



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

July 16, 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 respond to the ‘OCO Rapid Monitoring Visit to Washington State Penitentiary’ 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 the Washington state correctional facilities. The agency appreciates the opportunity to have your staff tour the Washington State Penitentiary and evaluate the facility’s implementation of the protocols and procedures, especially cleaning and communication tools, 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 an incarcerated individuals health and safety while incarcerated, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<b>OCO Recommendation</b>	<b>DOC Response</b>
OCO recommends that WSP, and all other DOC facilities, quickly operationalize an on-going process to replace face coverings that does not necessitate an incarcerated individual asking for replacement.	At this time, the Department of Corrections is providing additional face coverings to the incarcerated individuals as they request them. The department knows that the incarcerated individuals are the correct person to identify if they need an additional face covering and has allowed them to request additional as needed through unit staff. Headquarters is working on a process that will add this face covering check into a more daily routine procedure without over providing an overage and continuing to conserve resources. These conversations are continuing and as updates to procedures are made, they will be shared with the



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<p>OCO suggests streamlining more timely communication regarding statewide system problems on machines that are widely used by most incarcerated individuals.</p>	<p>population and external stakeholders.</p> <p>While the CePrisons system was down, all memos sent to facilities were sent to the facilities with direction to post in the living dayroom areas for all to see, or hand-delivered cell front to those individuals on quarantine or medical isolation status. The facilities coordinate communications about systems being down at tier rep meetings that are held at least weekly, sometimes daily, and as inquired upon from the incarcerated individuals. We will continue to improve communication as the COVID-19 response progresses, and will continue to post information or hand deliver if required so all of the population has access to information.</p>
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We also 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. Moving forward, 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