can continue to conduct our important work with as little disruption as possible.

We are in this together – thank you for your ongoing support.

Elenore Arend | Assistant Deputy Minister

BC Corrections

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General



Ministry of
Public Safety and
Solicitor General

BC Corrections
Office of the Assistant
Deputy Minister

MEMORANDUM

Mailing Address: PO BOX 9278 STN PROV GOVT, Victoria, BC V8W 9J7 Telephone: 250 387-5354
Location Address: 7th floor, 1001 Douglas Street, Victoria BC V8W 2C5 Facsimile: 250 387-5698

C564405

March 12, 2020

All BC Corrections staff

Re: COVID-19

As the situation with the COVID-19 is rapidly evolving, I wanted to reach out to let you know that we are paying close attention to the global response efforts underway.

BC's Chief Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry is now providing a daily COVID-19 update around 3:30pm aired online [here](#) (by clicking on the yellow banner that reads live update). This will include the latest information available from the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) (BCCDC), [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) (PHAC), and [World Health Organization](#) (WHO).

With countries all over the world impacted, there is a lot of information circulating online. I want to urge you to refer to the BCCDC, PHAC and WHO as your source for accurate information.

Dr. Henry has urged British Columbians to practice "social distancing" and regular handwashing following the [BCCDC guidelines for handwashing or hand rubbing](#) with an alcohol-based sanitizer.

Social distancing is not to be confused with self isolation. There are a lot of definitions for "social distancing," essentially you are encouraged to refrain from all non-essential social interaction outside of work and school, etc.

Today, Dr. Henry advised against all travel outside of Canada. Moving forward, those that choose to travel outside of Canada will be required to self isolate from work, schools and other public spaces for 14-days following their return. Based on today's update from Dr. Henry, the Public Service Agency is drafting an FAQ for staff and supervisors that will provide us with more information regarding these new measures.

Dr. Henry has also advised that all events over 250 are now cancelled. Though it's been decided to cancel events of this size, Dr. Henry has confirmed that those working in buildings or spaces with over 250 people can continue to attend these practicing social distancing while in those environments.

All British Columbians are urged to take the guidance from Dr. Henry seriously. She will continue to update British Columbians regarding any new interventions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, which we are committed to sharing with you in real time.

We understand several of you have questions. Your supervisors may be able to answer your questions specific to your personal situation. While we may not have the answers to all your questions immediately, we will coordinate efforts by consulting our senior management, ministry executive and/or one of the agencies noted above. Information will be shared with all staff by their provincial

director as appropriate. Additionally, question(s) and answer(s) will be added to an FAQ on CorrPoint to help keep all staff informed in the event you have similar questions.

Meetings are occurring daily to discuss the latest COVID-19 information and direction from the Public Service Agency, to determine next steps as required. We are working hard to plan for all possible eventualities to ensure that we can respond quickly and efficiently to any change in directions from Dr. Henry. This includes any required changes to policy and procedures during this time.

I want to assure you that your health and the health of the individuals we support is our top priority.

Thank you for your continued professionalism during this time – your efforts to keep yourselves and your workspaces healthy are appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Arend', with a stylized, cursive script.

Elenore Arend
Assistant Deputy Minister

FAQs: Individuals in custody

During this COVID-19 outbreak, we are all experiencing a time of worry about our health and overall well-being. We recognize that being in a correctional centre adds to your feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. The following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been developed to answer some of the questions you may have. Please don't hesitate to ask additional questions. The health and well-being of everyone in the centres is very important to us.

1. What is being done to stop COVID-19 from entering the centre?

We have strict rules to protect our centres from COVID-19. Here are some of the things we are doing:

- New admissions process for all intakes to screen for COVID-19.
- No visitors, non-essential contractors or official visitors are allowed into the centre, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Confidential visits with lawyers can occur without direct contact behind glass in secure visit booths, but video visits or telephone calls are preferred.
- No one, including staff, may enter the centre if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or if they have travelled outside of the country.
- Mandatory handwashing and cleaning protocols.
- Increased cleaning throughout the centre, living units, staff areas and all "high-touch" surfaces.
- Working with health care to make sure men and women in custody that are sick are screened and isolated if needed.

2. How are new admissions/intakes being screened?

There is a process for all new intakes coming into the centre to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This includes an in-depth questionnaire by correctional staff plus a health screen and temperature check.

New admissions will be isolated for up to 14 days and health care will be consulted before they are taken off assessment. During the assessment period, health care will check them frequently for signs of COVID-19.

ADULT CUSTODY DIVISION COVID-19 RESPONSE

3. Are staff being checked for COVID-19?

Staff are self-monitoring and following strict provincial health guidelines for self-isolation, when it is required.

4. How can I prevent getting infected?

The Provincial Health Officer has indicated that the most important thing you can do is wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face. Using soap and water is the single most effective way of reducing the spread of infection. To reduce your risk of infection:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Do not touch your face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow when you sneeze or cough.
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Do not share food, drinks, utensils, etc.

While you may not feel sick and these rules may seem like an inconvenience, please be mindful of others who are more vulnerable to COVID-19. We are all in this together.

5. How does social distancing work on the unit?

There are many ways to practice social distancing:

- Limit activities outside of your cell.
- If you are out on the unit, try to keep as much distance between yourself and others as possible.
- Keep your hands at your side when possible.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or sleeve.
- Stay in your cell when you are sick and advise the unit officer.

ADULT CUSTODY DIVISION COVID-19 RESPONSE

6. Why aren't we being given masks and gloves?

The use of personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, etc.) is determined by health care and our safety plan. Wearing a mask when a person is not sick can give a false sense of security and make it more likely that someone touches their face and doesn't participate in social distancing or hand washing.

Instead, keep as much distance between each other as possible and wash hands frequently.

7. Can all staff and people in custody be tested for COVID-19?

Medical staff determine who is tested for COVID-19. Currently the BC Centre for Disease Control does not recommend testing people who are not showing COVID-19 symptoms.

Please monitor yourself for signs of illness and tell health care staff if you are feeling unwell. Staff are also self-monitoring and they will seek medical advice if they are showing any symptoms.

The best defence is keeping distance from others as much as possible and washing hands frequently.

8. Will there be enough cleaning supplies on the unit?

Staff are making sure that each unit has enough cleaning materials supplied daily. Also, the unit cleaners have been instructed to clean common and "high-touch" areas more often, such as the handrails, tables, phones, etc.

9. Are the phones and other equipment being cleaned after each use?

All "high-touch" surfaces are being cleaned more regularly. You can also wipe down the phone with soap and water before you use it.

ADULT CUSTODY DIVISION COVID-19 RESPONSE

10. Should I still be eating my meal with a large group of people? What about being out on the unit with others?

We have added a lot of things to protect our centres from COVID-19: new intake screening, staff screening, increased cleaning, stopping visits and reminding everyone about social distancing and hand washing. These go a long way to keep our units safe.

During meal times and when you're out on the unit, be mindful of how close you sit beside another person, do not share utensils, do not share food, and wash your hands as much as possible.

11. Will programs continue?

Volunteer programs have been reduced or temporarily stopped. Contracted services for the most part continue to be available at this time. As the situation progress, things may change.

12. Why can't I have face-to-face meetings with my lawyer?

Visitors are limited right now to reduce the chance of COVID-19 coming into the centre. Confidential visits with lawyers can occur without direct contact in secure visit booths, or by video visit or telephone, depending on the situation.

- s.13

- COVID-19 has significantly increased the costs of operations and required us to suspend visitation and reduce programming, which over time, could result in unrest and subsequent violence within our centres. The temporary introduction of free unlimited local and long-distance calling has mitigated these issues for the time being. BC Corrections is currently piloting video visitation technology and plans to roll this out to all centres by December 2020, at which time the costs of calls will be reintroduced.

- s.13; s.17

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- In lieu of in person-visitation, free local and long-distance calling has been provided to individuals in custody.s.13; s.17
s.13; s.17

Procedure Mask Use and Safe Work Procedures for COVID 19

Adult custody is adopting the precautionary mitigation measure of providing non-surgical procedural masks for officers, staff and contractors. Procedural masks will be worn when people are unable to maintain the recommended physical distance in their workspace.





COVID 19 is transmitted by large droplets which may be generated when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Droplets travel a short distance through the air (less than 2 meters) and can be deposited on inanimate surfaces or in the eyes, nose, or mouth of individual in the vicinity.

A non-surgical procedural mask can help containing your own droplets and protect others, but it will not protect you from COVID-19. Masks are not a replacement for physical distancing and frequent hand washing /sanitizing.

Masks can become contaminated on the area that you breathe through, including the outside, or when touched by your hands. When wearing a non-surgical procedural mask, you must take the following precautions to protect yourself and others:

- **Avoid touching your face mask while using it**
- **Change a mask by only touching the straps or ear-loops, as soon as it gets damp or soiled by putting it directly into the brown paper bag**
- **Dispose of masks properly in a no touch lined garbage bin or place in the brown paper bag for drying and re use**
- **Do not place a used procedure mask on any work surface, common area or equipment. There is a potential risk of infection due to droplet transfer**
- **Continue physical distancing and wash your hand often.**








Donning an Ear Loop Non-Surgical Procedural Mask

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash/sanitize your hand before taking your mask from supply and donning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pull at the top and bottom to open the pleats or chamber With colored or printed side facing out, and the nose wire at the top, put your fingers through the ear loops position the mask over your nose and mouth. Place the ear loops securely around the ears.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pull the mask from the top and bottom to fully open the folds of the mask, and adjust the mask around the face
	<p>Gently re-form (do not pinch) the nose wire (if equipped) Over the bridge of the nose and make any final adjustment.</p>

Removing an Ear Loop Non-Surgical Procedural Mask

Staff will be provided a brown paper bag which is the preferred item to store the mask between uses.

1. Move to a designated area.
2. Ensure that you are within easy reach of the brown paper bag/laundry/disposal bin/container.
3. Reach BEHIND your ears and grasp both ear loops
4. Remove the mask outward from your face by handling only the ear loops.
5. Place the mask into the paper bag provided
6. If disposing the mask: dispose of the the mask by touching only the ear loops into a no touch lined garbage
7. Wash/sanitize your hands

Donning a Tied Non-Surgical Procedural Mask	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash/sanitize your hand before taking your mask from supply and donning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pull at the top and bottom to open the pleats or chamber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With colored or printed side facing out place nose wire over the bridge of the nose so it extends across the upper cheekbones and form the nose wire across the face using both hands.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While holding the mask in place with one hand, grasp the bottom of the mask, separating the folds, and fit the bottom of the mask under the chin towards the neck
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gently form (do not pinch) the nose wire (if equipped) over the bridge of the nose and make any final adjustment.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tie the lower ties snugly and securely so the mask will not ride up the face
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With both hands, gently re-form the nose wire (if equipped) over the nose and cheekbones. This will insure a proper and secure fit.

Removing an Ear Loop Non-Surgical Procedural Mask

Staff will be provided a brown paper bag which is the preferred item to store the mask between uses.

1. Move to a designated area
2. Ensure that you are within easy reach of the brown paper bag/laundry/disposal bin/container
3. Remove the mask by handling **only the ties**
4. Untie the bottom, then the top tie
5. Remove the mask outward from your face
6. Place the mask into the paper bag provided receptacle by touching only the ties
7. Wash/sanitize your hands.



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C564431

March 13, 2020

All Staff
Community Corrections Division

Re: COVID-19 Update

Earlier this morning we all received a Memo from our ADM Elenore Arend, updating staff on what we know today regarding measures to manage the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. I wanted to follow up that message with some additional details of importance to Community Corrections Division staff.

First, while the risk of transmission to British Columbians remains low, it is important for all of us to exercise reasonable caution and take appropriate steps to keep ourselves and others safe as we all work to reduce the spread of this illness. As already outlined, proper hygiene including regular handwashing and maintaining social distance measures are critical steps for each of us. All unnecessary travel, outside of Canada, should be curtailed, mindful of the requirement for anyone leaving Canada to self isolate for 14 days upon return. For many of us, myself included, this has meant a very rapid change in our holiday plans this spring. I note that the BC Public Service Agency is completing work on an FAQ document which will provide clarity around leave benefits and expectations when self isolation is required.

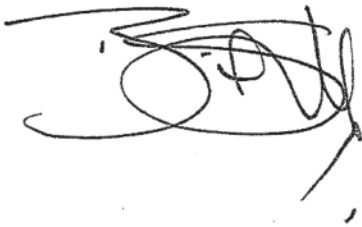
Health information continues to evolve rapidly, and for this reason, BC Corrections' senior managers are briefed each day regarding the status of viral transmission across BC, along with health measures to continue to manage this. The Community Management Committee is also meeting every day to review this information and to follow up on feedback and questions that you raise in your worksites. We will continue this until the health situation in BC is stable and our operations are back to normal. For this reason, any questions you have regarding health and/or operational impacts should be directed to your supervisor who will, in turn, relay these to regional directors for our daily operations meetings. CMC is committed to ensuring you have the information you need to manage your safety and that of your co-workers and clients.

We continue to review our operations throughout the day and will continue to update you regularly. Some of the areas being considered include the status of scheduled in-person training, itinerant office coverage, home visits, the delivery of Core programs and contracted office cleaning protocols. It is also critically important for each of us to monitor our own health; if we are experiencing any cold or flu symptoms, please stay home and seek appropriate medical advice. Similarly, clients should be screened for any symptoms and their appointments rebooked or conducted remotely until they are symptom-free. More details

about signage for the front door asking clients not to enter if they have cold/flu like symptoms will be provided soon.

Your health and that of your families is our first priority. We have an important role in maintaining public safety, but that starts with each of us staying safe in order to continue our important work.

Thank you for continuing to keep your leadership team updated on any questions or concerns that come up in your offices so that we can ensure you have what you need in your roles. An FAQ is being developed and will soon appear on CorrPoint for your reference.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Small', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bill Small
Provincial Director

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C564484

March 17, 2020

All Staff
Community Corrections Division

Re: COVID-19

I am writing to you today to provide additional information and follow up from our last update on Friday, March 13. Your divisional leadership group remains committed to keeping all of our staff updated on the specific measures the Community Corrections Division is taking undertaking to do our part to “flatten the curve” in the global response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

BC Corrections’ senior management team met off and on throughout the weekend and again today to continue planning for the ongoing delivery of key services with a view to protecting you and your clients. Similarly, the Community Management Committee met Monday and again this morning to consider many of the issues I outlined in my message to you on Friday. We have made several key decisions to minimize the gathering of clients and staff in group settings. All of these are intended to support our priority of keeping our staff and clients safe by reinforcing important social distancing measures while we continue to provide important public safety services.

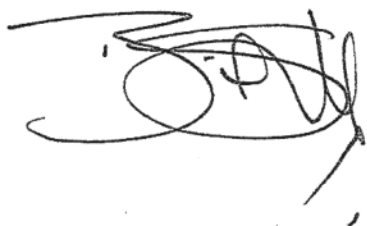
- Effective immediately, all offender group programs are being postponed. This means the in-house delivery of Core programs, along with contractor-delivered programs such as RVP and Forensic Sex Offender groups will be temporarily discontinued for at least the next three months.
- All staff training has been reviewed, and basic staff training for probation officers and administrative support staff will be given priority, with all other training, including modularized STICS courses and Core program facilitator training being postponed. We are working with the JIBC to deliver this basic training remotely, effectively eliminating all face to face training for our staff during this time. This work continues and we will update you on design details as they are finalized.
- Effective immediately, all Strategic Community Supervision Structured Learning Workshops will also be postponed.
- We are continuing to actively implement strategies to reduce the overall flow of client traffic into our offices beyond the steps outlined above. CMC is meeting daily to finalize some of these measures, which will undoubtedly evolve over time. Of particular note, we are distributing additional information to assist with immediate front-line screening of

all clients, preventing in-office attendance by individuals who are symptomatic and/or have recently returned from international travel, and are finalizing protocols to safely reduce our direct supervision activities.

Local Managers have been briefed and will provide direct support to you in your offices as we implement the decisions made today and any future measures to support reduced points of contact and volumes in our offices. These measures will continue to change over the coming days, and we will keep you updated on all of them.

In addition, we are aware that as the week progresses there are several other important issues CMC will be addressing with you, including supporting staff whose childcare situations are impacted by virus control measures which keep them and their children at home. Similarly, we have staff who face the prospect of home visits, notifications and other community outreach. I will reiterate that it is perfectly appropriate to consult with your local managers and to pause what would normally be a routine case management activity while you consider the right decision; much of our work is anything but routine at this time. Finally, as things develop over the coming week or two there may be a need for offices, particularly in smaller communities, to consider their business continuity plans and for that reason it will be important for all staff to ensure they are familiar with their office's BCP ahead of any need to discuss their activation.

With your safety underlying all of the decisions and future discussions I have outlined here, I want to thank you for your continued professionalism and support to as we take steps to do our part by reducing the risk of exposure while keeping communities safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Small', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bill Small
Provincial Director



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C564606

March 20, 2020

All Staff
Community Corrections Division

Re: Interim Policies for Community Corrections

As part of the Community Corrections Division's commitment to reducing the transmission of COVID-19, the following interim policies are effective immediately:

Court referrals:

- Clients reporting in person from court to a court office, are directed to **report by phone** to the appropriate receiving office. The court office confirms current telephone numbers and alternate numbers for the client prior to sending the referral.
- The receiving office admits the client into CORNET when phone contact has been established. The probation officer who receives this phone call conducts a verbal intake with the client, making an interim assessment of risk which will determine whether the client can continue to report by telephone or whether in-person reporting will need to be established. Refer to the Interim Levels of Intervention principles in section 2.4.5 of the *Community Corrections Policy Manual*.
- If the client fails to report by phone to the receiving office, the referral is returned to the court office for consideration of enforcement action. The receiving office makes every reasonable effort possible to contact the client, using multiple attempts, prior to returning the referral to the court office.

Client transfers:

- If an existing client subject to telephone reporting moves to the catchment area of another office, they will remain under the supervision of the current office unless exceptional circumstances or unique circumstances warrant otherwise. The current office is most familiar with the client, and, as such, challenges associated with assuming supervision of a client unknown to a new catchment area are reduced.
- If an existing client subject to in-person reporting based on assessed risk moves to the catchment area of another office, supervision is transferred to the new office.

Client release:

- Adult Custody Division staff will direct clients, upon release, to report by telephone to the appropriate receiving community office.

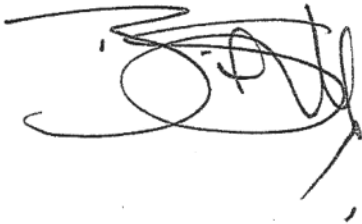
Letters of permission:

- Letters of permission may be sent to the client through email as an encrypted document. The authorized encryption process is attached in the email and can be found [here on CorrPoint](#). The outgoing transfer of documents without encryption is not permitted. The letter of permission is to be scanned or sent as a photograph (JPEG) to ensure the original direction is not altered.
- All letters of permission are to be reviewed verbally with the client to ensure the client understands the full scope of the permission letter.

CPIC:

- s.15

Questions relating to these interim policies may be directed to Kyla Wiersma, policy and program analyst, at 236-912-2017 or Kyla.Wiersma@gov.bc.ca.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Small', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bill Small
Provincial Director



Ministry of Public Safety
and Solicitor General

BC Corrections
Community Corrections

MEMORANDUM

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C564859

March 26, 2020

All Staff
Community Corrections Division

Re: Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) requests – Interim Policy

s.15

Questions relating to these interim policies may be directed to Micheal LaRocque, policy and program analyst, at 778-698-7503 or Micheal.LaRocque@gov.bc.ca.

Bill Small Provincial
Director

pc: Kimberley McLean
Nathan Buckham

Leading change every day

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C565004

March 30, 2020

All Staff
Community Corrections Division

Re: Court services transition to HUB service model – COVID-19 response.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Provincial Court of British Columbia has transitioned to a Hub Court model. Urgent criminal trials, bail hearings during court sitting hours, and other urgent criminal hearings will only be heard by video conference or telephone at one of the below Hub Court locations, unless otherwise ordered by the Regional Administrative Judge or their designate:

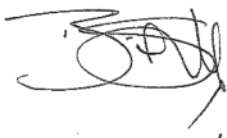
- Victoria Provincial Court – Adult criminal matters in the Island Coastal region;
- Vancouver Provincial Court (222 Main St.) – Adult criminal matters in the Vancouver region;
- Surrey Provincial Court – Adult criminal matters in the Fraser Metro region;
- Kelowna Provincial Court – Adult criminal matters in the Interior Fraser region; and
- Prince George Provincial Court – Adult criminal matters in the Northern Interior region.

Daily court lists at each identified Hub Court will reflect the originating court file location. The originating court registry and BC Prosecution Service office will retain ownership of matters proceeding at the new Hub Court locations. Non-urgent matters will be adjourned to future dates.

Generally speaking, initial reporting from court will occur by phone rather than in-person to the receiving court office. BC Corrections has provided the judiciary, Court Services Branch, and BC Prosecution Service with contact information for each Community Corrections office within the province to support telephone reporting direction to the correct location.

This interim practice does not remove the referral process outlined in section 18.2.6 of the *Community Corrections Policy Manual*, as some individuals may require additional referral direction. If/when this occurs, the client is provided verbal direction to report by phone to the appropriate Community Corrections office. All verbal referral directions are logged in CORNET accordingly.

Questions regarding this change in service delivery may be directed to Micheal LaRocque, policy and program analyst, at Micheal.LaRocque@gov.bc.ca or 778-698-7503.



Bill Small
Provincial Director

**MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLICITOR GENERAL
BC CORRECTIONS
BRIEFING NOTE**

PURPOSE: For INFORMATION for BC Corrections Senior Management,
International Response to COVID-19

ISSUE: Jurisdictional scan on COVID-19 international correctional responses

SUMMARY:

- International correctional responses to the COVID-19 pandemic have been taken to reduce the risks to staff and inmates.
- Efforts include:
 - Changing inmate movement procedures and restricting gatherings;
 - Limiting outside contact;
 - Training staff on hygiene and COVID-19 detection procedures; and
 - Expanding supply inventories.

BACKGROUND:

- COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus that first appeared in China in December, 2019, the World Health Organization declared it a global pandemic on March 11, 2020.
- The first case appeared in Canada on January 27, 2020 and the first in British Columbia on January 28, 2020.
- BC's provincial health officer, declared a public health emergency on Tuesday, March 17, 2020.
- A jurisdictional scan of international correctional responses to COVID-19 was conducted to look at what actions BC Corrections might consider adopting and for informational purposes.
- On March 18, 2020 the first COVID-19 cases of both inmates and correctional officers in the United States were reported.

International Responses (Actions noted below are not necessarily universal, but are common unless otherwise noted):

Inmate Movement:

Inmate Communication:

- Multiple modes of communication are used including posters, pamphlets, radio, television, movies, and from staff.
- Daily updates are provided on hygiene measures and expectations as well as emergency measures and limitations taken under emergency conditions.

Group Activities:

- Group activities, including educational and social activities, have been suspended.

Admissions:

- New admissions are housed separately from the general population and monitored for 14 days.
- Inmate temperatures are taken; those with high temperatures (e.g., 38° C) may be put in isolation or refused admission.
 - Transfer vehicles are decontaminated when an inmate has a high temperature.
- Temporary or administrative sentences may be suspended for the duration of emergency which if the limitation period of the sentence lapses during the emergency will not be enforced.

Releases:

- Some inmates have been released early to reduce system pressures.
 - An agreement to self-quarantine may be required.
 - May target inmates at greater risk based on age or medical condition
- Health authority are informed of released symptomatic/positive inmates.
- Released inmates may be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days.

Transfers:

- Transfers have been reduced, or in some cases suspended except for order and security measures.
- Screening may occur at same level as admissions.

Staff:

Testing:

- High-risk staff (e.g., pregnant, staff with severe disease or on special treatment) are required to stay home and do distance work where possible.
- Home quarantine has been implemented for employees coming from affected countries.
- In extreme examples:
 - Body temperature is measured at entry to all facilities (daily), for all entering people (including staff, prisoners, and lawyers) and at regular intervals while in the centre.
 - All personnel working at entries must wear protective respirators.

Training:

- Medical staff provide prison officials with:
 - Protective equipment instructions which include the hygiene requirements for effective use.
 - Training in symptom detection procedures.

Maintaining hygienic environment:

- Disinfectant is readily available.

- All surfaces in commonly used locations are regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Medical personal protective equipment (PPEs, e.g., respirators, protective gloves, protective eyewear, and no-touch thermometers) is available for screening and a sufficient supply maintained for wider use if necessary.
- Some jurisdictions have provided guidance on when PPE is required, and how to put on/remove PPE safely.

Outside Contact:*Visits:*

- Inmate visits have typically been suspended except when legally required (e.g., legal counsel).
- Some jurisdictions have compensated inmates for this loss financially and/or by providing greater phone/video call access.

Contractor Access:

- Access has been limited; in some instances contractors must provide assurances of health and no contact with infected individuals for at least 14 days.

Supply Inventory

- Some jurisdictions have increased their inventory of food, hygiene supplies and other material up to 30 days beyond standard practice.
- In one instance (Czech Republic), inmates began sewing their own 100% cotton reusable face-masks to be distributed to all employees, inmates and employee's family members.

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