



# NEWS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

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Montana State Prison officials have taken precautionary steps after an employee at the Deer Lodge facility tested positive for influenza. The exact strain of the influenza is not known at this time. The appropriate lab results will be available early next week.

The steps taken at the prison, which houses about 1,480 and has about 600 staff, were designed to reduce the potential exposure of inmates, employees and the public.

Several standard precautionary measures are being taken, such as limiting group activities and halting the transfers of inmates in and out of the prison to both other prisons and community corrections programs. We feel these steps are a prudent and measured response, given the closed environment of the prison and potential for flu to spread among a confinement institutional population," said Warden Mike Mahoney." The prison cancelled visitation through Sunday.

Staff and inmates at the prison received information Thursday about basic hygiene and how to prevent the spread of germs through such steps as frequent hand washing, covering the mouth when sneezing or coughing, and avoiding touching the mouth, eyes and nose.

"Our intent is to implement appropriate precautionary measures that enable us to provide for the safety of our staff, the inmate population and the public," Mahoney said."

