



March 23, 2020

COVID-19 Update: Whitehorse Correctional Centre and Yukon Community Corrections

The Corrections Branch is working diligently towards preparedness during the rapidly evolving COVID-19 global pandemic. The Branch is making concerted efforts to ensure the health and safety of staff, clients, and the public while also ensuring the provision of humane essential services.

The Corrections Branch is taking a proactive approach. In consultation with the Yukon Communicable Disease Centre and in line with the recommendations from the office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, a number of precautionary measures have been implemented to reduce the potential for exposure and transmission. The following are some of the steps that have been taken at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre (WCC) and in Yukon Community Corrections (YCC).

The Whitehorse Correctional Centre

- WCC Health Services have delivered information sessions to inmates on COVID-19;
- WCC staff have received education sessions on the use of recommended personal protective equipment, including hand sanitizer, and this equipment has been made available throughout the facility;
- All front-line correctional staff and managers have been reminded of the direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health on March 22, 2020 to self-isolate if they have recently returned home to the territory;
- As essential service workers, all front-line correctional staff and managers have been reminded that they are not permitted to attend any social gatherings, even those with less than 10 people;
- Additional cleaning measures in the secure area of the WCC have been implemented;
- All non-essential training for staff has been suspended until further notice;
- All inmate programming facilitated by external contractors and community partners have been suspended until further notice, although all programming facilitated by correctional officers is still available to those incarcerated at the WCC;
- A new tool has been implemented to screen all persons admitted to either the WCC or the Arrest Processing Unit upon initial intake;
- Court appearances from the correctional centre are being facilitated via video;
- Intermittent offender reporting is being closely monitored and assessed on a weekly basis. Where feasible, alternate community supervision arrangements are being made;
- Signage regarding COVID-19 has been posted throughout the facility for both inmates and visitors, additional hand sanitizing measures will be put into place for visitors and staff, and screening measures of all individuals attending the facility for visits have been implemented;

- As of Tuesday March 24, 2020, all personal visits with members of the public will be suspended until further notice;
- In order to support inmates with continued personal connections with family and friends, two free daily telephone calls are being provided to inmates as per an agreement with the inmate telephone service provider;
- Professional visits are still permitted, however, all visits are currently being offered in a secure manner, with a physical barrier between visitors and inmates to prevent droplet and contact transmission. Disinfectant products have been placed on both sides of the visiting area to enable each individual to clean the area prior to the visit. Professional visits with lawyers are also being facilitated via video conferencing. As per normal routine, all visits must be booked in advance; and,
- An order for increased canteen stock has been placed to mitigate any disruption in service delivery.

As a reminder, the kiosk located in the WCC's reception area is still available for members of the public to deposit funds into inmate trust and phone accounts. Funds may also be added to trust accounts by mailing a money order to the WCC while funds to phone accounts can be deposited by calling 1-866-713-4761 or online at www.inmatephones.ca.

Yukon Community Corrections

- Signage regarding COVID-19 has been posted throughout the YCC office;
- Additional cleaning materials have been made available for both client and staff use;
- Probation officers have begun shifting to a supervision model whereby clients check-in via phone or video depending on the individualized circumstances of the client;
- All non-essential training for staff has been suspended until further notice;
- All in-person group programming for clients has been cancelled until further notice; and,
- All travel for probation officers to conduct in-person supervision or attend circuit court has been suspended until further notice. To ensure there are no gaps in service delivery, supervision in communities will be done via phone or video technology.

The Corrections Branch will continue to work collaboratively with the Yukon Communicable Disease Centre and the office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health to ensure continuity in service delivery without sacrificing the health and safety of staff, clients, and the public.

Sincerely,



Andrea Monteiro
Director, Corrections