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Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

To: Juvenile and Adult Facility Residents and Family Members
From: Jeff Zmuda, Secretary
Date: March 10, 2021
Re: Coronavirus and KDOC updates

Pathway to Success, our new KDOC strategic plan, has reached the implementation phase, and our Strategic Implementation Teams (SIT) will start meeting in late March/early April. We have formed five teams: Employee Environment, Population, Communications, Resource Deployment, and Grant/Resource Attainment. These teams will work with information from staff retreats, feedback gained through the 2020 Listening Tours and use their expertise to develop recommendations for improving KDOC. You can find out more at <https://www.doc.ks.gov/pathway>.

We sent a message to all our residents and their families recently regarding a change at Larned Correctional Mental Health Facility. My hope is that you will take time to read the memo. Basically, we have finalized plans to relocate minimum-security residents at Larned (currently at the West Unit) to the newer and more modern South Unit, formerly the juvenile facility at Larned. This will necessitate the relocation of those who are currently residing at the South Unit.

Our long-range plan is to design and operate a facility for our older population at Winfield Correctional Facility. Funding to make this plan a reality was included by Governor Laura Kelly in her budget request to the state legislature, and the plan is progressing through the legislature this year. Until this can be accomplished – which will take about two years to bring online once the funding is in place – we must develop other solutions to serve this population, and the plan at Larned was deemed the most feasible and cost effective.

We are monitoring progress for resident vaccinations on our website at <https://www.doc.ks.gov/kdoc-coronavirus-updates/covid-19-vaccinations> and the response has been very encouraging. 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/>.

You may have seen or heard about new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about recommended behaviors once an individual is fully vaccinated. Please monitor additional information on this subject. There is so much we still don't know about COVID-19 and its variants. For now, KDOC will keep in place all current public health-recommended pandemic safety measures. This means we will continue to wear masks, remind everyone to wash hands regularly and practice social distance as much as possible.

One more reminder! Daylight's Savings Times begins Sunday, March 14th, so "spring forward" and turn your clocks ahead one hour!

Thank you and be safe!