

Department of Public Safety & Corrections
State of Louisiana
Secretary's Office

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



JAMES M. LE BLANC
SECRETARY

February 28, 2020

Michael Ranatza, Executive Director
Louisiana Sheriffs' Association
1175 Nicholson Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Dear Mr. Ranatza:

As you know, the CDC is responding to an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a new coronavirus (COVID-19), first detected in China and now identified in 50 locations internationally, including cases in the United States. DPS&C is taking precautions and reviewing our preparedness plans to begin now taking steps to prevent the possible spread and decrease exposure risks, specifically in our secure care facilities. I write today to request your assistance in sharing our plan with our local level partners.

The first and most important action we should take is to ensure that all secure facility staff and offenders are informed of the importance of personal protective measures. According to the CDC, these include:

1. Voluntary Home Isolation: Stay home when you are sick with respiratory disease symptoms. At the present time, these symptoms are more likely due to influenza or other respiratory viruses than to COVID-19-related virus.
2. Respiratory Etiquette: Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw it in the trash can.
3. Hand Hygiene: Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
4. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60%-95% alcohol.
5. Environmental Health Action: Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces and objects

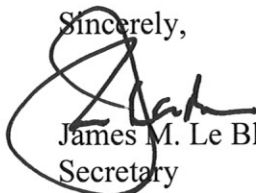
For our state prisons and P&P Districts, we are working to inventory and secure hygiene and protection supplies (soap, masks, gloves, etc.) and educating our incarcerated and supervision population and staff on the above measures. We are working on implementing policies that will include procedures for inquiring with staff and all visitors about symptoms and recent travel. If an individual has symptoms (fever, persistent cough, shortness of breath) and recently traveled, we will determine if additional risk screening is necessary or if the person should be denied access to the prison until symptoms subside.

In the event that we have a confirmed case in a state prison, our plans call for reducing exposure through the implementing the use of only mandatory staffing coverage, suspending all non-essential visiting, and discontinuing non-emergent transfers.

I am asking that you share this plan of action with all of our local level jail partners. We are asking that they monitor for the above noted symptoms and suspend non-emergent transfers on anyone with identified symptoms until the symptoms have subsided. In the event that a transfer is necessary for an individual that has symptoms, local jail staff should contact DPS&C's Medical Director, Dr. John Morrison, at 225-281-0706 or DPS&C Chief of Operations, Seth Smith, at 225-341-9465 to discuss transfer options/protocols.

We will also be sharing this information with each of the Basic Jail Guidelines Team Leaders and they can be contacted if any local jail staff have questions about our procedures.

Sincerely,



James M. Le Blanc
Secretary

JML/aw

c: Seth Smith, Chief of Operations
Dr. John Morrison, Medical Director
Stacy Falgout, Nursing Director