June 18, 2020

* OCO stakeholder meeting MOVED to next Thursday, 10 – 12 pm, same call-in info.
* Will be holding a discussion with family members and concerned citizens re I/I property loss/mishandling on Wednesday from 8 – 9 am.
* We have started a COVID-19 workgroup that centers family members who have a medical degree. Just kicked that off.
* Released the WCCW report yesterday and will be releasing the CRCC rapid monitoring report tomorrow. We also have a slate of reports to release that have been pending.
* Still working on the IITS/IIBF projects
* [announced at end of call] The first death due to COVID-19 has occurred. He was at CRCC. More information in the DOC press release happening now.

WSP Trip – Assistant Ombuds Caitlin Robertson

* June 10 and 11 – met with all four OCL (tier rep) groups. All meetings were one hour long or longer, no DOC present. The common concerns were first related to OCO and what we can do; questions about visitation and when will WSP open up; a lot of frustration around JPAY. We talked about the workgroup around JPAY. Questions about face coverings and a lot of questions about incarcerated individuals not wanting to wear face coverings and that only staff should. They have been handwashing the coverings, so there were questions about how to get new ones. We spoke to staff about how to get new ones – we saw new ones available – after raising the concern, we saw more of the face coverings passed out on Thursday. Went to a variety of the units – we saw a lot of COVID signs, but didn’t see a lot of OCO signs, so we brought that to the Superintendent’s attention. We saw germicidal spray and rags being used. We tried the phones at every unit that we went to. We also raised a concern related to a lack of the new grievance forms. We spoke independently and confidentially with the individuals in medical isolation in E unit. We saw the telephones. Also the sergeant distributed their property after we asked about it. All of the individuals have received at least one shower and have been able to contact their families.

CRCC Trip – Early Resolution Ombuds LaQuesha Turner

* I heard that there were minor disturbances in F and G units – doors kicked in and a window broken. I visited all of the medium unit and visited with the tier reps in each pod. My escort was the crisis negotiator and as I received information that there was going to be riots, I made sure staff were aware. I observed staff doing door-side medications and food delivery. At the time of the visit, they were letting people out for only 20 minutes every other day. There were concerns about lack of legal access that were fixed by the CUSs or Supts before I left. Concerns about the inability to do everything they needed in 20 minutes. I heard that people were urinating or defecating in soup cans because they were dry cells. The broken window was allegedly due to an individual needing to use the bathroom. A few staff relayed genuine concern for the population whether because the person was elderly or they had needs. After we left, the Supts announced that they increased the time out of cell from 20 minutes every other day to 30 minutes every day. They also identified cells that did not have televisions (112) and were trying to obtain televisions for those cells.

Q&A

* Will there be an infraction for the person who broke the window? I was told that all four people in the cell were infracted. OCO is going to follow up.
* Unit G is on deadbolt lockdown again – last week it was taken away. DOC relayed that there was a staff assault.
* What about water distribution? Q did not have people relay that concern. But we have heard that water bottles are being distributed. How much water is being given in ounces and over what period of time?
* What about people being let out for the bathrooms? The process is that if people hang a piece of paper out of the door, the CO would let them out. The problem is that if you don’t get their attention right away, you may have to wait. After my visit, the facility said that they were increasing the amount of staff. But it still is a concern because some individuals may need more.
* What about testing? Yes, they have expanded testing to the everyone – staff and the incarcerated in Sage unit and the medium units. Expanded testing has been something that OCO has been asking for and we hope more is done.
* What about a video that Uttecht did? Joanna didn’t remember, Caitie said that Uttecht had informed us about a video.
* Individuals can’t get on calls with their attorneys at CRCC? Please let OCO know specific names and circumstances and we will follow up.
* Guard decided at camp to start infracting people for not locking their property – they have to keep it locked at all times. She gave out 73 infractions for lockers that she found unlocked. Joanna will follow up with AHCC.
* Were people transferred from CRCC to WSP? Yes, these were individuals who were in administrative segregation and they were transferred to WSP.
* Regional care facilities – on the website, they’re only giving the numbers from AHCC. We know more than 18 people have COVID? In talking with the MCC Superintendent, it was relayed that the people are not being transferred to the regional care facility, but to the COVID-positive unit that is in the IMU. I believe the regional care facility has been activated, but I’m not sure.