

# 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 announces additional positive COVID-19 test results

**Dover, DE** -- The Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) today announced six additional positive COVID-19 test results, including three asymptomatic inmates who received proactive COVID-19 testing earlier this week. Review an informational chart of positive COVID-19 cases among DOC employees, contracted staff and inmates for each DOC facility by [clicking HERE](#).

These latest positive test results include:

- **A Correctional Officer who is assigned to Sussex Community Corrections Center in Georgetown.** This Officer was last at the facility 4 days ago – on Tuesday, April 14. After beginning to experience flu-like symptoms, the Officer began to self-isolate at home and sought medical attention, at which time a COVID-19 test was administered. The positive COVID-19 test result was received on Friday, April 17 and verified by the DOC. This brings the total number to 18 Correctional Officers to test positive for the virus.
- **Three asymptomatic inmates from the Sussex Community Corrections Center in Georgetown.** These inmates were housed in proximity to two SCCC inmates who tested positive for COVID-19 this past week. They [are part of a group of 7 inmates who have been carefully monitored in isolation since April 12, including daily temperature checks, and who received proactive COVID-19 tests on Thursday, April 17](#). This morning, 3 positive test results and 4 negative test results were returned from that proactive test. The 3 asymptomatic inmates with positive test results have been transported to the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center COVID treatment center and the 4 inmates with negative test results continue to be carefully monitored in isolation at SCCC.
- **An inmate at the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC) in Smyrna.** The inmate is part of a minimum-security housing unit that has been carefully monitored by security and healthcare workers, with temperature checks two times a day. It is the same housing unit in which the first 12 inmates to test positive for COVID-19 were housed. The inmate is part of a group of 45 inmates from that same housing unit who received a proactive COVID-19 test on April 10; a negative test result was received. When a fever was discovered during a twice-daily temperature check on Monday, April 13, a second COVID-19 test was administered; a negative test result was received. As symptoms developed, the inmate was moved to the prison infirmary on Thursday, April 16, and he was admitted to an area hospital later that same day, at which time a third

COVID-19 test was administered. The positive COVID test result was returned on Friday, April 17. The inmate remains in stable condition and is not on a ventilator.

- **An inmate at the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC) in Smyrna.** The inmate is part of a minimum-security housing unit that has been carefully monitored by security and healthcare workers, with temperature checks two times a day. It is the same housing unit in which the first 12 inmates to test positive for COVID-19 were housed. The inmate is part of a group of 45 inmates from that same housing unit who received a proactive COVID-19 test on April 10; a negative test result was received. This inmate was transferred to the prison infirmary on Tuesday, April 14 with non-covid symptoms. When a fever was discovered during a twice daily temperature check on Thursday, April 16 a second COVID-19 test was administered. The inmate was admitted to an area hospital on Friday, April 17. A positive COVID-19 test result was returned today, Saturday, April 18. The inmate remains in stable condition and is not on a ventilator.

**This brings the total to 20 inmates statewide to test positive for the virus at just two DOC facilities, including 15 inmates from one minimum security housing unit at one prison facility (JTVCC) and 5 inmates from one housing area at one Community Corrections Center (SCCC).**

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

“To date we have contained COVID-19 cases among inmates to one housing unit in one prison and one housing pod in one community corrections facility. Of the 20 inmates who have tested positive, only 8 have symptoms, which are being treated with round-the-clock care. Eleven others are well into recovery or remain asymptomatic. We will continue to be vigilant against this virus,” **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.
- Facemasks are being worn by Correctional Officers and contract healthcare workers as a protection for inmates, Officers and other employees. **All Correctional Officers have been wearing facemasks since April 10. Facemasks have also been provided to more**

**than 500 inmates who are in infirmaries, those with compromised immune systems, and certain inmates with institutional jobs, such as food service.**

- Most Probationer visits with Probation Officers were transitioned to phone check-ins in March 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.

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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