



Nevada Department of Corrections

Public Information Office: 775-887-3309
PIO Scott Kelley Cell: 775-350-0037

Press Release

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Director Charles Daniels Discusses COVID-19 with Staff at Facilities across Nevada

Charles Daniels, Director of the Nevada Department of Corrections, is visiting facilities throughout Nevada to speak with staff about COVID-19 and the department's important role as a public safety agency.

"We're in this together," Director Daniels said during a recent visit to High Desert State Prison (HDSP), which announced on March 26 that one of its staff had tested positive for COVID-19. "We're on the frontlines. The community is counting on our leadership during this pandemic."

During his visit to HDSP, Director Daniels spoke with correctional officers and support staff, watched Surface Sanitation Teams clean surfaces throughout the prison, and toured the unit where the infected staff member had worked.

"Our ongoing public health response was to detect and isolate both staff and offenders who displayed symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19," he said. "We further assessed our contingency plans and modified them to deal with the threat."

Accompanying Director Daniels during his visit to HDSP was Calvin Johnson, Warden at HDSP, who has been on the job less than a week. Johnson rose through the ranks of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, serving in numerous positions to include warden at Oakdale and Pollock penitentiaries in Louisiana, before coming to Nevada.

"It's important for our staff to see the director at the facilities," Johnson said. "It shows that he cares about the challenges our front-line staff face. It's also a chance for us to show the protocols we're taking to contain the spread of COVID-19."

The Nevada Department of Corrections is committed to building a safer community by striving to incorporate progressive best practices in all aspects of corrections. NDOC houses nearly 14,000 persons with felony convictions in 18 facilities statewide. For more information visit www.doc.nv.gov.

Those protocols, which are consistent with national and state health and human services guidance, include:

- The employee self-quarantining at home.
- HDSP offenders being isolated in their cells.
- NDOC medical staff medically observing staff and offenders for signs of the virus, which include coughing, fever, and shortness of breath.
- Surface Sanitation Teams, using a 10% bleach concentration, thoroughly cleaning surfaces throughout HDSP.

Operationally, NDOC has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by implementing more intensive screening and precautionary measures based on guidance from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and other agencies.

“I’m proud of the work of our custody staff continue to do while executing contingency plans with discipline and professionalism,” said Harold Wickham, Deputy Director of Operations. “NDOC will continue to closely monitor the situation at all of our facilities, and work closely with local and state public health officials to ensure the health and safety of staff and offenders.”

“I extend my thoughts and empathy to those who have been impacted by COVID-19,” Director Daniels added. “This is a challenging time for all of us, and I’m impressed by our response at High Desert State Prison. Further, Emergency Operations Centers have been activated at every institution. Our wardens are conducting separate townhall meetings with the offender population every Tuesday and Friday during each of our primary shifts. NDOC is a public safety agency committed to keeping our communities safe and will continue to man the line during this crisis.”

Visit [NDOC’s website](#) for more information about the department’s pro-active approach to fighting the spread of COVID-19.

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