

*Utah Department of Corrections*

*Presentation to the Law Enforcement and  
Criminal Justice Interim Committee*

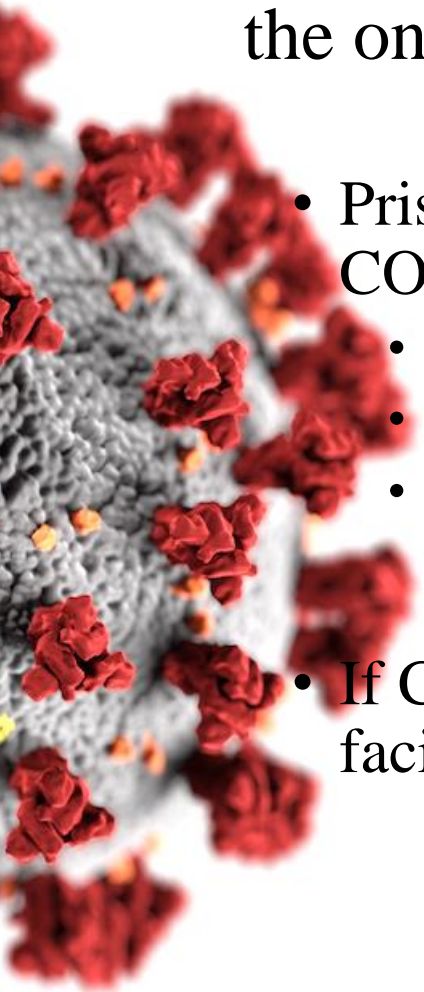
# **COVID-19 Response & Protocols**

June 16, 2020



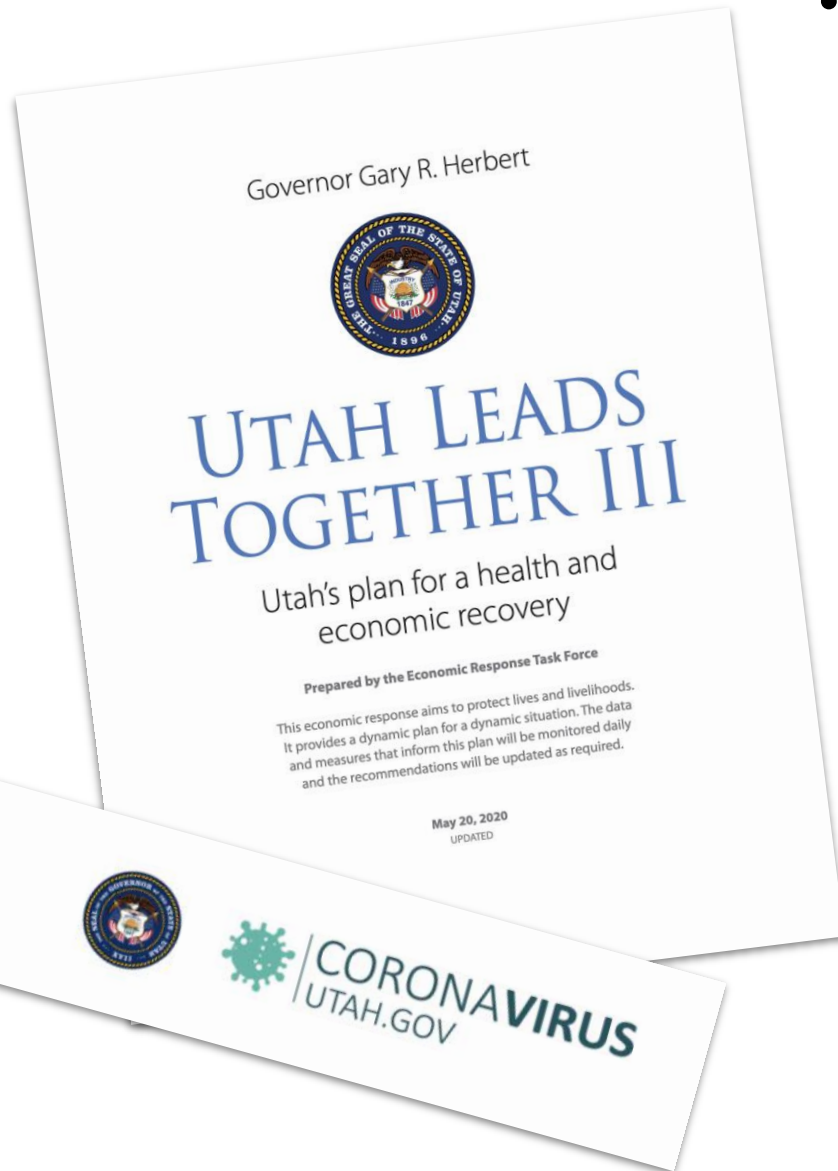
# Initial Response

- The Department of Corrections responded quickly and decisively to the on-coming threat associated with COVID-19
  - Prisons and jails are extremely vulnerable to public health threats such as COVID-19
    - Facilities are confined and congregate environments
    - Movement or release of population generally is not an option
    - Population tends to be more medically frail and have a variety of co-occurring medical problems
  - If COVID-19 enters a facility, it is easily transmitted and can spread through facilities very quickly



# Initial Response

- Following the lead of the Governor's Office and Utah Department of Health, the Department of Corrections
  - Began gathering information that would be needed to develop processes and protocols
  - March 10 – Deputy Director was assigned to coordinate the Department's preparations and response to COVID-19
    - Quickly after receiving this assignment, the Department created its own COVID-19 Task Force which includes leadership throughout the Department
    - The UDC COVID-19 Task Force has been meeting every morning at 0900 and typically includes more than 25 leaders in the Department
    - The Taskforce has been tasked with developing and implementing protocols, managing resources such as PPE, making decisions related to operations, and receiving updates on the status of incarcerated individuals
  - March 21 – Department established its COVID-19 Action Plan



# Initial Response

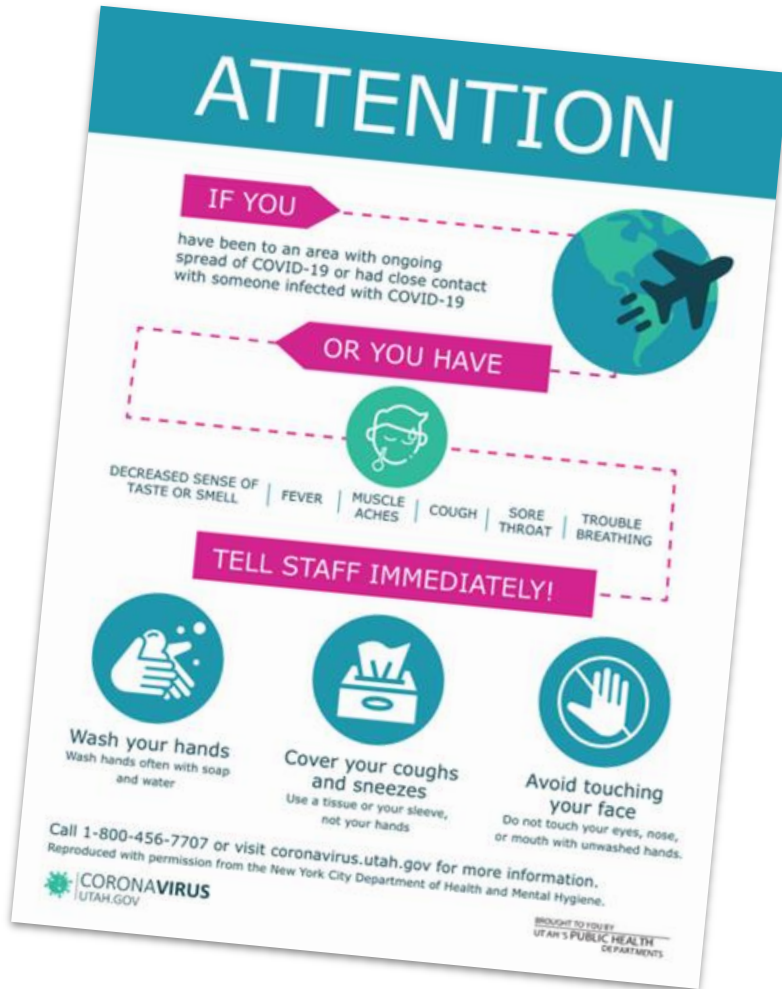


\*Handout provided to all incarcerated individuals

- March 23 - The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released its *“Interim Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Correctional and Detention Facilities”*
- Reviewing this guidance, it was clear the Utah Department of Corrections had already put into place many if not most of the guidelines from the (CDC)
- Primary focus of the Department of Corrections has been:
  - **Prevention** – strong focus on keeping COVID-19 from entering Utah’s prison system
  - **Containment** – strategies developed to ensure, if COVID-19 entered the prison system, the Department would have processes and protocols to quickly contain the virus and focus on keeping it from spreading



# Immediate Actions ~ Prevention



- Personal visits with inmates' families and loved ones – suspended (telephone provider has offered 10 free 15-minute phone calls per week)
- Volunteer services for incarcerated individual programs – suspended
- Staff and others entering the prison facility are screened
  - Temperature checks
  - Screening questions
  - Review of symptoms
  - Any staff unsuccessful in getting through this process are immediately sent home and required to work with Human Resource Management to receive clearance prior to returning to work
- A single access point to the Draper prison was created to ensure all entries are funneled through this access point

*\*Messaging posted throughout all facilities and centers for staff and incarcerated individuals regarding screening, protocols and general information.*

# Immediate Actions ~ Prevention



- Increased cleaning frequency – ensuring adequate supplies of soap and cleaning products are available – including cleaning schedules and training on appropriate cleaning (e.g. hard surfaces, phones, door handles)
- Implemented social distancing among both incarcerated individuals and staff members
- All staff and incarcerated individuals were provided a minimum of two face coverings with instruction to wear any time close contact could occur
- Group treatment and other sessions were limited to 10 or fewer individuals – again with social distancing

# Immediate Actions ~ Prevention



- Stopped receiving intakes of new inmates from county jails (movement of individual contraindicated)
- Limited – where possible – transports of inmates to the University of Utah Medical Center
- Congregated most medically fragile inmates into a single facility with close access to medical care and extremely limited movement into or out of the housing unit
- Created space for both male and female inmates – both at Draper and Gunnison – to serve as Quarantine areas (for symptomatic and those possibly in contact with a COVID-19 person) and Isolation areas (for those testing positive for COVID-19)

*\*Newsletter provided to all incarcerated individuals*



# Current Operations and Processes



- Department moved to a single Intake day per week – occurs on Wednesday (now taking intakes from county jails)
- These intakes are kept in a cohort for a minimum of 14 days prior to being moved to general population
- Department of Health tests all cohorted inmates the day after the single intake day (Corrections has been provided rapid COVID-19 testing equipment and supplies – these are used in exigent circumstances and at Gunnison for their new intakes)
- Any symptomatic or potentially COVID-19 exposed inmates are housed separately in a different housing unit under Quarantine



# Current Operations and Processes



- Inmates that have tested positive for COVID-19 are housed in a different facility in Isolation (different facility from both cohorted and Quarantined inmates)
- Quarantined inmates that do not develop symptoms over a 14-day period are tested just prior to moving to general population
- After 14-days in Isolation and without symptoms, inmates must test negative for COVID-19 on two sequential tests before moving to general population

# Current Status and Issues

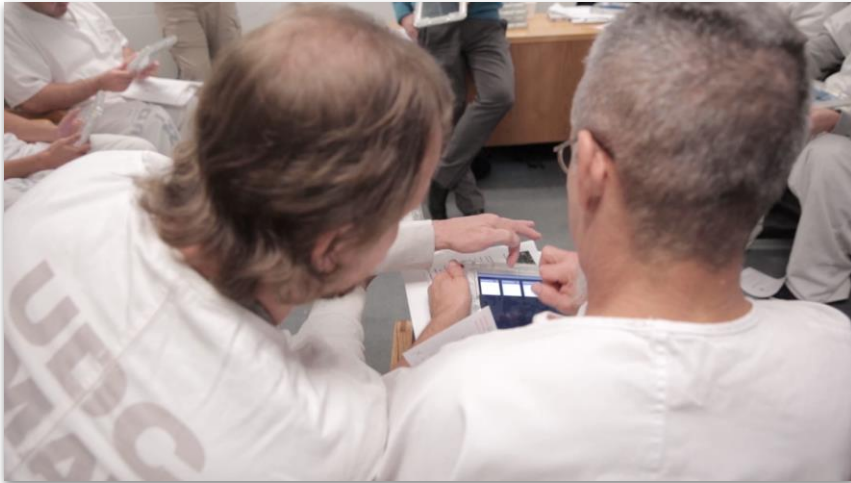


- To date, the Department has had three (3) COVID-19 positive inmates
  - All came from new intakes from county jails
  - Inmates were initially Quarantined or cohorted and immediately moved into Isolation upon a positive test result
- Custody and medical staff observe proper PPE protocols when interacting with either Quarantined or Isolated inmates
- Department has monitored and maintained specific amounts of PPE in inventory including N-95 & KN-19 masks, eye protection/shields, rubber gloves, gowns and Tyvek suits

# Current Status and Issues



- Department is in the process of implementing video visitation to supplement phone calls, in the absence of personal visits (video visitation will be maintained once the pandemic is over)
- Opportunities have been provided for an idle inmate population, but still requires work and attention
  - Greenhouse operations turned over to the housing unit with the medically fragile population, allowing some to leave the facility and work
  - Programming and treatment services are being taken to the inmate population that is under the tightest restrictions
  - Programming and treatment services have continued, as we have been able, with other housing units – ensuring proper distancing is maintained and face coverings are used by both staff and inmates
- Temperature screenings have been suspended in administrative offices and AP&P offices – while still requiring staff to self-monitor



# Questions?



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