



Ned Lamont
Governor

STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Office of the Commissioner



Rollin Cook
Commissioner

TO: All DOC Staff
FROM: Rollin Cook, Commissioner
DATE: April 21, 2020
SUBJ: **Wearing of Masks**

A handwritten signature of Rollin Cook in black ink, placed over a light gray rectangular background.

As we rapidly approach the two-month mark of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, I want to thank you for your selfless dedication to the Agency's mission. Your efforts have been incredible at every turn.

I want to take this opportunity to announce a significant development in the Department's plan to continue to fight the spread of the coronavirus.

Effective Wednesday, April 22, 2020 all Department of Correction staff members will be required to wear protective face-masks while on duty whenever social distancing is not possible.

Additionally, all offenders under our supervision will be required to wear protective masks when exiting their cells, exiting their cubicle, in common areas or day rooms.

This decision was made, first and foremost, out of concern for the safety of staff as well as the offenders under our supervision. It is also in accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7BB, which requires that all state employees wear a face covering whenever social distancing is not possible.

Employees must comply with the Executive Order and any agency policy on this topic unless there is a medical condition that prevents compliance.

With regards to the offender population, it is within the scope of my authority as Commissioner to mandate that they wear face-masks, unless there is a medical condition that prevents compliance.

Although I am pleased to announce that some headway is being made on the PPE front, we continue to work to procure as many PPEs as necessary to ensure the safety of our staff.

Phone: 860.692.7482 ♦ Fax: 860.692.7483
24 Wolcott Hill Road ♦ Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109

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To aid in preserving the critical resources we do have, in addition to the N95 masks, surgical mask and level three cloth masks made internally at our industry shops, I have authorized all of our employees the ability to wear their own personal masks from home.

In terms of distribution, all employees have been issued a surgical mask as well as a cloth mask. All offenders have received a cloth mask made by CEC. The offenders who are exhibiting symptoms associated with the virus or are housed in a quarantine unit have been provided with a surgical mask.

In addition to providing an N95 mask to all staff working within an isolation or quarantine unit, the decision was recently made to issue every staff member working at the six facilities which, to date, have been hit hardest by the pandemic an N95 mask.

Although some of these measures may feel inconvenient, they are important in ensuring our health and safety.

Your safety now, and always, is my primary concern.

Please stay safe and well.