



# NEWS RELEASE

## DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

### Commissioner Monroe B. Hudson, Jr.

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**Presented by Jason P. Miller, Chief of Communications and Community Relations**

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## Department of Correction removes temporary COVID-related limit to in-person visitation

**Dover, DE** – The Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) announced today that the restriction to in-person visitation to one adult visitor per inmate, which was established in late May amid increasing COVID-19 transmission in the community, is being lifted. **Beginning September 6, 2022** one adult visitor and one child visitor under age 18 will be permitted per inmate during scheduled visits in all Level V prison and Level IV work release and violation of probation facilities. Surgical face masks will continue to be made available to visitors upon their arrival for use while in DOC facilities.

The Department of Correction has continued to follow its comprehensive COVID-19 mitigation protocols which were introduced in March, 2020 and have been continually updated with the latest best practices and public health guidance. DOC's COVID-19 protocols feature testing and quarantine of new arrivals to DOC facilities, testing and quarantine of inmates who exhibit symptoms of illness and inmates who have had sustained contact with COVID-positive individuals, ongoing cleaning and air purification of DOC facilities, and continual education and access to COVID vaccination and booster shots. Face masks have continued to be provided to inmates and staff and face masks have remained required in all areas where medical care is provided and in COVID isolation and quarantine units.

DOC COVID-19 inmate testing and vaccination highlights:

- The DOC continues to aggressively employ inmate COVID-19 testing and **more than 39,600 inmate tests have been administered** since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- DOC's inmate COVID-19 vaccinations began in January, 2021. **56% of current inmates in DOC custody have received at least partial COVID-19 vaccination and 1,521 current inmates who are eligible to receive a COVID-19 booster have received a booster shot. Meanwhile, 2,654 inmates have been released after receiving COVID-19 vaccination while in DOC custody.**

"The Department of Correction has continued to take proactive steps during times of increased COVID-19 transmission in the community to reduce the risk of infection to inmates and staff, including temporary restrictions on in-person visitation when necessary," **said Department of Correction**

**Commissioner Monroe B. Hudson Jr.** "Thanks to our comprehensive COVID-19 mitigation measures and the strong cooperation of Officers, staff, inmates and families we have continued to see very small numbers of COVID cases among inmates and staff and it is appropriate to expand in-person visitation at this time."

The number of inmate and DOC staff cases of COVID-19, which remained at near zero for months, had ticked up in May, 2022 as transmission in the community significantly increased. Active COVID cases among the inmate population peaked at 31 in late May before falling and have remained at under 20 active cases across all DOC facilities for several weeks. As of August 26, 15 inmates across all DOC facilities statewide have known active cases of COVID-19, of whom only one has minor symptoms of illness.

The DOC offers a variety of phone and video visitation to inmates in order to facilitate family and community support that is important to their wellbeing. During the COVID-19 pandemic the DOC sped up and completed a multi-year technology project to expand video visitation to all Level V prison facilities. DOC is completing the installation of equipment to expand video visitation to Level IV work release and violation of probation facilities this year.

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