

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE ADAM WOOL

Session: January – April
State Capitol, Room 501
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
Phone: 907-465-4976

House Finance Committee

Interim: May – December
1292 Sadler Way, Ste. 308
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Phone: 907-452-6084



Dear Commissioner Dahlstrom,

In recent weeks, the Governor has been lifting COVID-19 public health mandates as a response to our state's ongoing containment of the virus. This will help Alaskans get back to work and also allow people to slowly resume social interactions with others. Certainly, the COVID crisis has presented significant challenges to all of our citizens, including those who are incarcerated and who work within our correctional facilities. On April 2, the Department of Corrections released information to several of the frequently asked questions they had received in an informational pamphlet. In consideration of the changes in state health mandate policy and the continually evolving nature of this health crisis, our office would like to receive updates to these questions as well as have a few new questions answered in the areas of testing, visitation, correctional staff, and insitutions. In particular, we would like to be provided an update on the following inquiries:

Testing:

- 1.) Does every facility currently have test kits?
- 2.) Are inmates being tested upon intake/transfer to a DOC facility?
- 3.) Are tests available for asymptomatic people, including both inmates or correctional officers?
- 4.) Is rapid testing available for people who have come into contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case?

Visitation:

- 1.) What are the current visitation opporutnities for inmates to interact with friends and family?
- 2.) Are there current plans to resume normal visitation with friends and family (with health and safety precautions)?
- 3.) What are the current professional visitation (i.e. attorney visitation) opportunities?
- 4.) Are there current plans to resume normal professional visitation?
- 5.) What are the current outside contractor and volunteer visitation opportunities, including for rehabilitative/educational programs?
- 6.) Are there current plans to resume normal contractor and volunteer visitation opportunities resume?
- 7.) Are there interruptions or changes in the delivery of incoming inmate mail during this time?

Correctional Staff:

- 1.) Are all correctional officers/staff recieving COVID-19 tests, even if they are asymptomatic?
- 2.) Are all correctional officers able to receive PPE (including masks)?

- 3.) Are correctional officers able to be tested at department facilities, or do they need to seek their local provider?
- 4.) Is contact tracing being conducted for correctional officers/ staff who test positive for COVID-19?

Insitutions

- 1.) Are inmates allowed to meet in groups of 10 or less for programs or classes run by a DOC employee?
- 2.) How have dining services for inmates been affected during this time?
- 3.) How have recreational opportunities for inmates been affected during this time?

Additionally, our office would like an update on the Palmer Correctional facility re-opening process, as well as the current recruitment efforts being made by the Department for correctional officers.

Please feel free to reach out to my office with any clarifying questions on these inquiries. Thank you for your work on behalf of Alaska's prison population, correctional officers, and all staff that serve in the Department of Corrections.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Adam Wool". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Adam Wool
Representative, District 5
Fairbanks, Alaska