



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of the Secretary

6776 Reisterstown Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21215
410-585-3346 – TOLL FREE 877-379-8636 • www.dpsscs.maryland.gov

STATE OF MARYLAND

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RE-ENTRY SERVICES

OOS IB # 2023-01

Effective: June 6, 2023

INFORMATION BULLETIN

SUBJECT: Guidance for Correctional Operations COVID-19 Management and Strategies for Enhanced COVID-19 Prevention

Except for the Baltimore Central Booking and Intake Center, the following procedures and guidance are in effect for all Department correctional facilities until notified of a change.

PPE Requirements and COVID-19 Management in Correctional Facilities

No PPE is required in a correctional facility except in as required:

- By the Department's Mandatory Respiratory Protection Program, which shall continue as normal in accordance with *ADM.055.0007—DPSCS Respiratory Protection Program*;
- When working in medical and mental health areas as described below; and
- When transporting certain incarcerated individuals as described below.

However, the Department will continue to:

- Provide quality surgical masks for employees and incarcerated individuals whose personal preference is to be masked;
- Make hand sanitizer routinely available and easily accessible throughout correctional facilities; and
- Encourage all employees, visitors, and incarcerated individuals to practice good hand hygiene.

PPE Requirements in Medical and Mental Health Areas of a Correctional Facility

- Medical and mental health staff shall be masked when in face-to-face contact with patients.

- All incarcerated individuals shall wear a surgical mask at all times when in medical and mental health treatment areas, unless directed otherwise by a healthcare provider.
- Incarcerated individuals are not required to mask when obtaining mediation through a pass-through window or when meeting for group therapy sessions, unless directed otherwise by a healthcare professional.

For the purposes of this IB:

“Medical and mental health treatment areas” include a hospital, clinic, designated treatment area, mental health unit, and dispensaries when face-to-face contact is required.

“Face-to-face contact” means less than 6 feet away for more than 5 minutes, or when providing treatment in a confined space, such as an examination or treatment room.

PPE Requirements when Transporting Incarcerated Individuals

Standard Medical Transport

- Correctional officers in the vehicle shall wear a surgical mask.
- Incarcerated individuals shall wear a surgical mask except when a healthcare provider advises otherwise.

COVID-19 Medical Transport

- Correctional officers in the transport vehicle shall wear an N95 respirator.
- Incarcerated individuals shall wear a surgical mask except when a healthcare provider advises otherwise.

Other Transport

- Employees and incarcerated individuals whose personal preference is to be masked may wear a surgical mask.

Infection Control Practices

- The environmental compliance and safety officers (ECSOs) will ensure that locations where individuals are required to wear PPE are properly stocked with the necessary items.
- ECSOs will ensure that sufficient hygiene and cleaning supplies are available to all employees and incarcerated individuals.
- As stated above, the Department’s Mandatory Respiratory Protection Program will continue as normal in accordance with ADM.055.0007— DPSCS Mandatory Respiratory Protection Program.

COVID-19 Vaccinations

- As suggested by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) Guidance dated August 17, 2022, anyone working in, residing in, or visiting a correctional facility is encouraged to be vaccinated and keep up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccines and recommended boosters.
- To the extent that the MDH makes COVID-19 vaccines and recommended boosters available to the Department, the Department will continue to offer employees free vaccines and recommended boosters. For additional information on vaccines and boosters visit DBM's COVID-19 FAQ webpage.
- The Department shall continue to ensure that all incarcerated individuals are offered all routine vaccinations and recommended boosters.

COVID-19 Testing

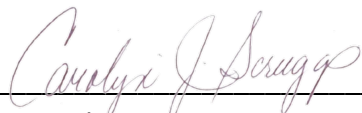
- At Home COVID-19 Rapid Antigen tests will be made available to DPSCS employees and authorized vendors and contractors.
- Diagnostic PCR testing will continue for incarcerated individuals who:
 - Shows signs or symptoms of COVID-19;
 - Have been potentially exposed to another individual known to have contracted COVID-19; or
 - Have been identified as being in close contact with someone known to have contracted COVID-19.

Additional COVID Management Practices and Strategies for COVID-19 Prevention

- The Department will continue to waive inmate medical fees and co-pays.
- The Department will continue to follow the CDC's recommendations regarding isolation and quarantine periods for inmates:
- Each of the Department's correctional facilities shall identify and maintain isolation and quarantine housing for incarcerated individuals recovering from or being evaluated for COVID-19.
- Managing officials may consider enhanced COVID-19 prevention strategies when the COVID-19 hospital admission rate is medium or high, or when facility-level factors indicate increased risk.

- Because COVID-19 hospital Admission rates do not always reflect the COVID-19 risk in correctional and detention facilities, managing officials should also assess facility-level factors that reflect its unique characteristics, operations, and populations to guide decisions about when to add or remove additional prevention measures.
- Facility-level factors that may indicate that enhanced prevention measures are needed include, but are not limited to:
 - The facility's vaccination coverage;
 - The current level of transmission within the facility;
 - The risk of severe health outcomes for the people in the facility; and
 - The facility's structural and operational characteristics.
- Managing officials implementing enhanced prevention strategies should consult *ADM.055.0012– Utilization Protective Equipment and Additional Levels of Protection*.

Approved:



Carolyn J. Scruggs, Secretary

Date: June 6, 2023

Distribution:

A – Facility/Agency Reference Set

S – All Correctional Facility Staff