



COVID-19 Behind the Walls

Prisoner Reports Dated March, April 2-6, 2020

SP MCC March 2020: Some Guards are squirting hand sanitizer into prisoners' hands. Can't remember what else he said, as I wasn't writing it down at that time.

4/2/20 DA ERDCC:

They received three 55-gallon drums of alcohol for use in the factory to make hand sanitizer for the outside; none allowed in prison for prisoners. Finally cancelled church services. All programs have been cancelled. However, much close congregation of prisoners in the gym and in the dining hall. Guys are worried about their families. They have stepped up cleaning. Prisoners, acting as porters, doing a good job cleaning the wings, phones, etc.

He saw and heard (on FOX-2 news out of STL last night) Anne Precythe saying they've had no cases of COVID-19 among Missouri prisoners. (HH: I went online and checked. Precythe was reported to have said there ARE currently no positive cases, that one prisoner had tested positive but does not test positive now, and that 13 have tested negative, with 4 tests pending. It was later reported that the one prisoner had died in a KCMO hospital.

CH WMCC 4/3/2020:

At 2:34 pm I read Amy's response to him; he was heartened and encouraged. He then gave me the following information:

He is currently in Enhanced Care Unit, although not sick. About an hour ago, the FUM (a woman) called them all out of their cells and told them they would be moving to another HU somewhere in the prison, all but those assigned to ECU for health reasons or as Daily Living Assistants.

Cleaning is essentially the same. They are given watered down disinfectant (something called 7/10), although he can see in the bubble where they have full-strength Lysol for the guards). Wing workers come 2 or 3 times a day and wipe down door handles, railings, phones, etc.

Asked about soap provisions, he says that has not changed. Every 5 days they are given a hotel-sized bar of soap.

Those who are sick, if they have an elevated temp are put on room quarantine (probably because it's an EHU). CH is in vocational training for electronics. They are reducing the size of classes to no more than 10 people and trying to keep them 6 feet apart. They're doing this with other education classes as well.

They are allowing total of 30 people in library at a time, 20 in regular library and 10 in law library.

Still playing basketball in gym, so congregating in close quarters. Still jammed into dining room, 4 to a 4-seat table, long lines of people waiting to get in, socializing.

He's in 9A. HU's 10A and 10B are designated for quarantine. That's 24 cells with 2 prisoners each, so 48 beds.

CH's sister is a nurse at Mosaic Hospital in St. Joe, so she's been keeping track of any prisoners brought in.

He knows about the guy from WMCC who tested positive, was sent to St. Joe, then to a hospital in KCMO.

There's a rumor that 2 more prisoners have tested positive for the virus; DOC is mad about it.

Back in November or December there was a serious flu going around, affecting a LOT of prisoners, including him. It was horrible, and it lingered for about a month. He thinks they might have had COVID-19 back then.

4/3/20 FH ERDCC 9:30 am: Called again about needing help getting affidavits for his case. When he first called, I suggested MJC. He wrote them a letter, waited awhile, had someone on the outside call them, then called himself, talked to someone who said the person he would need to talk with wasn't there and would be back in a week or so. He asked me to contact them; I said I'll email them.

Said they're checking all guards and VIC's at the door; they have to pass some kind of medical test to get in.

They're doing a lot of extra cleaning of railings, doorknobs, phones, etc. They're restricting movement. In dining room, only 2 to a 4-person table. They exit 2x2. Only 40-50 people allowed in at one time; used to be 80-90. If someone is sick, they take them right out and put them in quarantine.

4/3/20 KB ERDCC: I just saw a report on MSNBC that a suit has been filed on behalf of Illinois prisoners that at risk prisoners (the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions) must be released from Illinois prisons because they cannot practice necessary social distancing while confined. It's the same for us in Missouri. We are double celled, so no matter what other procedures are employed, we must still be confined in close quarters with others, and we also must be in the cell while another prisoner defecates in an open toilet. We'd like you to ask the McArthur Justice Center to file a class action suit similar to the Illinois suit on our behalf. Please ask them for us. Even if you think they won't do it, please take the time to ask them. (HH: I sent MJC his email.)

4/4/2020 CG FCC:

95% of the prisoners at Farmington are sex offenders. The prison is old, decrepit, filthy and infested with roaches and other vermin. They make a show of having prisoner workers cleaning the wings, wiping down things, but it's clearly not enough. Every night they give each prisoner a teaspoon of bleach squirted into the prisoner's bucket, supposedly to clean the cell. All cells are double-occupancy, except for those in the MOSOP program, which are dorms. They are attempting to enforce social distancing, such as in classrooms, letting in no more than ten people at a time. Word is going around that they have started making masks in the factory for sale on the outside. They've been stockpiling brown bag meals in the kitchen, checking the temperature and taking some out, putting some in, and the rumor is that they will soon all be on lockdown for 2 weeks.

4/6/2020: This morning, between 11-12, Keith got a call from a prisoner at WMCC, who

said a prisoner had tested positive for COVID-19, and the entire wing has been on quarantine for a couple of days.

4/6/2020: At 2:05 pm, an email was sent, saying in part, “Currently there are no cases of COVID-19 inside any Missouri Department of Corrections facility. We want to keep it that way as long as we can.” They continued prohibiting visiting until May 14. Starting April 7, JPay will begin providing one free email stamp per week for each offender. Securus continues to give two free 10-minute phone calls per week to each prisoner as they have done since March 23.

4/6/20: CURE mail: **BE at SCCC** sent a copy of a letter he had sent to Warden Michelle Buckner dated March 9, 2020 regarding the corona virus. It reads as follows:

In a little over seven (7) days this virus has gone from the first case being reported in Seattle, Washington, to a GLOBAL EMERGENCY!!! Yet, nothing is being done to give the offender population the proper tools to help combat this virus. We live in wings of 72 offenders, breathing the same air, using the same phones and showers. We are not being given additional supplies to even follow the instructions you have placed in every wing, violating established policies, D4-2.2, Safety, D1-9.1, Emergency Procedures, IS24.1, Emergency Preparedness and IS24.21, Emergency Health and Medical. Offenders are forced to use community salt and pepper in the dining halls, drink from trough-styled containers manually filled, etc. Offenders NEED ACCESS TO “UNCUT” CHLORINE FOR CLEANING, PAPER TOWELS AND OTHER SUPPLIES for safety purposes. Your response is eagerly awaited and ant