

MONTANA DEPARTMENT
OF CORRECTIONS

LAW AND JUSTICE INTERIM COMMITTEE UPDATE

September 14, 2020



The DOC's sentinel testing efforts have resumed at DOC-run and DOC-contracted facilities (30-50 sentinel tests per week)

Symptomatic testing continues as needed at all facilities.

DOC Clinical Services staff is available to assist with contact tracing and testing at all DOC and DOC-contracted facilities.

Testing information is available here:
cor.mt.gov/covid-19

DOC COVID-19 TESTING UPDATE

DOC TESTING UPDATE CONTINUED

TESTING AT DOC SECURE FACILITIES
(including Crossroads Correctional Center)
since June 1, 2020:

- 1,151 offenders, 414 staff
- 1 offender positive, 1 staff positive

TOTAL POSITIVE RESULTS AT ALT-SECURE FACILITIES
(prerelease, treatment, assessment):

- Alpha House (Billings) – 10 offenders, 2 staff
- Connections Corrections Program – East (Butte) – 7 offenders, 0 staff*
- Gallatin Re-entry Program – 2 offenders, 2 staff
- Great Falls Prerelease Center – 2 offenders, 0 staff
- Nexus Treatment Center (Lewistown) – 14 offenders, 0 staff*
- Passages (Billings) – 1 offender, 0 staff
- Watch West (Warm Springs) – 0 offenders, 4 staff
- START (Anaconda) – 42 offenders, 4 staff*

*Indicates new virus activity since the last LJIC meeting.

To date, the DOC has had no hospitalizations or deaths related to COVID-19



COVID-19 RELIEF FUND PURCHASES

The DOC has purchased, or is in the process of purchasing, about \$1 million in equipment to help mitigate the risk of COVID-19 at its state-owned and contracted facilities:

- whole-room disinfectant machines;
- standard disinfectant machines;
- telemedicine units;
- infrared, no-contact thermometers;
- handwash stations;
- remote blood pressure stations;
- transport vehicles for moving offenders among facilities (capable of isolating driver from patients);
- small transport vehicles for moving offenders from units to infirmary (capable of isolating driver from patients);
- and more.



TO ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF STAFF AND OFFENDERS:

Offender movement into DOC facilities remains limited and follows protocol guided by the department's Clinical Services staff in consultation with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. (25 offenders/week at MSP, 6 offenders/2 weeks at MWP, number of intakes varies at PHCF)

Working with sheriffs and detention center staff to identify ways to take additional pressure off their facilities.

Staff members are screened daily, including temperature checks, when they report for work.

Mask use is mandatory among DOC staff. Masks are provided to offenders for their use.

In-person visitation remains suspended at DOC secure facilities.

ONGOING COVID-19 MITIGATION MEASURES

HELPING OFFENDERS MAINTAIN CONNECTIONS WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS

The DOC's vendor, Centurylink, provides one free phone call and one free video visitation every week for each inmate. Since April 1, 2020, inmates at MSP, MWP and PHCF have participated in:

- **22,533** free 10-minute phone calls
 - **MSP** – 19,015, **MWP** – 3,068, **PHCF** - 450
- **3,782** free 20-minute video visitations
 - **MSP** – 2,399, **MWP** – 1,115, **PHCF** - 268

The DOC implemented email service at MSP, MWP and PHCF through its vendor, Edovo. Since implementation, more than **159,158** emails have been sent among offenders and their family and friends.

- **MWP** (since April 27, 2020) – **144,449** emails
- **MSP** (since Aug. 7, 2020) – **14,124** emails
- **PHCF** (since Aug. 19, 2020) – **585** emails



MORE ABOUT EMAIL

Offenders invite their family/friends to communicate via email through the system.

- Contact must be initiated by the offender.
- The recipient may accept the invitation to begin communication or block the request to decline.
- The offender may not send another request if the recipient chooses to block the request.
- Recipients may choose to block email from the offender at any time.

Family/friends pay for the service by purchasing credits which can be used for communication between the purchaser and the specified inmate only.

- The cost for email is \$10 per 30 credits or \$25 per 80 credits. Each email costs between 31 cents and 33 cents.

Email communication is reviewed by DOC staff to identify any suspicious activity.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

COVID-19 has presented some challenges related to providing religious ceremonies at our secure facilities; however, the DOC is committed to ensuring these opportunities are available to offenders during this difficult time.

Religious activities provided include, and are not limited to: Odinist, Muslim, Wicca, Buddhist, Seventh Day Adventist, services, open worship, LDS and JW studies, pipe ceremonies, smudging, Mass, rosary and communion; and more.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, participation at MSP is limited to one unit at a time to avoid cross-contamination.

Native American sweats are not being offered as Clinical Services staff, with guidance from state health officials, believe it is unsafe to do so. Instead, pipe ceremonies are offered every week.

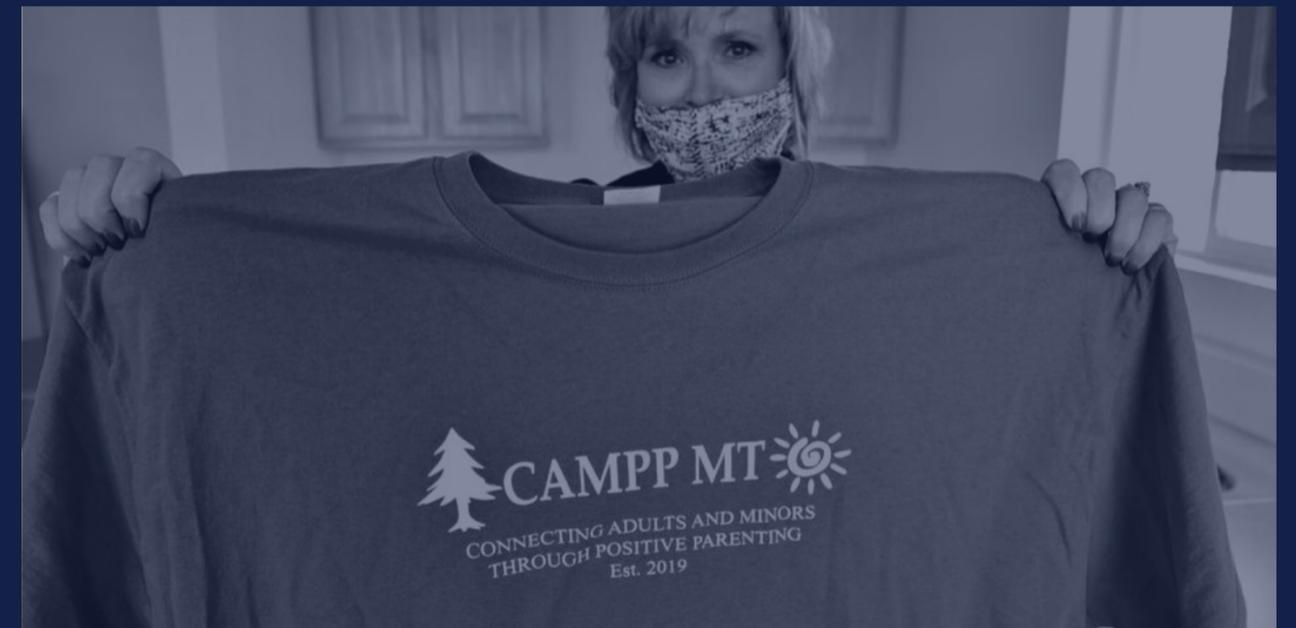
CAMPP: DELIVERING NEW PROGRAMMING DURING COVID-19

The DOC completed its first Connecting Adults and Minors through Positive Parenting (CAMPP) at MSP recently. Fifteen families including 36 children participated.

This evidence-based program is designed to help build connections between incarcerated fathers and their children. CAMPP is funded through U.S. Department of Justice grant — \$673,000.

The 12-week program includes parenting instruction, supervised letter writing and video calls, and a three-day “camp.”

The University of Montana, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, the Office of Public Instruction, and Big Brothers Big Sisters consulted on different aspects of the program, including ensuring the emotional health of the children who participate.



CAMPP: BUILDING CONNECTIONS, VIRTUALLY

Inmates and children participating in CAMPP received identical curriculum boxes at the beginning of August.

Included in the boxes: crafting supplies, clay pots, soil, seeds, and more.

Using Zoom, fathers and children took part in activities like writing in journals, creating vision boards, crafting “All About Me Posters,” and gardening. They also performed in a virtual recital at the end of the three-day “camp” portion.

“I'll tell you what it's done for me and my kids. It's given us a second chance at being a family.” – Jesse Harrison, MSP inmate and father.



CENSUS UPDATE

The DOC electronically submitted its Census 2020 data for secure facilities on April 28. The U.S. Census Bureau instructed that electronic submittal was the preferred method for secure populations.

Tribal affiliation, an optional category for the Census, was not submitted for Native American offenders as per instructions from U.S. Census Bureau staff. (Tribe was not consistently provided in data extracted from OMIS.)

Since being alerted to concerns about this, the DOC, with the U.S. Census Bureau's permission, has submitted tribal affiliation data for offenders whose files in OMIS contain that information.

In addition, the DOC reached out to the 60 individuals whose files did not include that information so it could be added and submitted to the Census.

DOC is putting a process in place to make tribal affiliation a mandatory field of collection for OMIS.

QUESTIONS?

