

# NEWS RELEASE

## DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

### Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

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Presented by Jason P. Miller, Chief of Communications and Community Relations

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## DOC proactively tests 56 additional inmates for COVID-19 and announces two new positive test results

**Dover, DE** -- The Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) today announced that it has proactively tested an additional 56 inmates for COVID-19. It also announced that a second inmate from Sussex Community Corrections Center (SCCC) in Georgetown has tested positive for COVID-19 and an additional Correctional Officer from James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC) has tested positive for the virus.

- The SCCC inmate who tested positive for COVID-19 was housed in proximity [to a SCCC inmate who tested positive for COVID-19 earlier this week](#) and has been carefully monitored in isolation since Sunday, April 12. When he began to exhibit flu-like symptoms a COVID-19 test was administered on Monday, April 13. The positive test result was returned last evening, Wednesday, April 15.
- The JTVCC Correctional Officer who tested positive for COVID-19 was last at the facility 8 days ago – on Wednesday, April 8. After beginning to experience flu-like symptoms, the Officer began to self-isolate at home, and as symptoms developed the Officer sought medical attention, at which time a COVID-19 test was administered. The positive COVID-19 test result was received by the Officer this afternoon, Thursday, April 16. This diagnosis brings the total number to 14 Correctional Officers to test positive for the virus.

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

The additional 56 inmates proactively tested for COVID-19 include:

- 49 James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC) inmates from a minimum-security housing unit adjacent to the housing unit where the original four inmates tested positive last week. Of these 49 tests, 48 were negative, with one test resubmitted because the original test sample was compromised en route to the laboratory. These inmates are being carefully monitored in isolation by medical and security staff, including daily temperature checks. These minimum-security inmates with underlying health issues also have been given face masks.

- 7 SCCC inmates from the same housing area where the two inmates who tested positive this week were housed. The test results are pending. These inmates are being carefully monitored in isolation by medical and security staff, including daily temperature checks. Both SCCC inmates who tested positive for COVID-19 have been moved to the JTVCC COVID-19 treatment center, where they are in stable condition. This brings the total number to 14 inmates across all DOC facilities to test positive for the virus, including 12 inmates from one minimum security housing unit at JTVCC and 2 inmates from one housing area at SCCC. **Of these 14 inmates, just 4 have symptoms related to COVID-19; 8 others have been asymptomatic since first being tested proactively last Friday; and 2 others are recovering and are no longer displaying symptoms.**

"DOC is employing aggressive isolation, monitoring, testing and treatment protocols to help us act in real time to combat the threat of COVID-19 to our facilities," **Commissioner Claire DeMatteis said.**

The DOC is employing a variety of prevention, screening, cleaning and containment measures to guard against the spread of the novel coronavirus, including:

- All persons, including Officers, administrative staff and probationers who enter any Level V prison, Level IV violation of probation or work release center, or Probation and Parole Office are screened for COVID-19, including a series of questions and a forehead temperature check with a thermometer
- Staff who present with symptoms are sent home to self-quarantine and directed to contact their health care provider.
- Newly arriving inmates are held in isolation for the first 14 days, during which they are carefully monitored, including daily temperature checks with a thermometer.
- DOC has implemented extra daily cleaning of DOC facilities and is using specialized fogging machines to disinfect entire rooms of common areas, housing units and workspaces.
- Face masks are being worn by Correctional Officers and contract healthcare workers as a protection for inmates, Officers and other employees. Face masks are also being provided to inmates who are in infirmaries and certain inmates with institutional jobs.
- Most Probationer visits with Probation Officers were transitioned to phone check-ins starting last month to support social distancing measures.

In addition, the DOC has temporarily suspended in-person prison programming to reduce the movement of people into facilities and movement of groups of people within facilities. Certain programs, including treatment and education programs and religious programming, are being transitioned to a virtual video format. Inmates continue to have outside recreation opportunities within their confined areas and continue to have access to phones to stay in regular contact with their loved ones. DOC is also expanding the use of electronic tablets among the inmate population, where available.

Review an informational chart of positive COVID-19 cases among DOC employees, contracted staff and inmates for each DOC facility by [clicking HERE](#). Get updated information about the

DOC's response to COVID-19 and read previous announcements of positive COVID-19 cases by visiting <https://doc.delaware.gov>, and follow *decorrection* on Facebook and Twitter.

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