

NEWS RELEASE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

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DOC announces restart of in-person inmate visitation

DOVER - Commissioner Claire DeMatteis announced today that in-person inmate visitation will restart at Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) facilities on Monday, June 29. Visits must be [scheduled in advance directly through DOC facilities, which will begin taking visitation registrations on Monday, June 22](#). This comes a week after the DOC issued a [12-week report that highlighted its comprehensive effort to contain the disease in the state's correctional system](#).

In-person visitation was suspended on [March 11 as a precaution to protect inmates and staff as COVID-19 infection spread to Delaware](#). During the suspension of in-person visitation DOC expanded availability of existing phone and video visitation to facilitate family and community support. Since March, the DOC also established video visitation for the first time at Howard R. Young Correctional Institution and made it available to inmate patients housed in the COVID-19 Treatment Center at James T. Vaughn Correctional Center. Expanded phone and video visitation will continue as in-person visitation resumes.

"Over the past three months we have worked effectively to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and thanks to our extensive screening, cleaning, monitoring, testing, and tracing efforts we currently have only one inmate with the illness across our entire correctional system," **said Commissioner Claire DeMatteis**. "Meanwhile 140 inmates, many of whom remained asymptomatic at all times, have fully recovered. As a result, we are prepared to cautiously restart in-person visitation on June 29. We must take the ongoing threat of COVID-19 seriously and this is not the time to let our guard down. We will continue our aggressive proactive measures to guard against infection and spread of this disease in all of our facilities."

Visitation will initially be restricted to one adult visitor per inmate per visit, and all visitors will be required to wear DOC-issued face masks, which will be provided upon arrival, at all times while in a correctional facility. Additionally:

- All visitors will be screened when entering the facility, which will include a series of questions about their medical condition and whether they have had any direct or indirect contact with someone who has been tested for COVID-19 or is in quarantine. Screenings will also include a forehead temperature check with a thermometer.
- All visitors will be required to fully complete and sign a disclaimer form before the visit begins stating that they have not tested positive for COVID-19, have no symptoms of COVID-19, and have had no direct or indirect contact with someone who has been tested for COVID-19 or is in quarantine.

Review DOC's inmate visitation guidelines at

[https://doc.delaware.gov/assets/documents/DOC Inmate Visitation Procedures.pdf](https://doc.delaware.gov/assets/documents/DOC%20Inmate%20Visitation%20Procedures.pdf).

Please note:

- Visitors will not be permitted to enter any DOC facility if they have tested positive for COVID-19 and have not received a letter to discontinue isolation from the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH), have had any symptoms of COVID-19 within the past 30 days, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste, loss of smell, or other flu-like symptoms, and have had any direct or indirect contact with someone who has been tested for COVID-19 or has been in quarantine within the past 14 days.
- All visitors must immediately notify DOC if they test positive for COVID-19 after their visit so that contact tracing can be initiated by the DOC, in collaboration with public health officials.

The DOC is taking additional COVID-related precautions to reduce the threat of transmission during visits, including construction of Plexiglass barriers in visitation areas (see attached photos of those preparations underway at Sussex Correctional Institution and Morris Community Corrections Center). Hand sanitizer will also be provided to support personal hygiene throughout visits.

Learn more about the Delaware Department of Correction by visiting <https://doc.delaware.gov> and stay connected by following *decorrection* on Facebook and Twitter.

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