

IDOC Cancels Visiting at All Prisons

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IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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DES MOINES – The Iowa Department of Corrections has been implementing measures, policies and protocols to prevent the spread and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in the state prisons.

Effective immediately, visiting has been cancelled at all state prisons until further notice. This is being done out of an abundance of caution for the department's vulnerable population.

While most other correctional departments across the country have also suspended visiting, this decision is rarely easy. The DOC realizes the impact this can have on institution morale over time, and also knows the value of keeping inmates connected with their families. To help address this concern, the department has been exploring reduced cost or free phone calls, reduced cost O-mails, and is working to establish the capability for video visitations.

Regarding the department's efforts to mitigate the impact of the virus on the prison population, Director Dr. Beth Skinner commented, "Our staff are taking every precaution within our power to ensure that the prisons are ready to prevent and respond to the introduction of COVID-19." She also went on to say, "we are working closely with all relevant state agencies such as Iowa Dept. of Public Health and Homeland Security Emergency Management to ensure that we're taking every step we can to minimize the impact that this virus will have on our population."

Members of the public can find Department updates related to this pandemic at doc.iowa.gov/COVID19.

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