Covid-19 Response in Prisons

Description

In order to stop the spreading of SARS-CoV-2, the National Administration of Penitentiaries has taken the following measures in all subordinated detention places:

- Visits from relatives and friends are cancelled, as well as conjugal visits;
- The number and the duration of phone calls was raised;
- All exits from the penitentiary, as a benefit for inmates, are postponed;
- Transferring inmates between detention places is made only in special cases;
- All inmate work outside of penitentiaries is cancelled;
- Personnel that works directly with inmates is equipped with protection equipment;
- Some activities were restricted;
- Contact between penitentiary staff and inmates is limited;
- Temporary restricting freedom of movement for inmates classified in open and semi-open regime, meaning that the cell doors are closed;
- Distribution of flyers with information;
- Posting information, both in the spaces where the social reintegration activities take place and in the detention units, in places visible and accessible to the inmates (clubs, gyms, visiting sector, information panels at the level of the sections, dining rooms, library, educator/psychologist/social worker, classrooms, medical offices);
- Transmitting periodically information about SARS-CoV-2 through the detention places own radio and television circuits;
- Q&A meetings with medical staff and inmates;
- Frequent sanitation activities of the detention spaces and the spaces designed for activities;
- Individual counselling activities (educational, social, psychological) in order to raise awareness, to accept strict hygiene measures, and to limit the spread of the virus.
Measures of raising awareness were taken in order to inform the inmates about:

- The characteristics of the new coronavirus, the risk situations to which they may be exposed, the symptoms of the infection, the treatment, the measures of prevention and isolation;
- The importance of signalling any risk situation to which certain persons have been exposed, as well as reporting any symptoms manifested by the persons in detention;
- Hygiene and sanitation measures;
- Maintaining a relaxed climate in the penitentiary environment, in the context in which a pandemic announced at national or international level can create panic situations amongst the population.

In order to inform the staff, different information materials on SARS-CoV-2, which can be accessed at any time, by all the staff in the penitentiary system have been posted on the internal web.

The measures are updated constantly as we try to keep the virus outside of the penitentiary system.

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