



July 13, 2021

COVID-19 Update: Whitehorse Correctional Centre

On the afternoon of Friday, July 9, 2021 the Corrections Branch was informed that one of the individuals currently housed at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre (WCC) had tested positive for COVID-19. Upon receiving this notification, the Branch immediately began working with the office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) and Yukon Communicable Disease Control (YCDC) to determine whether there was any contact or exposure risk to the inmates and staff of the correctional centre. In consultation with Medical Officers of Health and YCDC, the correctional centre altered the facility's daily operations to mitigate against potential risk to the inmate and prisoner populations. The following measures were implemented:

Friday July 9, 2021

- Beginning at approximately 1300hrs, all inmates within WCC were confined to their cells to facilitate contact tracing and mitigate against the spread of the virus, only emergency inmate movement was permitted (e.g. for court or medical purposes);
- A fulsome review was conducted by WCC staff to identify all inmates, police prisoners and correctional staff who may have been in close contact with the individual who tested positive for COVID-19;
- All inmates identified as potential close contacts were tested for COVID-19;
- All medications were administered to inmates in their cells;
- All meals were served in disposable containers and all inmates dined in their cells;
- All correctional staff were directed to wear full personal protective equipment (e.g. mask, gloves, eye protection, surgical gown) when interacting with inmates and police prisoners;
- Temporary restrictions were placed on personal and professional visits, laundry services, and inmate access to showers and unit telephones; and,
- A correctional employee went door-to-door to speak to each inmate about the reason for the cell confinement and to respond to client inquiries.

Saturday July 10, 2021

- All inmates that were identified as potential close contacts were tested for COVID-19. All of these tests yielded negative results.
- Contact tracing and on-site testing for staff continued at WCC;

- All inmates remained confined to their cells as per the direction of the office of the CMOH; however, the majority of inmates were individually permitted outside of their cell for a total of 30 minutes to shower and were provided the opportunity to use the telephone;
- All meals were served in disposable containers and all inmates dined in their cells;
- The majority of medications were administered to inmates in their cells;
- All in-person visits continued to be suspended;
- Inmates were provided with a written memorandum regarding the current situation at the correctional centre and correctional staff again spoke to each inmate individually about the current situation.

Sunday July 11, 2021

- On-site testing for staff continued at WCC;
- In consultation with the office of the CMOH and YCDC, the Whitehorse Correctional Centre lifted cell confinement for individuals housed in the women's unit. All other individuals remained confined to their cells for the duration of the day and were permitted outside of their cell for a total of 30 minutes to use the unit telephone and/or shower;
- All meals were served in disposable containers and all inmates dined in their cells;
- The majority of medications were administered to inmates in their cells;
- With the exception of one out of territory professional visit, all in-person visits continued to be suspended;
- Temporary restriction on laundry services was lifted; and,
- Personal protective equipment requirements for correctional staff were modified after discussions with the office of the CMOH and YCDC.

Monday July 12, 2021

- On-site testing for staff continued at WCC;
- The temporary cell confinement for the majority of inmates was lifted, with the exception of those continuing to require medical isolation as per the office of the CMOH;
- All inmate movement off of living units has been limited to movement required for medical and/or court purposes;
- Regular meal service resumed with the continued use of disposable meal trays;
- Attempts have been made to limit staff movement within the correctional centre; and,
- Temporary restrictions on in-person personal and professional visits were extended until Wednesday, July 14, 2021.

As of July 12, all correctional staff that were identified as potential close contacts have been notified and recommended for COVID-19 testing. As of July 12, 2021, all of the COVID-19 tests conducted on inmates and staff have yielded negative results.

The Corrections Branch will continue to liaise with the office of the CMOH and YCDC. As the situation presented by COVID-19 evolves, the Branch will continue to take 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 guided by the principle of least restrictive measures.

Sincerely,



Andrea Monteiro
Director, Corrections