



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

June 9, 2020

Joanna Carns
Office of Corrections Ombuds
2700 Evergreen Parkway NW
Olympia, WA 98505

Dear Ms. Carns:

The Washington Department of Corrections appreciates the opportunity to review the ‘OCO Monitoring Visit to the Washington Corrections Center for Women’ completed by the Office of Corrections Ombuds.

The Department of Corrections takes the health and safety of the incarcerated population and staff in the Washington correctional facilities very seriously. The agency appreciates the opportunity to have your staff tour the Washington Corrections Center for Women and evaluate the facilities 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 protect the incarcerated populations health and safety while incarcerated, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Washington Corrections Center for Women understands the importance of the implementation of the new protocols put into place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Facility leadership is working with staff to ensure that all protocols are being followed and will continue to monitor protocol compliance, which will be addressed by staffing supervisors if noncompliance continues. The noted written warning on the white board in the medium custody unit has been removed as this was not an approved message. Incarcerated individuals will be first verbally reminded, if noncompliance continues, will then be issued a behavior observation evaluation (BOE), and if compliance is still resisted, a minor infraction will be issued.


The facility superintendent distributed a reminder email to all staff, clarifying the proper use and distribution of gloves as personal protection equipment (PPE) to incarcerated individuals. Those gloves that are not to be used with chemicals have been removed from all areas where chemicals are to be used. Germicide and Hepastat 256 are considered low caustic cleaners and do not require chemical grade use gloves. Additionally, the superintendent distributed communication to the incarcerated population about reporting skin irritation to medical staff to be evaluated and if needed, appropriate PPE will be given

to the incarcerated individual and arrangements will be made to ensure their health and safety.

Facility leadership has ensured that hand sanitizer is available for use during mainline for incarcerated individuals. This direction has been clearly identified for all future mainline occurrences and will continue to be available to the population. Additionally, the facility has allowed gym equipment to continue being used with the direction that each piece of equipment is cleaned after each individual use. The weight room will remain closed during this time. There is cleaning supplies available to clean the gym equipment and a bathroom with soap and water is available to wash hands before and after use of gym equipment.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Sinclair", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Sinclair, Secretary
Washington Department of Corrections