



KAY IVEY  
GOVERNOR

# State of Alabama Department of Corrections

Alabama Criminal Justice Center  
301 South Ripley Street  
P. O. Box 301501  
Montgomery, AL 36130-1501  
(334) 353-3883



JEFFERSON S. DUNN  
COMMISSIONER

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **ADOC Updates Inmate and Employee Testing Chart**

The Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) today announced an evolution of its COVID-19 inmate testing reporting schedule. Currently, updates are published every Tuesday and Friday by end of day. Moving forward, inmate testing data will be populated on the ADOC's website every weekday, Monday through Friday, and will include aggregate information collected from the preceding 24-hour period. Inmate testing data published on Mondays will reflect data collected from the prior Friday through Sunday. The new reporting process begins today, April 21, 2020, and will continue as described herein until such time as additional changes are required.

The ADOC also has introduced a second online chart that outlines self-reported positive tests for COVID-19 among its staff. We have now been informed through self-reporting of two additional cases of COVID-19 among our staff – one at Staton Correctional Facility and another at Mobile Community Based Facility/Community Work Center. With the exception of these two new self-reported positive cases of COVID-19 among our staff, the employee data reflected in this new chart already has been shared publicly in previous COVID-19 updates.

Moving forward, the chart outlining the ADOC employees' self-reported positive tests for COVID-19 will be updated every weekday, Monday-Friday, in conjunction with the inmate-testing data, and will include aggregate information collected from the preceding 24-hour period. ADOC employees' self-reported positive cases data published on Mondays will reflect data gathered from the prior Friday through Sunday.

With the addition of this chart, which is specific to our employees, we want to provide clarity as to how positive cases of COVID-19 are verified among the ADOC's staff. Please note that the ADOC does not test its staff for COVID-19, nor are we legally able to require staff testing as an employer. This is true of most public and private entities. If a staff member becomes symptomatic, he or she is responsible for contacting his or her physician, who subsequently will order a COVID-19 test, so long as certain Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) criteria are met. Per HIPPA regulations, the ADOC is not allowed to inquire about a staff member's personal health conditions, including the results of a COVID-19 test. Staff members, of their own free will, can self-report a positive test result to our Office of Health Services.

When the ADOC verifies a positive test among our staff through self-reporting, we then can share a public update on the result – with no identifying personal information included. The ADOC certainly encourages (but absolutely cannot require) staff to self-report, as it allows our Office of Health Services to recommend

any others who may have had direct, prolonged exposure to someone with a positive test to self-quarantine for the recommended 14-day period.

As a reminder, the ADOC's staff members have been provided with and continue to utilize face masks and, where necessary, additional PPE to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in our facilities. We anticipate that, in short order, all inmates will have been provided two (2) face masks produced at the factory plants at Holman Correctional Facility and Julia Tutwiler Prison for Women. Inmates' masks will be cleaned daily. Our goal is to produce enough masks to provide each inmate with a total of four (4) masks for personal use.

The ADOC remains grateful for and proud of the heroic efforts of its correctional staff, who – in the face of a global epidemic – continue to show up each day to protect the safety and security of our staff, inmates, and the public. We thank you for your continued bravery and perseverance.

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