



## **DOCCS Re-Opening Plan Fact Sheet**

As New York State begins to implement NY FORWARD, the Department's greatest concern continues to be the health, safety and well-being of our employees, as well as everyone placed within our care, custody, and supervision, particularly during this ongoing and evolving public health emergency. Toward that end, DOCCS has developed a comprehensive and gradual re-opening plan, that will follow the NY FORWARD guidance on a regional basis, while monitoring the NY FORWARD regional Control Center Process.

The Department's plan continues many prior initiatives, but also layers in new ones, the goals of which are to safely and gradually re-open, while shielding staff, the incarcerated population and parolees, from any unreasonable risks. The key components of the plan include the following:

### **NON-ESSENTIAL STAFF**

- DOCCS will gradually reintroduce non-essential staff in regions that have been approved for Phase 2 of NY FORWARD. As other regions are approved and move to Phase 2, non-essential staff assigned to a DOCCS work location in those areas will gradually return to work;
- DOCCS staff who have been telecommuting during the public health crisis will continue to do so; and
- DOCCS will explore expanding telecommuting, a compressed workweek, an alternate work week and the staggering of shifts, where appropriate and feasible, to reduce density.

### **PROGRAMS FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

- DOCCS will gradually reintroduce mental health programming in the Regional Mental Health Treatment Units, Intermediate Care Programs and other similar programs, with both staff and the incarcerated population required to wear masks;
- DOCCS will gradually reintroduce Step-Down Programs, with both staff and the incarcerated population required to wear masks;
- DOCCS will gradually reintroduce staff led programs such as: Sex Offender Counseling Treatment, ASAT, Facility Orientation and Transitional Services, with both staff and the incarcerated population required to wear masks; and
- DOCCS will continue the suspension of academic and vocational programming through the summer, as we evaluate plans for re-opening classes in the fall in a safe manner.

### **INTERNAL MOVEMENT OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

- DOCCS will slowly resume the internal movement and transfer of incarcerated individuals, on or about June 1, 2020, while instituting social distancing on transportation vehicles, with both staff and the incarcerated population required to wear masks; and

- DOCCS will transfer all adolescent offenders from Adirondack AO Facility to Hudson AO Facility, and subsequently transfer to Adirondack, incarcerated individuals age 65 and older, who meet the medical and OMH level.

## **INTAKE OF STATE READIES FROM COUNTY JAILS**

- On a regional basis, consistent with NY FORWARD, intake will begin two days per week, once a county reaches Phase 2 of re-opening, beginning no sooner than June 15, 2020, with the following criteria:
  - The county jail must not have a current COVID-19 positive case;
  - The county jail must perform a COVID-19 diagnostic test with a negative result prior to intake and the person must be subsequently isolated until transfer to DOCCS custody;
  - The state-ready individual must neither be part of a current contact trace nor quarantined, at the time of intake; and
  - Upon arrival, a temperature check and medical assessment shall occur prior to the Reception Center's acceptance of the individual into the draft area or into custody, and thereafter, a mask will be provided once the individual is cleared for intake.

## **INCARCERATED INDIVIDUAL VISITATION**

- At the present time, the temporary suspension of visitation will be extended. It is anticipated that the suspension will continue until, at the earliest, all regions have been approved for Phase 3 of re-opening under NY FORWARD. Depending on where the regions are based on the guidelines, we will continually re-evaluate this temporary suspension. While we understand the importance of family and visitation, we need to ensure that we continue to protect the staff and incarcerated population within our facilities. To that end, when visitation is restored, it will be done with the following new procedures in place:
  - Visiting rooms will be re-configured to reduce the capacity by half to practice social distancing. Facilities with outside visiting areas will utilize such areas, if weather permitting;
  - All visitors, incarcerated individuals and staff will be required to wear a mask during processing and during the visit. If a visitor does not have a mask, the visit will be denied;
  - Visitors will be screened with the questionnaire and temperature check prior to being allowed to visit;
  - There will be no physical contact between incarcerated individuals and the visitors until further notice;
  - Visiting will be divided into specific segments of the population (i.e. alpha by name or numeric by DIN) to ensure access for the entire population;
  - Visitors will have to pre-register with the facility and obtain a confirmation that the visit has been scheduled;
  - Each visit will be limited to two visitors with a maximum duration of two hours, with no cross visiting allowed;
  - All movement in the visiting area will be controlled by staff to ensure social distancing;
  - A minimum of one porter will be assigned to the area to disinfect each table as the visit is complete, as well as the vending machines and child area;

- The child area will be off-limits on the re-opening of visiting, but this restriction will be evaluated after 30 days; and
- The Family Reunion Program will remain closed, but this will be periodically reevaluated.

## **COMMUNITY SUPERVISION**

- Community Supervision will take a phased-in approach to re-opening operations across the State. In accordance with the NY FORWARD guidance, we will allow the bureaus to begin re-opening on a regional basis consistent with the NY FORWARD regional Control Center process in regions that have been approved for Phase 2. Each bureau's re-opening within an approved NY FORWARD designated region will be continually re-evaluated within each re-opening phase:
  - The bureaus will begin to take office reports incrementally in a multi-phased approach;
  - All staff and parolees will be required to wear a mask during the office reports;
  - A scheduling system will be used for each bureau(s);
  - Each parolee will be scheduled at a rate of one per 30-minute block;
  - Report days will be increased, and report hours expanded, as needed, to minimize density;
  - Staff and parolee will wear a mask during in-person interviews;
  - Staff will monitor and screen all staff, visitors and parolees in accordance with current COVID-19 policy; and
  - Waiting rooms will be demarcated for social distancing.

## **ONGOING EFFORTS TO PROTECT DOCCS FACILITIES, BUREAUS AND OFFICES**

The Department takes the continued spread of this global health emergency seriously and shares the same concerns as staff, incarcerated individuals, parolees and their loved ones.

Our focus is ensuring that the hardworking men and women of this Department, as well as our incarcerated and parolee populations, are healthy and safe. Just as we have successfully managed infectious outbreaks in the past, we have emergency protocols in place and have proactively made adjustments in our facilities and Community Supervision offices in an attempt to limit any outbreaks.

Each action we take in response to the spread of COVID-19 is done in the best interest of those who work or are incarcerated within our facilities, or who are supervised in the community. We will continue to evaluate all options as this situation unfolds. DOCCS has initiated a number of measures that will be maintained, and will layer in new ones, to ensure the safety and well-being of staff, incarcerated individuals and parolees:

- Mandating all staff to wear a face mask while on duty;
- Supplying all incarcerated individuals with a surgical-type mask and a cloth face covering;
- Supplying all incarcerated individuals in isolation or quarantine with a surgical-type mask;
- Allowing the incarcerated population to use state-issued handkerchiefs as masks;
- Continuing to work with our phone and tablet vendors to ensure continued access to some combination of weekly free calls and secure messages for the incarcerated population;

- Continuing and expanding the use of telecommuting for non-essential staff;
- Continuing the use of a health/travel questionnaire for staff, contractors and visitors, along with a temperature check for those entering facilities and Community Supervision offices;
- Displaying posters with information on COVID-19 and safety tips throughout DOCCS facilities and offices statewide;
- Regularly showing a video to the incarcerated population and staff at the facilities on proper handwashing;
- Continuing enhanced cleaning/sanitizing measures and disinfecting procedures for office surfaces and devices, consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New York State Department of Health guidelines, including working with landlords to ensure cleaning protocols are followed under the appropriate guidelines with increased frequency throughout offices, especially the high-risk areas, and issuing appropriate protocols on how to clean vehicles;
- Continuing to individually review incarcerated individuals who have not committed a violent felony or sex offense, that will be released within 90 days for early release so long as they have stable housing and health care;
- Continuing to individually review pregnant/postpartum incarcerated individuals for early release, who have not committed a violent felony or sex offense, and would otherwise be released within six months, so long as they have stable housing and health care;
- Continuing to make hand sanitizer available to all facilities for staff and the incarcerated population to use, as well as Community Supervision offices; and
- Legal visits will continue as non-contact visits at the present time.

Lastly, as we move forward, it is critical that we remind staff, visitors, contractors, incarcerated individuals and parolees to wear a mask whenever social distancing is not possible. We will continue to stress that there are simple steps that should be followed to stop the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses as follows:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands, especially before you eat;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Cover your cough or sneeze;
- Avoid sharing food and utensils;
- Report any symptoms promptly; and
- Again, wear your mask.

The Department takes seriously its duty to ensure the safety and well-being of those that work, and live in our correctional facilities, as well as those who supervise or are supervised in the greater community of New York. During this difficult time, the Department is appreciative of everyone's patience and understanding as we continue to face this virus together.