



JB Pritzker
Governor

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Director

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How are the youth doing? What do they know about the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak?

The youth are doing well. We have worked to educate them about the virus, how it is known to impact individuals their age, and the preventative actions they can take to reduce the risk of infection.

What steps have you taken to reduce the risk of infection at DJJ?

In collaboration with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), county juvenile detention centers, and other public safety agencies, we are remaining informed on best practices and taking measures to promote the health and safety of our staff and youth.

Here are some of the steps we've taken to help reduce the risk of infection at DJJ.

- **Screening:** We privately screen everyone entering the facilities through a single point of entry using criteria recommended by the CDC and Department of Public Health, including temperature readings using infrared thermometers. You can find the screening protocol [here](#).
- **Sanitation:** Everyone entering the facility is directed to wash or sanitize their hand prior to entry and upon exit. Sanitizer and tissue are widely available and common touch areas are disinfected during each shift. Additionally, the overall cleaning schedule was moved to an every-shift cleaning schedule.
- **Staffing:** We have created a staffing model that promotes youth safety and reduces risk to vulnerable staff members, while still allowing youth to receive the education and services they need for a productive day. Our model keeps us operationally sound and allows for adjustments if the needs of our facilities change. At present, staffing levels are not significantly impacting the operations of our facilities, and youth are continuing to receive educational and rehabilitative programming. DJJ is committed to maintaining programming and services to every extent possible throughout the duration of COVID-19 containment and mitigation measures.
- **Meetings:** All face to face meetings are now being conducted via phone, WebEx, or conference call and all community writs are discontinued through March 31, 2020. Effective March 18, Aftercare and administrative staff are working remotely. Effective March 19, remote work status is in place for IYC staff, where applicable.
- **Visitation:** Effective March 20, all visitation to the facilities is postponed through April 3. We will work to provide additional calls and video visits for youth and family during this time while sanitizing phones and equipment after each use.
- **Monitoring:** Lastly, we are monitoring youth and staff closely for symptoms or signs of respiratory illness and have a process in place if anyone presents symptoms of COVID-19 or reports exposure.

Has programming at the facility been impacted by the mitigation actions?

We've thought creatively about how to reduce risk as much as possible while keeping youth healthy and engaged. We are also seeking support from external stakeholders to help provide activities and entertainment for youth in the coming weeks.

Will DJJ release any youth or amend Aftercare supervision in response to the outbreak?

We are evaluating all DJJ-involved youth to determine where they will be the safest and best provided for. To that end, we will do what's in their best interest given their current status and outlook.

Are there adequate supplies for staff and youth in case of an outbreak?

DJJ has a COVID-19 response team who has worked diligently to ensure that the facilities are appropriately supplied, routinely cleaned and sanitized, and equipped with contingency plans in case of an outbreak. We continue to work with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Department of Public Health to procure additional supplies as a proactive measure in the event of prolonged containment needs.

For updated information on the impact of COVID-19 and about how the state of Illinois is managing the virus, please refer to the IDPH website

<http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>

How you can help:

Though the department currently has appropriate levels of medical and cleaning supplies, but donations of other items are welcomed. These include books, magazines, playing card decks, Uno card decks, ramen noodle packages, bottled water, soda bottles. The department also welcomes letters written to youth in our care.

Additional Questions?

Please direct additional questions to:

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