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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 17, 2021

Re: Coronavirus and KDOC updates

Thank you to each of you for your efforts and patience these last several days during the challenges presented by such extreme cold and weather conditions. If the weather reports are to be believed, warmer days are ahead, and I know we are all looking forward to Spring. It can't get here soon enough!

Recently, and for the first time in months, we had ZERO confirmed positive test results regarding COVID-19 testing through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) lab for all facilities submitting specimens. We had eight of nine facilities with at least one testing specimen submitted and NO confirmed positive results. Very good news and a great indicator as to where we may be headed with managing the spread of the virus!

We are now in our second week of offering COVID-19 vaccinations to staff and residents, and all reports indicate the processes are running pretty smoothly. We anticipate it will take us about eight to ten weeks to complete the vaccination process in all facilities. This is based on the amount of vaccine allotted to us each week by KDHE, which can vary, and the numbers of staff and residents who will be offered and accept the vaccine. This means the process may go faster or slower, depending on those variables. If you have not already done so, please take the opportunity to review information about the vaccines so that you are prepared to decide what is best for you individually. One source of information is <https://www.kansasvaccine.gov/faq.aspx>. Each facility can also provide you with additional information.

Moving forward with vaccinations is certainly wonderful news, but it remains critical that we continue our coronavirus mitigation measures. Please continue to wear a mask, wash your hands regularly and social distance as much as you can. These and other measures to mitigate the spread of the virus will need to remain in effect for the foreseeable future. As you know we have been reporting our numbers of positive cases each week and we will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Our plans on sharing information regarding progress on vaccinations will look slightly different. We will be sharing only the number of vaccinations each week provided to our residents. No staff data will be provided.

Today I would like to share with you KDOC's new *Vision Statement: Transforming Lives for the Safety of All*. Our guiding principles will remain keeping our society safe and holding individuals accountable for their actions. However, drawing upon research and evidenced-based practices, we can improve how we accomplish our work and provide even greater opportunities for future success for those under our authority.

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We will turn this *Vision* into reality by:

- *Investing in Individuals: Provide opportunities to acquire new experiences and skills to support personal and professional advancement and future success.*
- *Creating an Environment for Change and Well-Being: Design systems that encourage positive behaviors, healthy choices and self-improvement.*
- *Enhancing and Maximizing Communication: Improve interpersonal communication skills and expand effective communication practices at all levels of the department.*
- *Fostering Dignity and Safety: Establish practices and policies that honor individual differences with mutual dignity and respect, and all feel safe and supported.*
- *Engaging and Strengthening Our Partnerships: Expand partnerships with individuals and organizations within our communities to support our mission.*



Each of these areas will require commitment, time and creative problem solving from all of us working together if we are to truly accomplish our vision for KDOC. I believe the journey ahead for us along our *Pathway for Success* will be rewarding for each of us, and many others. Ultimately, this work with will foster a better work environment for all employees, have a positive impact on individuals under our authority, and contribute to safer, better communities throughout Kansas.