

714 S.W. Jackson St.
Suite 300
Topeka, KS 66603



Phone: (785) 296-3317
Fax: (785) 296-0014
kdocpub@ks.gov
www.doc.ks.gov

Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

To: Juvenile and Adult Facility Residents and Family Members

From: Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Date: September 22, 2021

Re: Coronavirus and KDOC updates

Last Wednesday we celebrated the recent academic success of several residents at Topeka Correctional Facility. Four individuals completed their GED, a great accomplishment and a springboard to future success. Seven individuals completed programming through The Last Mile coding program, and 18 made the honor roll last semester at Washburn. Congratulations to these residents who have worked so hard to reach these important milestones on their path to a better future.

About a month ago, I mentioned to you that our KDOC Research and Behavior Analytics team had released our annual report on adult recidivism. The report shows the 36-month recidivism for those released in 2017 is 32.27%, and this equates to a 7% improvement. Looking at this another way, this means 68% of returning citizens are living successful in our communities three years after release. That is a fantastic success rate! We continue to analyze data for insights into the programs and practices that are having the most impact in this area. We are encouraged by this trend, with this being the lowest recidivism rate we have experienced since 2008.

This improvement in our recidivism rate is contributing to another significant trend within KDOC. In April 2019 our adult resident number was near 10,100. We have seen a drop in our adult population of 1,700 over the past two and a-half years, with our number today in our adult facilities at around 8,400 individuals. I don't think we can overstate the significance that this reduction in the number of current residents has on our day-to-day operations. We have been able to collapse the number of housing units in some locations, saving taxpayers money and helping with our current staffing challenges. The lower population numbers have contributed to the management of our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our ability to deliver services has also improved by freeing up space within facilities to conduct classes and programs. KDOC has a great number of issues we are working to address, but some states are dealing with overcrowding or space issues in addition to all the other challenges facing those of us serving in corrections today.

In closing, please continue to follow all COVID-19 safety measures. Our numbers remain low, and we haven't seen a spike in positive cases, nor are we experiencing anything close to what we were a year ago. However, according to KDHE the Delta variant is still very active in our state. This will continue to take all of us working together to get beyond this pandemic and resume normal operations.