



SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, COUNTY OF NASSAU

Sheriff's Memo

TO: INMATE POPULATION
FROM: JAMES E. DZURENDA, SHERIFF
DATE: MARCH 20, 2021
SUBJECT: COVID UPDATE

As of today, March 20, 2021, the Nassau Correctional Center has 2 staff and 2 inmates who have recently tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. Nassau County reported 632 new cases of COVID-19 positive cases 48 hours ago and another 702 new positive cases in the past 24 hours. Nassau County currently has one of the highest infection rates of any of the New York State Counties. Yesterday's report indicated 2 residents in Nassau County have died of COVID-19, today's report indicates an additional 6 people died from Covid-19.

While it's true that that today, we do not see as many residents dying or contracting COVID-19 as we saw in March-June 2020. However, people are still passing this virus on to others and people are still dying right around us. Those that are most vulnerable to the virus and have elevated potential for death are those age 55 and older, those who are overweight, and those that have underlying medical history impacting their breathing or immune systems.

Correctional centers are at great risk for pandemic contagion due to their confined structures and they house some of the most vulnerable population. Sadly this population has the highest possibility of dying and this population exists here at the Nassau County Correction Center as it does throughout the world. As Agency Head, I have to do everything possible to protect those most vulnerable of dying. For this reason, the Correctional Center is still not in full operation. Those that have COVID-19, but show no symptoms, can pass on COVID-19 to someone in the population that may not get sick, but can pass it on to an inmate who is older, overweight, or has underlying medical issues which may result in that persons death.

I do understand the importance and impact that visiting has with the inmate population. I too want to restore visiting and outside programs as soon as it is safe to do so. I am also being guided by the Governor's Office as it relates to the NYS Department of Corrections Covid-19 related procedures. NYS will begin scheduling inmates from various counties including Nassau County, in the weeks ahead. Dozens of inmates anxiously await their discharge from the Correctional Center and this has been delayed by Covid-19 and the NYS DOC shutting down intake of inmates from the counties. Their most recent procedure prohibits the intake of a facility's inmates if there is even one positive inmate. That shows how serious the NYS takes this pandemic.

Currently, we are setting up safety measures, using the CDC Guidelines, to allow scheduled attorney visiting. If these safety measures prove successful, we will develop safety measures to begin limited scheduled family visiting. The community infection rate will also be monitored daily. We will increase activities as soon as it is safe. Again, one staff or inmate death is too many. Operations will return back to normal regular operations when safe. I appreciate everyone's patience and understanding throughout this crisis.

James E. Dzurenda, Sheriff