



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Oregon Department of Corrections

Robert Adams – Safety Administrator

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Brian Halfman
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Re: Response to complaint # 209439145

Please accept this as the response of the Department of Corrections (DOC) to the above cited complaints citing Snake River Correctional Institution (EOCI), and the allegations outlined below.

Allegation 1: AIC personal have asked guards to protective mask when interacting with them, for their personal safety. The guards have responded that they do not have to wear mask because it is not mandatory for them.

Location of hazard: Snake River Correctional Institution

It's an understatement to say that this is an unprecedented time for us at the Department of Corrections (DOC), as it is across the state, nation and the world. We have been working around the clock to slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect the people who work and live inside our institutions.

This includes implementing, maintaining and enforcing all Federal and State directives to the extent possible within a secured correctional institution setting.

The Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) has taken several actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 at all our institutions, community corrections offices, and worksites.

Below are the steps our agency has provided to all locations to follow, and, the steps that Snake Rivers Correctional Institution has taken to address the spread of this virus.

Face Covering/PPE:

- We have set up and maintained an Agency Operation Center (AOC) to ensure we are consistently addressing the spread of this virus according to the CDC, OHA, OSHA guidelines. This includes working with the state Operation Center and working with each locations Incident Command team to implement our agency plan.
- SRCI has set up their own Incident Command Team to include all positions in an emergency preparedness. This includes ensuring they are meeting the agency's direction, the governor's direction and addressing internal staff/AIC/Public concerns.
- We have utilized the Interim Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Correctional and Detention Facilities from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to establish our use of PPE regarding the COVID-19 response.
- Our Deputy Director, Heidi Steward released an E-mail to all DOC staff and Contractors on 7/13/2020 with the following verbiage:
"To mitigate our risk of COVID-19, being mandated to wear face coverings at all times, and further litigation – those found not using face coverings when required will be reminded. Anyone within six feet of others refusing to wear a face covering after being reminded, will be sent home for the day without pay and progressive discipline will begin. This is effective Tuesday, July 14"
- All staff working inside a DOC location are required to wear a face covering if they cannot maintain a six foot separation.
- Anyone entering the Health Services Department, Food Service Department, Oregon Correction Enterprises area must wear a face covering at all times.
- Security staff escorting patients out on medical trips are mandated to wear mask and gloves.
- Anyone working within six feet of a positive COVID-19 person, should wear the appropriate PPE, to include an N-95 respirator.
- DOC/SRCI has taken several actions to ensure that our PPE is accounted for, distributed according to CDC/OHA/OSHA directives, proper training has been conducted, and a protocol for emergency training/use of PPE is communicated.
- Staff are allowed to bring in their own face covering
- DOC has ordered and received 60,000 face coverings from Oregon Correction Enterprises for distribution to staff and AIC's
- Posted PPE posters that supply information on how to properly wear PPE
- Provided an agency on-line education on PPE use, respirator and training
- Provide consistent agency communication updates to all staff regarding our agency plan on receiving, training, distributing and use of PPE
- Each section has taken an inventory of their PPE supplies and are distributing/training according to the CDC/OHA/OSHA guidelines.
- SRCI's command center has made sure that the Health Service Department staff are equipped with the proper PPE/Equipment/Training and Emergency plans to accommodate the different levels of severity needed for this virus.
- We have eliminated the unnecessary use of N95 masks. It has been standard practice for the use of N95 mask to do jobs that do not require an N95 or higher. We did this to save our PPE for required staff
- Screening at the entrance to the institution
- Posted handwashing signs throughout the institution;

- Unit orderlies sanitize the dining room using bleach between meals;
- Sanitize the showers and other common areas throughout the institution using bleach;
- Increased cleaning requirements to include bleaching the walls and surfaces in dayrooms, housing units and dining tables up to 3 times per day;

Summary:

DOC's institutions were not designed to keep people six feet away from one another. AICs live in communal living facilities, either in a dorm or in a celled housing unit. DOC is limited in using other areas of the institutions, like classrooms and corridors, because AICs must be supervised by DOC employees. Our priority is safe and secure operations of our facilities for those who work and live in them.

As described above, DOC is following the face covering guidelines at SRCI to the maximum extent possible given DOC's custodial authority, duties and mission under Oregon law.

We are consistently (daily/all day) reviewing and addressing any and all concerns, complying with the Governor's mandates, following CDC, OHA, and OSHA's directions, and consistently communicating/educating our staff and AICs so we can slow the spread of COVID-19 and keep our staff and AIC's safe.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Bob Adams

Oregon Department of Corrections- Safety Administrator

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