



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

As New York State continues to implement NY FORWARD, the Department's greatest concern, as always, remains 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 and is presently implementing a comprehensive and gradual re-opening plan, that follows 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 has gradually reintroduce non-essential staff in all regions that have been approved for Phase 2 of NY FORWARD;
- DOCCS staff who have been telecommuting during the public health crisis have been approved to continue to do so; and
- DOCCS expanded telecommuting, compressed workweeks, alternate work weeks and the staggering of shifts, where appropriate and feasible, to reduce density.

### **PROGRAMS FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

- DOCCS gradually reintroduced 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 gradually reintroduced Step-Down Programs, with both staff and the incarcerated population required to wear masks;
- DOCCS gradually reintroduced staff led programs such as: Sex Offender Counseling Treatment, ASAT, Facility Orientation and Transitional Services, Trauma Programs, Thinking for Change, Moving On, Fresh Start 21, Advanced Aggression Program, Veteran's Residential Therapeutic Program, and Living Safely Without Violence, with both staff and the incarcerated population required to wear masks;
- DOCCS gradually reintroduced Aggression Replacement Training, Inmate Program Associate Training, with both staff and the incarcerated population required to wear masks;
- DOCCS gradually reintroduced General Library 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 slowly resumed the internal movement and transfer of incarcerated individuals, on June 1, 2020, while instituting social distancing on transportation vehicles, with both staff and the incarcerated population required to wear masks; and
- DOCCS transferred all adolescent offenders from Adirondack AO Facility to Hudson AO Facility. DOCCS subsequently transferred to Adirondack, incarcerated individuals age 60 and older, who meet the medical and OMH level, as the North Country has an extremely low infection rate.

## INTAKE OF STATE READIES FROM COUNTY JAILS

- On a regional basis, consistent with NY FORWARD, DOCCS resumed intake two days per week, once a county reaches Phase 2 of re-opening, beginning on June 15, 2020. Since that time, DOCCS has accepted individuals from almost every county and the City of New York, 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.
  - Effective September 14, 2020, DOCCS will increase intake frequency to three (3) days per week.

## INCARCERATED INDIVIDUAL VISITATION

- Visitation within our institutions will resume on Wednesday, August 5, 2020, in maximum security facilities and in all other facilities, on Saturday, August 8, 2020. Based on the feedback we have received from our facility superintendents, staff, unions, Inmate Liaison Committees, advocacy organizations and other state correctional systems, we have modified our previously announced temporary visitation procedures. While recognizing the importance of family and visitation, and being mindful of the critical need to continue to protect staff and the incarcerated population, visitation will resume under the following protocols:
  - Visiting rooms will be re-configured to reduce the capacity by half to facilitate social distancing. Facilities with outside visiting areas will utilize such areas, if weather permits;
  - All visitors, incarcerated individuals and staff will be required to wear a mask during processing and during the visit. Masks may be temporarily removed for processing, and while eating a meal for approximately 15 minutes. When drinking a beverage or eating a snack from the vending machine, the mask must remain, but may be briefly pulled down. Masks must not have any pictures, writings or sayings on them. All facial masks may be surgical-type, N95 or homemade. Facial masks with a one-way valve are not permitted. If a visitor does not have a mask, the visit may be denied;
  - Unless otherwise stated, DOCCS continues to enforce Directive 4403, which provides necessary information for the Inmate Visitor Program. Read it [here](#);

- Visitors will be screened with the questionnaire and temperature check prior to being allowed to visit. In facilities with a hospitality center, the screening shall occur at the entrance to the hospitality center. The questionnaire can be found [here](#);
  - Physical contact will not be allowed;
  - Visiting will be divided into specific segments of the population (i.e., alpha by name or numeric by DIN) to ensure that each incarcerated individual can have two weekend visits per month. Weekday visiting at maximum security facilities will remain in place;
  - Each visit will be limited to three visitors (unless the current facility policy specifies less) and one child, under the age of five, who must sit on an adult's lap, with no cross visiting allowed;
  - Visitors who have traveled to New York from a State that has met the metrics to qualify for the travel advisory requiring individuals to quarantine for 14 days, will be denied if the quarantine time hasn't been completed;
  - 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 other shared areas;
  - The children's area will be off-limits on the re-opening of visiting, but this restriction will be evaluated after 30 days;
  - Incarcerated individuals in quarantine or isolation will not be permitted to visit until they are determined to be recovered;
  - The Family Reunion Program will remain closed, but this will be periodically reevaluated with the intention to re-open in a gradual manner;
  - Packages will be allowed in accordance with current policy; and
  - Limits will be placed on the number of visitors at any one time in the hospitality center, processing area and pathways to visiting room, in order to maintain social distancing between persons.
- Individual facility visitation details will be posted on facility pages by Monday, August 3, 2020.

**NOTE: These provisions are subject to change and visitation could again be suspended should there be an increased infection rate at one or more facilities, or if conditions change in the community.**

## **COMMUNITY SUPERVISION**

- Community Supervision has begun a phased-in approach to re-opening operations across the State. In accordance with the NY FORWARD guidance, we have allowed 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 have begun to take office reports incrementally in a multi-phased approach;
  - All staff and parolees are required to wear a mask during the office reports;
  - A scheduling system will be used for each bureau(s);
  - Each parolee is scheduled at a rate of one per 30-minute block;
  - Report days have been increased, and report hours expanded, as needed, to minimize density;

- Staff and parolee are required to wear a mask during in-person interviews;
- Staff monitor and screen all staff, visitors and parolees in accordance with current COVID-19 policy; and
- Waiting rooms have been 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 until visitation resumes on August 5, 2020.

Lastly, as we move forward, it is critical that we continue to 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.