



May 12, 2020

COVID-19 Update: Whitehorse Correctional Centre

The Corrections Branch continues to work diligently in responding to the ever-evolving COVID-19 global pandemic. Over the course of the last several months, the Branch has implemented a number of precautionary measures to reduce the potential for exposure and transmission of the virus at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre (WCC). A fulsome outline of the proactive practices that have been adopted at the WCC and in Yukon Community Corrections was previously circulated in public memoranda on March 23, 2020 and April 1, 2020.

In responding to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Corrections Branch has taken a measured approach aimed at ensuring the health and safety of correctional staff, clients, and the public while also ensuring the provision of humane essential services. This approach has been developed in consultation with the Yukon Communicable Disease Centre and has been guided by recommendations from the office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health as well as the principle of least restrictive measures.

The Corrections Branch continues to monitor and assess the dynamic situation presented by the COVID-19 global pandemic with extreme care to ensure that its response is appropriate in the circumstances and proportional to the level of risk presented as new developments arise. The measured approach that has been implemented aims to balance health and safety with values that are integral to the delivery of correctional services, including dignity, respect, and legality.

As of May 1, 2020, all 11 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Yukon had recovered and no new cases have been reported. As such, the Corrections Branch has taken steps to strike an appropriate balance in its approach given the current, presenting situation in Yukon. This has included:

- As of May 5, 2020, redeploying WCC's receptionist back to the usual post in the institution's reception area.
- As of May 12, 2020, reinstating personal visits with members of the public on weekdays at 17:45 and 19:00.

- o In order to continue to maintain inmate safety, these visits will be offered in a secure manner, with a physical barrier between visitors and inmates to prevent droplet and contact transmission. Prior to entering the WCC, all visitors will be required to use hand sanitizer. Before permitting the visit to take place, WCC employees will ask each visitor a series of COVID-19 screening questions. Only two visitors will be permitted per visit session and measures will be implemented to ensure that physical distancing between visitors is maintained. Disinfectant products have been placed on both sides of the visiting area to enable each individual to clean the area prior to the visit. Since the ability to physically distance while escorting a visitor to the visiting location is limited, the escorting WCC employee will be issued appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Recognizing that WCC personal visits are still limited, the correctional centre will continue to provide each inmate with a free, 20-minute telephone call every day.

As the situation presented by the COVID-19 global pandemic evolves, the Corrections Branch will maintain its measured approach to appropriately balance risks to health and safety with the provision of humane essential services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrea Monteiro".

Andrea Monteiro
Director, Corrections