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Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

To: Juvenile and Adult Facility Residents and Family Members

From: Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Date: January 27, 2021

Re: Coronavirus Updates

We know that one of the most pressing issues we face is the pandemic and its impact on the health and safety of our staff and residents. We continue to work with the Governor's office and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) regarding COVID-19 response protocols and access to vaccines. According to information recently released by Governor Laura Kelly, KDOC staff and residents are included in Phase 2 under the "congregate living" provision. You can find out more about our state's plan at <https://www.kansasvaccine.gov/35/Vaccine-Info> We will keep you updated on specific plans for KDOC. We will continue to update our positive COVID-19 numbers twice a week, Mondays and Thursdays, and share them with you. We also post them on the KDOC website at <https://www.doc.ks.gov/kdoc-coronavirus-updates/kdoc-covid-19-status>.

As I have shared with you over the past few months, members of the leadership team from throughout the organization have been engaged in a planning process to set the course for the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) over the next few years. This message, and others in the coming weeks, begin the next phase of this work in which we share our new *Pathway for Success* and take the next step of including staff from all parts of KDOC in the essential work of implementation.



Before I turn to the new, first let me reflect upon our past. Our roots at KDOC are as old as our State, dating to the 1860's with the establishment of the Lansing State Penitentiary. And really, our corrections roots are much older, with incarceration as a form of criminal punishment becoming widespread in the United States just before the American Revolution, and penal incarceration efforts in England dating to the early 1500's with prisons in the form of dungeons existing since long before then.

That beginning was followed by different waves of change in the U.S., bringing new mechanisms such as parole, probation and indeterminate sentencing into mainstream penal practice. Equally rooted in our history is the American favor of the concept of reform and rehabilitation of offenders to become law-abiding citizens. This dates to the post-colonial days of our nation.

In more recent history, in 1973 the Kansas Legislature re-codified our purpose, which in part says "... apply this act and acts of which it is amendatory or supplemental liberally to rehabilitate, train, treat, educate and prepare persons convicted of felony in this state for entry or reentry into the social and economic system of the community..." This law remains in effect to this day. In addition, we now benefit from over four decades of scientific research defining the key principles to reducing crime, principles that align with this statutory purpose.

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This history is best understood when viewed through the prism of societal norms of the times. Our history has always been about change. This change in some ways mirrors the broader demographic and social changes of our developing democracy.

And change is not unique to our work. In many ways it is ingrained in all that we do as people. The last update to the KDOC vision, mission and beliefs was done in 2009 and is contained in a 2010 published strategic plan. Since that time we've seen many changes in our day to day world including the launch of the iPad in 2010, the use of smartphones rise from 35 to 81% of all Americans between 2009-2019, the emergence of the concept of "binge-watching" due to the development of streaming video services, and the decline in the use of landlines and print media.

I hope this brief historical summary is illustrative that change has long been an important and fundamental part of our work and our world. We now that a next step in a continual process of improving ourselves, our organization, and the experience of broader society. In the coming weeks I will share information specific to our mission, vision and beliefs and related strategies as established in the new plan.