

Safety measures put in place at DOC facilities to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

DOC has followed the Department of Health directives and Center for Disease Control guidelines for protecting inmates and staff. The DOC has also: instituted staff screening, including answering questions and taking temperature; provided educational materials on precautions and prevention measures to staff and inmates; added extra handwashing stations in our facilities; waived inmate co-pays for medical review; reduced dental services; increased our order for essential medications so that we have enough to treat the inmates; developed isolation and quarantine plans for all of our facilities; continued a restriction on sending inmates into the community in response to COVID-19 (this impacts community service and work release inmates and Community Transition Program parolees); adjusted schedules to reduce contacts; increased disinfecting efforts around the facilities and increased laundry services; limiting the size of inmate groups for meals and other activities as possible; and suspended visitation and volunteer activities.

Inmates in the Pheasantland Industries (PI) Garment Shop at the Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield are producing cotton jersey face masks and nylon gowns. Inmates in several PI shops at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls produced reusable and disposable face shields. Inmates in the Print Shop laser cut clear plastic sheets to size for the face shields, the Upholstery Shop inmates made the elastic bands with foam and the Metal Shop workers applied the metal and rivets to the shields. PI made approximately 3,000 gowns.

Masks that are produced by Pheasantland Industries were distributed to staff and inmates in each of the DOC facilities. Each employee is required to wear a mask anytime they are inside a facility.

The inmates have been instructed to wear the masks anytime they are out of their cells at the higher security facilities or out of their bunks at the minimum security units, with the exception of when they are eating or showering or have more than 6 feet of separation during recreation time. Hand sanitizer is provided to inmates under staff supervision in the facility dining halls and recreation areas. Inmates working in Pheasantland Industries have produced enough masks so that each inmate in the state prison system has three. Inmates who are releasing back into the community are also provided with a mask.

We have adjusted admission and intake processes to ensure individual assessment, separation and cohorting of new admissions for their first 14 days in the facility. In addition to the Centers for Disease Control guidelines for correctional facilities, DOC regularly takes every inmate's temperature. If an inmate has a temperature of 100.4 or above, DOC staff will refer them to Correctional Health for an assessment. If an inmate is experiencing symptoms (fever, new onset of shortness of breath or a new onset cough), they are expected to report this to staff.

As a result of all the measures taken to mitigate the spread of the virus, our number of positive cases remained low for months. Until the early part of September, we had only 5 positive cases in the whole system. Four men and 1 woman, and all had recovered. Three of those five came into the prison system already positive, coming either from community housing or local jails.

In early September we started to see a few positive cases at the minimum unit in Pierre. It averaged 1 to 2 positive cases per day until mid-September, when we were at 15 positive cases.

The Department of Corrections (DOC) conducted a mass-testing event at the Pierre Community Work Center (PCWC) under the Department of Health's guidance on Sept. 14. Following the results of that testing, we were able to identify a number of cases and get those individuals into isolation. Because of the number of positive cases, those inmates who had previously tested positive and those who tested positive during the mass testing were moved to the PCWC, which is located east of the Women's Prison. Inmates at PCWC who did not test positive were moved to the Women's Prison. Those inmates who were identified as close contacts to those who tested positive are on quarantine status at the Women's Prison.

Inmates in Pierre are not being allowed to go out into the community for work release or community service projects. Visitation, programming and contact with volunteers is suspended. Inmates do have access to their inmate tablets for phone calls and messaging. Each inmate has been provided with two additional free phone calls per week. Video visitation is continuing.

DOH has subsequently mass tested two of the cell blocks in the main prison and the separate building known as Unit E. The results of that testing identified more inmates that tested positive. Those positive cases are isolated for ten days, as recommended by the Department of Health.

As of October 20, 2020, the women's prison has 2 active positive cases and 240 who are recovered.

On October 11, 2020 4 inmates at the Mike Durfee Prison in Springfield tested positive for COVID-19. The positive inmates were isolated, and their close contacts were quarantined.

On October 14, 2020 four inmates at the penitentiary in Sioux Falls tested positive for COVID-19

As of October 14, 2020, all the inmates at the Barracks in unit B-1 were tested. This is where the first positives inmates were housed. As of October 20, 2020, the results of that testing showed 159 inmates were positive. The positive inmates are isolated, and their close contacts were quarantined.

On October 19, 2020 we tested all of West Hall and Special Housing Unit in Sioux Falls, which was approximately 180 tests, As of this writing we are awaiting test results. As of October 20, 2020, we have 32 positives inmates in Sioux Falls.

On October 20, 2020, we tested Harmon Hall and Ludeman Hall in Springfield, which is 296 tests. We are awaiting the test results as of this writing,

To what extent are certain religious practices of Native Americans restricted do to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Lakota offenders are able to participate in Canunpa (Pipe) Ceremonies, Native American Church, Drum Practice and Prayer Ties.

They may work on bead work or dance regalia for family and friends.

There is an extensive library of books and music on Lakota Cultural and Spirituality.

Offenders may watch videos of Wacipis (Pow Wows) and documentaries about the Lakota on the internal prison network.

They can have their approved ceremonies outside at the Inipi (sweat lodge) however the inipis (sweat lodge ceremonies) at this time are halted.