

DEKALB SHERIFF'S OFFICE IMPLEMENTS PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PLAN

“The inmates at the DeKalb County Jail, their loved ones, and our staff of more than 800 can all be confident that every possible directive of public health officials and policies - developed by the agency for such a day as this – is being employed to guide us through whatever scenario may arise. Out of an abundance of caution, however, we have implemented several additional procedures for attacking this virus head-on. We trust our health services vendor partners when they advise us that we CAN minimize the risks if we take certain extra steps.”

– Sheriff Melody M. Maddox

Here are a few of the initiatives we have implemented:

CLEANING & DISINFECTING

An escalated program of cleaning and disinfection is being applied to all DKSO operations.

- In addition to raising awareness among employees and inmates of the importance of personal hygiene (“Wash Your Hands” signage), the agency increased its supply of approved cleaning/disinfecting solutions available for use by anyone in the facilities.
- Special attention is being focused on cleaning door handles, phones, computer keyboards, elevator buttons, and any surfaces throughout the buildings that see heavy use by all employees and vendor partners.
- Public and semi-public areas, such as the jail lobby and on-site courtrooms are being cleaned at least 3 times per day.
- Inmate transport buses are cleaned after each trip.

ACCESS TO FACILITIES

- Some doors will not continue to be available for employee or vendor partner use.
- Agency leadership is considering requiring that all individuals entering DKSO facilities are medically assessed prior to entering DKSO buildings. This includes employees and our vendor partners.
- New Jail tours are not being scheduled and scheduled tours have been postponed.
- Volunteers who frequent the jail - Chaplains and instructors in the Jail’s expansive “Options” program of on-site classes – have been advised that those visits are suspended for the foreseeable future.

- Attorneys who need to visit inmates are being required to exclusively use a special section that already existed for that purpose, and they may be required to be medically screened before entering the facility.

JAIL OPERATIONS

- Mock scenarios are being used to train personnel and to educate officers on current medical services protocols. These sessions are held on all watches to ensure all officers receive up-to-date information.
- Jail Operations is meeting its challenges with additional medical screenings for COVID-19 virus symptoms at Intake. As of March 13, 2020, arrestees are being medically assessed outside the door to the intake sallyport.
- Arresting officers are being asked to have temperatures taken at the same time, as a precaution.
- Loan-out inmates returning to the jail will be admitted through Intake only, not in the Transport area, as before.
- Work Release/Weekender Programs are being reviewed with a goal of suspending them temporarily. Consultations are being scheduled with the judicial officials.
- TRANSCOR inmates will not be accepted into the jail for the foreseeable future.
- Effective March 23, 2020 agency leadership is instituting a 5-day quarantine for every new inmate entering the facility who is classified for general population housing. Two gender-specific housing units (6NW) have been designated for new inmates who do not exhibit symptoms during the intake medical assessment. This additional hold will help contain exposure should a new inmate develop symptoms during the 5-day period.
- Non-emergency contract work inside the Jail is suspended until further notice.

INMATE HEALTH SERVICES

- Wellpath, our medical services provider, has shared its plan of action and staffing plans related to emergency services during this crisis.
- Our Dental services provider will continue its normal functioning. However, no invasive procedures will be performed and operations will be limited to exams only. No oral or dental surgery will be scheduled at Grady.

- Our Mental Health services provider has provided its Emergency Response plan for review with respect to this crisis.

VISITATION

- The DeKalb County Jail On-Site Video Visitation Center will be closed temporarily. Inmates will be allowed temporary use of the Remote Video Visitation service for their approved visitors. Inmates will receive one (1) free remote visit per week, per inmate at no cost to the caller.

COURT OPERATIONS

The agency will work in conjunction with the judicial system to continue to provide security and to provide inmate access to due process, as we are directed.

- Other virtual remote hearings will be conducted within the courts inside of the Jail to meet mandated judicial requirements and further limit inmate movement.
- A decision will be made in conjunction with judges to medically assess all visitors to the courthouse.
- Court Operations is increasing cleaning of holding cells at the courthouse.

FIELD OPERATIONS

- Field Operations is cleaning and disinfecting each of its marked units and transport units after transporting arrestees.
- When interacting with the public, the entire Field Operations Staff will remain courteous, but shall take reasonable and necessary precautions to limit any exposure to the virus. These precautions shall include but are not limited to carrying multiple pens and sanitizing any pen utilized by the public; routine hand washing; and, utilizing the N95 mask when necessary.
- Procedures are amended for pickup of released Inmates with active warrants out of DeKalb County: Effective immediately and until further notice, we will only pick up released inmates from other facilities who have active DeKalb County warrants for any of the "7 Deadlies (violent felonies)," or for Domestic Violence or Sex Offender charges.
- The Domestic Violence Unit will continue serving Temporary Protective Orders.

- Annual registration for Sex Offenders will continue as required.

BACKGROUND AND RECRUITMENT

Although the agency will continue to encourage applications for employment through existing marketing campaigns, we will restrict person-to-person contact with the general public.

- Participation in open hiring events is suspended until further notice.
- PEB sessions conducted as part of the hiring process are suspended until further

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