Covid-19 Response in Prisons

Description

This documents includes:

Commissioner’s Instruction
Commissioner’s Broadcasts
Coronavirus Factsheet – Prisoners
Coronavirus Factsheet – Staff
Coronavirus Factsheet – Visitors
Commissioner’s Letter to Prisoners
Coronavirus Visitor Questionnaire

Point of Contact

Department of Corrective Services Western Australia

Additional Covid-19 resources are available at: http://bit.ly/2U0oKLG
If you would like to send us information about Covid-19, please fill in this form: http://bit.ly/2WnqiRH
Commissioner’s Instruction
COVID-19
11 March 2020

For action by: Superintendents and Directors of Prisons, the Superintendent of Banksia Hill Detention Centre and Managers of Community Corrections, Youth Justice Centres and other work sites.

Background:
There have been a number of confirmed cases of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) detected in Australia.
As of 10 March 2020, there were six confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Western Australia.
Corrective Services is working in consultation with the Department of Health to limit the impact of COVID-19 on prisons, the justice system and the wider WA community.
Coronavirus can cause a range of symptoms from mild illness to pneumonia. Affected people may experience fever, flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat fatigue, difficulty breathing.
I have asked Assistant Commissioner Andrew Beck and my Staff Office Levi Islam to co-ordinate our response at HQ.
Corrective Service Executive staff are determining the appropriate procedures and management plans in response to latest advice from the Health Department.
I require the action and procedures in this instruction to be undertaken before 12 March 2020.

Instructions:

PRISON SITES & BANKSIA HILL

1. Attached to this instruction are a range of posters and fact sheets for display. You must personally ensure these are placed throughout your establishment.

2. You must report to AC Beck the barrier controls you have in place on entry to the prison and high risk areas today.

3. The attached letter to prisoners must be issued to every prisoner by lock up today.

4. Handwashing material must be available throughout your establishment and checked twice per day.

5. Operational Orders required by AC Beck must be completed on time.
6. Ensure there is appropriate screening in place at visitor centres. Ideally visitors should be screened as part of the telephone booking process, prior to their arrival at the site. A sample questionnaire is provided.

7. Remind staff daily to check the Department’s intranet for updated information.

**COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS AND YOUTH JUSTICE MANAGERS**

1. Attached to this instruction are a range of posters and fact sheets for display. You must personally ensure these are placed throughout your office.

2. You must report to AC Beck the barrier controls you have in place by today.

3. Handwashing material must be available throughout your office and checked twice per day.

4. Operational Orders required by AC Beck must be completed on time.

5. Remind staff daily to check the Department’s intranet for updated information.

**OTHER WORK SITES**

1. Attached to this instruction are a range of posters and fact sheets for display. You must personally ensure these are placed throughout your work site.

2. You must report to AC Beck the barrier controls you have in place.

3. Handwashing material must be available throughout your work site and checked twice per day.

4. Operational Orders required by AC Beck must be completed on time.

5. Remind staff daily to check the Department’s intranet for updated information.

---

**Issue date:** 11 March 2020  
**Effective date:** 11 March 2020  
**Expiry date:** Until further notice

Issued on the authority of the Commissioner of Corrective Services, Department of Justice.
Dear Colleagues,

COVID-19 Taskforce

Further to my Broadcast on 11 March 2020, the number of confirmed cases of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) detected in Western Australia has increased to 14 out of more than 3,780 tests. One death has been recorded. Corrective Services continues to work closely with the Department of Health, the Western Australian Police Force and other government agencies to limit the impact of COVID-19 on prisons, the justice system and the wider community.

The Corrective Services COVID-19 Taskforce headed up by Assistant Commissioner Andrew Beck is operational and based on level 23 of the David Malcolm Justice Centre.

The Taskforce consists of the following staff:
- Andrew Beck, Assistant Commissioner – Taskforce Leader
- Levi Islam, Staff Officer to the Commissioner – Taskforce Coordinator
- Stuart Young, Assistant Superintendent Operations – Adult Male Prisons Response Coordinator
- Samantha Johnson, Assistant Director Operations Women & Young People – W&YP Response Coordinator
- Anthony Howson, Director Adult Community Corrections – Community Corrections Coordinator
- Trudi Stone, Senior Project Officer – Taskforce Support.

The Taskforce is responsible for:
- Ensuring a methodical and practical approach is taken to prevent staff, prisoner, offender and detainee exposure to COVID-19
- Monitoring and reporting the day to day operations of Corrective Services’ workplaces during the declared pandemic and in the event of an increased threat from COVID-19
- Coordinating and monitoring recovery processes.

Further information
The COVID-19 Taskforce has set up the dedicated email address COVID19Queries@justice.wa.gov.au for staff to raise any queries they may have in relation to the management of COVID-19 in Corrective Services.

Staff should continue to refer to the Department of Health for daily updates, travel advice and other specific information on COVID-19.
Alternatively, if you have health related queries please refer to HealthyWA or call the Coronavirus Information Line 1800 020 080.

Tony Hassall  
Commissioner, Corrective Services

13 March 2020
Dear Colleagues,

COVID-19 Taskforce

As you may be aware, there have been a number of confirmed cases of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) detected in Australia and as of 10 March 2020, there were six confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Western Australia.

Corrective Services is working in consultation with the Department of Health to limit the impact of COVID-19 on prisons, the justice system and the wider WA community. My senior executive is closely monitoring the situation in relation to COVID-19 and is responding accordingly to minimise the risk of its spread. While it is business as usual across Corrective Services, practical and proportionate steps need to be taken to slow the possible transmission of COVID-19 into custodial facilities.

In order to ensure that this is a coordinated response, I have tasked Assistant Commissioner Andrew Beck to head a Corrective Services COVID-19 Taskforce. Andy comes to us with an extensive background in Corrections having previously been a Prison Superintendent and the Deputy Commissioner for Prison Operations in Queensland. With the assistance of Levi Islam, Andy will coordinate Corrective Services response to ensure a methodical and practical approach is taken to manage and monitor the day to day operations of our facilities in the event of an increased threat from COVID-19.

Andy and his team will be the single point of contact and the Department's one source of truth for all internal and external communications and actions regarding Corrective Services COVID-19 response. All areas are expected to cooperate with Andy via their respective chain of command and provide him with site specific Operational Orders, contingency plans and site updates in a timely manner.

Tony Hassall
Commissioner, Corrective Services

11 March 2020
Dear Colleagues

Coronavirus information
With Coronavirus becoming a nationwide concern, our Department is working with the Department of Health and Population Health WA to make sure the information we give out is accurate.

Communications materials
We will be distributing Health Department posters in English and Mandarin to ensure staff and the general public are kept informed. Signage is also available for display in visitor centres and gate houses.

The Department has put together two posters for staff to use, one for prisoners and one for all prison visitors. They can be downloaded from the intranet. The Health Department also has more information in a useful poster form:


For more information, including questions and answers, go to [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Measures Corrective Services are taking to minimise potential exposure to the coronavirus
All new intakes into custody will be given a risk assessment relating to their potential exposure to the virus, either due to recent travel or contact with confirmed cases.

If risk is identified, an individual management plan will be developed by our Health Services staff in conjunction with the Health Department and Population Health. Our Health Services staff are alert for early signs of possible infection. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and preventative measures in line with the NHMRC Infection Control Guidelines and Health Services policy and procedures on Infectious Diseases and Outbreaks, as well as Health Department Guidelines on Case Management will be followed.

The coordination of individualised case management will occur in conjunction with Population Health as coronavirus is a notifiable disease. Custodial Services will ensure compliance with infectious disease precautions and coordinate safe placement of prisoners.
Isolation of offenders not requiring hospitalisation is a challenge in our facilities due to our high bed occupancy and shared ablutions – so population management requires close co-ordination between Health Services and Custodial Services. We are ensuring the availability of PPE including masks, gloves and access to hand hygiene for all staff and visitors.

The best way to prevent the spread of the virus is by regularly washing your hands, not sneezing or coughing near others, and staying away from anyone who has the virus.

Thanks for your attention on this important issue.

Tony Hassall
Commissioner, Corrective Services

5 February 2020
COVID-19 – Coronavirus

Fact Sheet for PRISONERS

There have been a number of cases of Coronavirus detected in Australia and Western Australia.

A number of actions are being taken to limit the impact on prisons, prisoners and Corrective Services staff.

The Department of Justice Corrective Services is following Health Department guidelines and advice and will update our processes accordingly.

Please see below update as at 11 March 2020.

What is Coronavirus and COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. COVID-19 is a new Coronavirus that was first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019.

What do you need to know?

If you are a new arrival and have been overseas in the past 14 days, you could be at risk of having Coronavirus. Please self-monitor for symptoms of the virus and alert health staff if you have any concerns.

For all other prisoners, if you have been in contact with someone that you think may have Coronavirus please self-monitor for symptoms and alert health staff if you have any concerns.

What are the symptoms?

Coronavirus can cause a range of symptoms from mild illness to pneumonia. Affected people may experience:

- fever;
- flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue;
- difficulty breathing.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, please tell prison staff immediately and ask that they alert health services.

How can we help prevent the spread of Coronavirus?

Practice good hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.
Prisoners are encouraged to:

- wash hands regularly with water and soap (please see signs for the correct way to wash hands);
- cough and sneeze into your elbow and not your hand;

You may be asked to wear a face mask and/or staff working with you may wear one.

If you do become unwell treatment will be rest and fluids.

What about visitors?

Visitors will be screened over the phone to determine if they are at-risk of spreading Coronavirus.

Please ask friends and family not to visit you if they have:

- travelled overseas in the past 14 days and are unwell;
- travelled to Mainland China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia (including Bali), Japan, Singapore or Thailand; or
- any flu-like symptoms, fever or shortness of breath.

In the event that your family and friends are unable to visit due to health reasons we will endeavour to make allowances or arrangements to give you more phone time, skype access or

Attendance at court

There may be an instance where you miss court due to your own illness, or the risk of transmission.
In this event Prison Staff will notify the Courts and arrangements will be made.

In the event that you are unwell, either with Coronavirus symptoms or confirmed Coronavirus, but you need to attend Court you will be asked to wear a mask, will need to cough and sneeze into your elbow and will need to wash your hands regularly with soap and water.

Please don’t be alarmed if staff escorting you wear masks and gloves.

If you have any questions or concerns

Contact your unit or wing manager.
COVID-19 – Coronavirus

Fact Sheet for STAFF

There have been a number of cases of Coronavirus detected in Australia and Western Australia.

A number of actions are being taken to limit the impact on prisons, prisoners, and other Corrective Services staff in Community Corrections and Youth Justice.

The Department of Justice Corrective Services is following Health Department guidelines and advice and will update our processes accordingly.

Please see below update as at 11 March 2020.

What is Coronavirus and COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. COVID-19 is a new Coronavirus that was first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019.

What do you need to know?

All Department staff are required to observe the self-isolation and infection control measures as advised by the latest WA Department of Health Agency Advisory - COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease) as follows:

- all employees who have left or transited through mainland China (excluding Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan) on or after 1 February 2020 must isolate themselves until 14 days after leaving China;
- all employees who have left or transited through Iran on or after 1 March 2020 must isolate themselves until 14 days after leaving Iran;
- all employees who have left or transited through the Republic of Korea on or after 5 March 2020 must isolate themselves until 14 days after leaving the Republic of Korea.

Updated advice can be accessed on the WA Department of Health website.

All employees who have returned from overseas travel in the last 14 days should self-monitor for symptoms and immediately isolate themselves if they become unwell.

Coronavirus updates for the Department are available on JustUs, if you have any concerns you can contact HR through the Online Enquiry function.

For health concerns, please refer to the WA Department of Health website or you can contact the dedicated Coronavirus information line on 1800 020 080.
What are the symptoms?

Coronavirus can cause a range of symptoms from mild illness to pneumonia. Affected people may experience:
- fever;
- flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue;
- difficulty breathing.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, please tell your manager and alert health services.

How can we help prevent the spread of Coronavirus?

Practice good hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.

We are all encouraged to:
- wash hands regularly with water and soap (please see signs for the correct way to wash hands);
- cough and sneeze into your elbow and not your hand;
- avoid close contact with anyone who has a cold or flu-like symptoms where practicable.

You do not need to wear a mask if you are healthy. While the use of masks can help to prevent transmission of disease from infected patients to others, masks are not currently recommended for use by healthy members of the public for the prevention of infections like coronavirus.

Due to the fact that COVID-19 is a virus, if you do become unwell treatment generally will be rest and fluids.

What about visitors?

Visitors will need to be screened over the phone to determine if they are at-risk of spreading Coronavirus.

Please refer to the questionnaire for ANYONE who is entering prison, detention centre grounds or a community corrections or youth justice centre.

Any visitors who are displaying signs and symptoms of being unwell can be asked to leave the facility immediately as per the signage provided.

With regard to visitors, if a person is denied access for Health reasons, where practicable alternative arrangements should be made to enable prisoners to maintain contact with their families which may include additional phone calls.

If you have any questions or concerns

Please refer to your manager or superintendent.
COVID-19 – Coronavirus

Fact Sheet for VISITORS

There have been a number of cases of Coronavirus detected in Australia and Western Australia.

A number of actions are being taken to limit the impact on prisons, prisoners and Corrective Services staff.

The Department of Justice Corrective Services is following Health Department guidelines and advice and will update our processes accordingly.

Before you enter a prison please consider the below information which is designed to keep you, the prisoners and our staff safe.

What is Coronavirus and COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. COVID-19 is a new Coronavirus that was first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019.

What do you need to know?

In order to keep prisoners and staff safe, and prevent transmission of the virus into our facilities we will be conducting some screening questions about your recent travel activity.

Please keep in mind that you will be denied entry:

- If you have left or transited through mainland China, Iran, Italy or South Korea in the last 14 days;
- If you have travelled overseas in the last 14 days and are displaying signs of having Coronavirus you will not be allowed into the facility; OR
- If you have had contact with someone who has been confirmed to have Coronavirus you will not be allowed into the facility.

Countries considered to pose a risk of transmission include:

**Higher risk:** Mainland China, Iran, Italy, South Korea

**Moderate risk:** Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia (including Bali), Japan, Singapore, Thailand

If you are unable to visit due to health reasons please speak with staff about possible options available to you, such as extended phone time and skype allowances.

We are working to keep everyone safe, and appreciate your assistance with this.
What are the symptoms?

Coronavirus can cause a range of symptoms from mild illness to pneumonia. Affected people may experience:

- fever;
- flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue;
- difficulty breathing.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, please tell prison staff immediately.

How can we help prevent the spread of Coronavirus?

Practice good hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.

WA Health advises

- wash hands regularly with water and soap (please see signs for the correct way to wash hands);
- cough and sneeze into your elbow and not your hand.

If you do feel unwell, please leave the facility immediately and refer to Department of Health directive for more information.
Notice to All

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

As you may be aware, there have been a number of confirmed cases of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) detected in Australia and as of 10 March 2020, there were six confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Western Australia.

Corrective Services is working in consultation with the Department of Health to limit the impact of COVID-19 on prisons, the justice system and the wider WA community.

Coronavirus can cause a range of symptoms from mild illness to pneumonia with treatment generally being rest and fluids.

To reduce the risk of infection occurring in prisons, Corrective Services will be required to take a number of actions which may result in changes to your normal daily routine.

Your health and wellbeing is my concern which is why I have put these measures in place.

We will try to ensure that the changes are reasonable. I’ve asked your Superintendent to ensure any changes to your daily routine are communicated in the normal way.

Over the coming days, information will be posted on your notice board to tell you what you need to do to reduce the risk of spreading this disease. It is important that you read the information and follow the advice provided.

Corrective Services is working closely with the Department of Health to ensure the appropriate protections are in place for you, other prisoners and your visitors.

As a result, your visitors may be asked some additional questions. This is for the protection of staff, your visitors and you. We will aim to keep disruption to a minimum.

If you have any concerns please speak to your unit officer or a member of staff from health services.

Tony Hassall
Commissioner Corrective Services
Department of Justice
Western Australia
COVID-19 – Coronavirus

Questionnaire for ANYONE requesting access to Corrective Services facilities
(NOTE: Interpreter services and support for people with literacy difficulties may be required)

There have been a number of cases of Coronavirus detected in Australia and Western Australia.

Actions are being taken to limit the impact on Corrective Services facilities and processes will be updated accordingly to ensure the health and wellbeing of staff and residents.

Please see below questionnaire for ANYONE entering our facilities as at 11 March 2020. This document can be used by prison staff when booking prison visits over the phone.

QUESTIONNAIRE

As you may be aware, there has been a number of Coronavirus or COVID-19 cases detected in Australia. In order to ensure the health and safety of our staff [and prisoners/those visiting our facilities] we need to ask some questions before you can be provided access.

1. Have you left, or transited through mainland CHINA or IRAN in the last 14 days?
   (If YES – deny visit request, or request the person leave the facility and offer non-contact arrangement.)

2. Have you left, or transited through the REPUBLIC OF KOREA in the last 14 days?
   (If YES – deny visit request, or request the person leave the facility and offer non-contact arrangement.)

3. Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of Coronavirus in the last 14 days?
   (If YES – deny visit request, or request the person leave the facility and offer non-contact arrangement.)

4. Are you feeling unwell – do you have a fever, flu-like symptoms (including coughing, sore throat or headache, and/or have any shortness of breath?
   (If YES – deny visit request, or request the person leave the facility and offer non-contact arrangement.

   For staff members, please confirm if they have travelled overseas in the last 14 days before sending home.)

[STAFF NOTE: Additional phone calls and Skype E-visits have been approved as an alternative arrangement.]