

# NEWS RELEASE

## DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

### Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

---

---

**Presented by Deputy Bureau Chief of Prisons, Paul G. Shavack, Public Information Officer**

245 McKee Road | Dover, DE 19904 | Office: 302.857.5294 | [paulg.shavack@delaware.gov](mailto:paulg.shavack@delaware.gov)

---

---

### ***Correctional Officer Tests Positive for COVID-19***

**Dover, DE** -- The Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) announced this evening that a Correctional Officer assigned to James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC) has tested positive for COVID-19.

The Correctional Officer was last at JTVCC on Friday, March 27. On Saturday, March 28, after beginning to experience flu-like symptoms, the Officer began self-isolating at home. As symptoms developed, the Officer sought medical attention on Sunday, March 29, at which time a COVID-19 test was administered. The Officer has continued to isolate at home since that time. The positive COVID-19 test result was received today, Friday, April 3, and verified by the DOC this evening.

"DOC launched aggressive prevention and screening practices for COVID-19 before the virus entered our State, and as community spread has increased across Delaware we have prepared for the increased risk of an infection by officers or inmates," **Commissioner Claire DeMatteis said**. "We already undertake comprehensive daily cleaning in all of our facilities, and that will continue with renewed urgency. I want to emphasize that at this time there is no evidence of transmission within James T. Vaughn Correctional Center. In response to this diagnosis, we will carefully monitor all officers, other employees and inmates at the facility for any symptoms and will immediately isolate, assess and treat any individual who demonstrates any sign of illness."

No additional information will be provided about the identity of the Correctional Officer for privacy protection.

This is the second COVID-19 diagnosis of a DOC staff member or contractor. [Earlier today, the DOC announced that a contract healthcare worker assigned to New Castle County Community Corrections, who was tested for COVID-19 on March 20, received a positive diagnosis on Thursday, April 2.](#) That contract healthcare worker has not been in a DOC facility for 18 days – more than the 15-day incubation period of the illness, and has since recovered.

No inmate within Delaware's correctional system has tested positive for COVID-19.

The DOC maintains robust COVID-19 screening and cleaning practices as part of an infectious disease management plan. All persons entering any DOC facility are screened for COVID-19, including a series of questions and a forehead temperature check with a digital thermometer. Staff who present with symptoms are sent home to self-quarantine and contact their health care provider in accordance with the established Delaware Department of Correction COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedure. Newly-arriving inmates to DOC facilities are isolated from the rest of the inmate population for 14-days while being monitored for symptoms of respiratory infection.

Get the latest news and information about the DOC's response to COVID-19 on <https://doc.delaware.gov> and follow DOC at *decorrection* on Facebook and Twitter.

RELEASED: 040320 2230 (PGS)