

Hello everyone,

We received great news this week that the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) officially issued a statement of containment for Lansing Correctional Facility (LCF). Your hard work has paid off and I want to thank you for your commitment to slowing the spread of the virus. I've attached the letter from KDHE to this e-mail, but essentially this means that while there is potential for new cases of the virus to occur, strategies have been put in place to quickly identify, trace and contain the virus without extensive transmission in a rapid manner.

The threat of this virus is still real and will be with us for quite some time, but we came together as a team to face COVID-19 head on and now we can begin to move forward, at least a bit. None of this would have been possible without your hard work and dedication. I also want to extend my thanks to Phil Griffin and others with KDHE who worked so diligently with us to ensure we were doing everything we could to protect our staff and residents. We have lost six lives to the virus and we will remember our staff and residents that passed as a result of the outbreak at LCF. I continue to extend my sympathy to all of you who knew them.

This week also marks the end of our need for support from the Kansas National Guard. They were called in to provide support during the COVID-19 pandemic and with the statement of containment and advisement from KDHE, Corizon is now capable of assuming all medical duties and their daily medical care for our residents. Help from the National Guard has been invaluable in ensuring that we could continually monitor our residents for symptoms and care for those who were ill. You all have worked so well together, and I thank you for welcoming them into our family for the past two months.

With the above news of containment, we will see a change in turnaround times for COVID-19 tests run at our facilities. During the thick of our testing process, KDHE deemed it necessary to expedite our results so that we could effectively house the population to slow the spread of the virus. While the threat of the virus still exists, the chances of it spreading as rapidly as before have drastically lowered lessening our need for expedited testing. The typical turnaround time for COVID-19 tests results is four to five days. This will be our new normal and is part of the evolution of our overall response. I want to thank you in advance for your understanding.

As we enter this new phase, another change that I want to share with you is a decreased frequency for updating our overall number of positive cases. Instead of daily, we will update our numbers on a weekly basis. We will share these numbers each Monday by 5 p.m. For the most current information regarding positive COVID-19 cases and those who have returned to work and general population, visit <https://www.doc.ks.gov/kdoc-coronavirus-updates/kdoc-covid-19-status>. Should we see a second wave of the virus later this summer or fall, we will reevaluate how frequently we share this information.

The most frequent question we seem to be getting from our residents and folks out in the community is concerning reinstating visitation. We have a work group that is tasked with evaluating what this process will look like and we will share more information as it is available. The most important thing to share with those you are speaking with is that we will only begin in-person visitation when it is safe to do so. This will involve monitoring local and state COVID-19 data and ensuring that we have new systems and procedures in place at our facilities to ensure everyone's safety. We will get there, but it will be a slow and thoughtful process.

Thank you for all you do. Your work matters.

Take care...and be safe.

Jeff Zmuda  
Secretary of Corrections