

Regarding masks, no signed waiver will be required to receive a mask.

We've been closely following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CDC's guidance on the use of masks has recently changed, and we've worked hard to quickly ensure that all of our staff and those in our care have access to masks consistent with this new guidance.

The CDC [makes it clear](#) that the mask recommendation "complements but does not replace" other critical steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. To make sure that anyone wearing a mask fully understands that they may not be preventative and that it's important to continue measures like social distancing and proper hygiene recommendations, we will provide an educational handout. Again, no signed waiver will be required to receive a mask.

As we all adjust to the rapid changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, our company will continue to adapt our practices and policies in accordance with guidance from health experts to ensure the health and safety of our employees, those in our care and our communities.

Regarding the pepper spray claim, those allegations are patently false. On April 10, there was no use of force at the Otay Mesa Detention Center, nor were any chemical agents dispersed.

It is true that face masks were issued to every individual in our care at Otay Mesa. The temporary removal of three detainees from one of the pods was in direct response to their being disruptive during the issuance of the face masks. At no time was any force used to remove these individuals, and they were returned to the pod a short while later.

The facts and circumstances surrounding this event were shared with our government partner, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and we encourage you to contact them for confirmation of the above information.

### **Response to Senator Harris' statement and prevention measures**

We're working closely with our partners at Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and ICE Health Services Corps (IHSC), which provides the healthcare at the facility, to ensure the health and safety of everyone at the Otay Mesa Detention Center. In addition to the steps we put in place several weeks ago, we've updated and expanded our response to COVID-19 at the facility in the following ways:

- Movement around the facility has been limited, with the exception of court hearings or a medical emergencies.
- Housing pods with positive cases are under quarantine.
- Meals are being served in the housing pods rather than the dining facility.
- Masks are being provided to all staff and detainees in accordance with updated CDC recommendations.

We had already been separating high-medical-risk detainees prior to having any cases at Otay Mesa and, at the direction of ICE, all social visitation had been suspended effective March 13, 2020, until further notice. We continue to regularly update detainees and staff about positive cases at the facility.

For reference, the following statement includes steps that have already been in place at the facility for some time. You can also learn more about our company's pandemic response on the [dedicated COVID-19 section of our website](#).

CoreCivic is working hard to protect our employees, those entrusted to our care, and our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have a Coronavirus Medical Action Plan in place at each of our facilities, which we've been working on since January. This plan includes:

- Having medical staff participate in the intake process to identify those who are deemed high-risk of being infected with or contracting COVID-19;
- Isolating those who are deemed high-risk as needed; and
- Working with local and state health departments to conduct appropriate testing.

All of our facilities are actively promoting the following three health habits for inmates, detainees and residents, as well as staff: regular hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette (coughing or sneezing into a sleeve or tissue), and avoiding touching one's face. We also encourage the practice of social distancing for all individuals within our facilities.

Our health services administrators cooperate fully with local and state health departments, and our protocols mirror local, state, and federal recommendations. Our plan and practices build on the extensive work we do every day to run clean, healthy and safe facilities. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of all our medical staff during this time.

We have asked all of our employees to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases by adhering to the following recommendations:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow the CDC's recommendations for using a facemask (medical professionals).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

### **Screening**

All employees are screened upon entering a CoreCivic facility. Procedures are specific to correctional and detention facilities, designed to prevent the introduction and spread of the COVID-19 virus. These steps include answering a screening questionnaire related to symptoms of infection, and a safe temperature check.

### **Social Distancing**

Staff routinely encourage appropriate social distancing and model that behavior for those in our care. Social distancing is encouraged through regular town hall meetings, posted flyers, information presented over the closed-circuit television system, and the routine instruction of staff all serve to encourage those known effective steps to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting Practices**

In all CoreCivic facilities, staff adhere to the CDC recommendations for cleaning and disinfection during the COVID-19 response. This will include cleaning and disinfecting surfaces, objects and shared equipment that are frequently touched or used by staff members and those entrusted to our care. Our

facilities use commercial cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants that are effective against the virus that causes COVID-19, following label instructions to ensure their safe and effective use. We have adequate supplies to support these intensified cleaning and disinfecting practices.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations found [here](#), face masks will be provided to all staff and detainees. Disposable gloves are readily available for conducting searches and handling property, and staff working at the front lobby screening site wear a face mask, eye protection (goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face), gown/coveralls, and disposable gloves.

With regard to the number of COVID-19 cases at the Otay Mesa Detention Center, I can confirm that we have 8 CoreCivic employees that have tested positive for COVID-19. Questions regarding detainee or ICE Health Services Corps (IHSC) cases should be directed to our government partners, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the U.S. Marshals Service. Additional information can be found at [www.ICE.gov/COVID19](http://www.ICE.gov/COVID19) and [www.usmarshals.gov/coronavirus](http://www.usmarshals.gov/coronavirus).

Respectfully,

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