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Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

To: Juvenile and Adult Facility Residents and Family Members

From: Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Date: February 10, 2021

Re: Coronavirus and KDOC updates

As mentioned in a memo sent to you last week, our state has now entered Phase 2 of the COVID-19 vaccination prioritization plan. This phase includes persons aged 65 and over, high-contact critical workers and those living in congregate settings. Most of our employees (though some non-facility employees are in a later phase) and all of our residents are included in the implementation of Phase 2. Please refer to the Feb 5, 2021 memo for a more detailed explanation of the plan and process.

Today I want to share some thoughts on our new mission statement: *Partnering to Promote Safety and Responsibility through Best Practices*. Simply stated, we have – at the core of our department’s existence – a requirement to protect the safety of the citizens of Kansas, the safety of our employees and the safety of those under our authority. That obligation is only achieved in partnership with each other, with community leaders and service providers, and with those under our authority along with families and loved ones.

There is a lot coming at us today, both as an agency and each of us individually. Expectations for all of us are higher than they have ever been, including our response to the pandemic, how we care of each other and how we care of our population on behalf of their families. We add to that programs and practices that hold each individual accountable for their actions, and in the case of those under our authority, the opportunities we provide to transform lives and prepare for the successful return to community living. We must redefine and strengthen our relationships related to each and every aspect of our operation. This will require each of us to make a conscious choice to evolve and grow.

I ask you to reread those nine words in our new mission statement again - *Partnering to Promote Safety and Responsibility through Best Practices* – and think about how that applies to you specifically. Each of us plays a role in achieving our mission, and while our roles may be distinctly different, each are dependent upon the role others play, and each plays an equally important part in our success. Every interaction with each other and with the individuals under our authority is an opportunity to affect positive change and to promote safety and responsibility.

Next week we will look more closely at our renewed vision for our organization and how we each have a role and responsibility in being a part of it.

Be safe...and be warm.