



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1110

May 21, 2020

Joanna Carns
Office of Corrections Ombuds
PO Box 43113
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Ms. Carns:

The Washington Department of Corrections appreciates the opportunity to respond to the 'OCO Monitoring Visit to Airway Heights Corrections Center' report completed by the Office of Corrections Ombuds (OCO).

The Department of Corrections takes very seriously the health and safety of the incarcerated population and staff in Washington state correctional facilities. The agency appreciates the opportunity to have your staff tour the Airway Heights Corrections Center and evaluate the facility's implementation of the protocols and procedures put in place to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The information provided by the OCO was useful to ensure the Department of Corrections is doing everything it can to ensure the incarcerated population's health and safety while incarcerated, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Airway Heights Corrections Center has put in place a plan to pursue the use of thermal transportation carts and rigid food trays for food services which will keep food warm during transport to the K-unit. By implementing this process the facility hopes to alleviate some of the concerns regarding food being served cold to the incarcerated population and to reduce the waste produced from the currently used Styrofoam clam shells.

We also appreciate your team's understanding of the unique implementation across the system and the addition of policies and procedures being put in place to protect our population. We will continue to proactively implement precautionary measures as the COVID-19 pandemic progresses. Moving forward, the Washington Department of Corrections will continue to collaborate with the Office of the Corrections Ombuds on any future quality assurance visits.

Sincerely,

Steve Sinclair, Secretary
Washington Department of Corrections