



Nevada Department of Corrections

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Press Release

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NDOC's COVID-19 Positivity Rate One of Nation's Lowest

Since launching a statewide testing initiative in May, the Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC) has tested 10,329 offenders for COVID-19, or 83% of its total population of 12,368. Of those tested, only nine – or .08% of all offenders – have tested positive for the virus, one of the lowest rates in the nation.

“Nevada’s goal has been to mitigate and prevent the spread of COVID-19 through rigorous testing and the implementation of deliberate and pro-active protocols,” said Governor Steve Sisolak. “Our state’s testing initiative is the result of a successful partnership between NDOC, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory to test one of our state’s most vulnerable populations.”

According to the Marshall Project, a non-profit that tracks COVID-19 testing, results, and recoveries at jails and prisons throughout the United States, Nevada’s rate of positive COVID-19 tests is currently the [eighth lowest in the nation](#).

“The very low number of offenders testing positive is a testament to the strength of the firewall NDOC established to stop the spread of the virus,” said Charles Daniels, NDOC Director. “Our custody staff implemented pro-active procedures to ensure the safety of everyone at our facilities, while our medical staff worked tirelessly to test offenders and provide appropriate medical care. This has been a team effort and I could not be prouder.”

The testing initiative includes NDOC staff. So far, 2,362 staff or 89% of NDOC’s total of 2,648 have been tested for COVID-19. Only 34 staff have tested positive for the virus for a 1.44% positivity rate.

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 more than 12,000 persons with felony convictions in 18 facilities statewide. For more information visit www.doc.nv.gov.

The percentages have declined since NDOC first began testing offenders and staff in late May. The low numbers are a result of NDOC's firewall, designed to stop COVID-19 at the gate and built on numerous, interlocking procedures, such as:

- Running modified operations that limit travel between facilities and restricted visitation at all facilities.
- Testing new arrivals at the intake units at High Desert State Prison and Northern Nevada Correctional Center for COVID-19, and isolating offenders who test positive in negative airflow cells.
- Issuing staff personal protective equipment (PPE), to include booties, gloves, N-95 masks, and hand sanitizer, while ensuring an adequate stockpile of PPE and the ability to deploy resources to other facilities if needed.
- Releasing staff who test positive from duty to begin quarantine, and only authorizing their return to work after receiving approval from NDOC's medical director.
- Hosting regularly scheduled town halls at all facilities to update staff and offenders on NDOC procedures.

As COVID-19 represents an ever-changing custody and medical challenge, NDOC is remaining vigilant and continues to fine-tune policies and procedures to keep the virus out of its facilities.

NDOC recently distributed 22,000 face coverings statewide to offenders to reduce the likelihood of an asymptomatic COVID-19 carrier passing the virus to others. Face covering distribution was done in conjunction with new security guidelines that ensure public safety goals are fully met.

NDOC will continue to work closely with local and state public health officials to ensure the health and safety of staff and offenders.

Department COVID-19 updates can be found at http://doc.nv.gov/About/Press_Release/covid19_updates.

More information about Nevada's COVID-19 response can be found at <https://nvhealthresponse.nv.gov>.

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