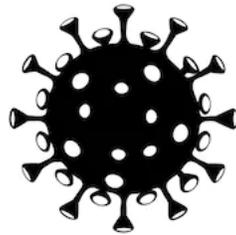


Staying Healthy, Staying Connected

COVID19 Information for Prisoners



Updated April 11, 2020

Dear Friend,

We hope this message reaches you in good health and spirits.

We are writing to you from a changed world—one most of us barely recognize. In a few short weeks, our daily routines of work, school, childcare, recreation, and simple things like shopping for basic necessities have been radically unmade and reformed in the shape of a new normal.

The adjustment has been difficult, and we remain in a historical moment that none of us can fully comprehend or predict. The majority of states have issued some version of “stay at home” order to minimize new infections, but even with these measures **the U.S. is now the country with the highest number of deaths worldwide.**

People feel anxious—not just about getting sick, but also about how to afford and access basic supplies and pay their bills with so many being laid off in an economy that’s at a standstill.

But alongside the anxiety, we also see positive social practices forming. We’ve witnessed a rapid and fierce coming-together of friends and neighbors committed to taking care of each other through this crisis. People are coordinating distribution of material resources and providing emotional support within their communities, finding ways to remain socially connected while being physically distant.

This guide extends that social connection inside, across the walls and razor wire. We haven’t forgotten about you and won’t stop advocating for you. We hope you find this guide helpful, and that you’ll stay in touch to let us know how you’re doing and what you need.

In solidarity,

Blue Ridge ABC

What this guide covers

This guide provides up-to-date information about COVID19. We have only used information from credible sources such as the Center for Disease Control and other public health resources.

Critical information is also covered in Spanish although we were not able to translate the entire guide.

We also suggest ways to advocate for yourself and others at this time, including a **COVID19 Report Form** and information about an upcoming national grievance filing day on May 7. Finally, we share news about people being released from prisons and jails in the wake of this crisis.

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Section 1: Background Information

- What is coronavirus // COVID19?
- Symptoms of COVID19 // Síntomas **** Español incluido ****
- Who is at a higher risk for severe symptoms?
- How does the virus spread? **** Español incluido ****
- How is COVID19 diagnosed and treated?

What is coronavirus // COVID19?

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases affecting the respiratory (breathing) system. In 2019, a new strain of coronavirus was discovered in humans (before then, it was only

known to exist in animals). This new or “novel” coronavirus causes the disease known as COVID19, which is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. COVID19 is short for **Coronavirus Disease 2019.**

After rapidly spreading across the world, COVID19 was officially declared a “pandemic” by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020. At the time of that declaration, the virus had spread to at least 114 countries and had killed more than 4,000 people. As of April 11 (exactly one month later), that number has risen to 185 countries with at least 108,000 deaths. The vast majority of people who get sick do recover; to date, over 400,000 people (that we know of) have recovered from COVID19.

Symptoms of COVID19

People may not experience symptoms **for between 2-14 days** (the “incubation period”) after infection. The most common symptoms are:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Síntomas

En los casos confirmados de la enfermedad del coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), las enfermedades reportadas han variado de tener síntomas leves a enfermedades graves, y hasta produjeron muertes. Los síntomas pueden incluir:

- Fiebre
- Tos

- Dificultad para respirar

Los CDC creen que los síntomas del COVID-19 podrían aparecer en tan solo 2 días o hasta 14 días después de la exposición.

Most people with COVID19 experience **mild to moderate symptoms** and recover without seeking treatment. Many people are also “**asymptomatic,**” meaning they show no symptoms at all. Some patients develop **severe symptoms**, including pneumonia, organ failure, and in some cases death.

According to current data, “approximately 14% [of patients] develop severe disease requiring hospitalization and oxygen support and 5% require admission to an intensive care unit to try to prevent the most severe complications including septic shock.” (this differs for high-risk groups, see “**Who is at higher risk**”)

Emergency warning signs for severe COVID19 include:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

Who is at higher risk for severe illness?

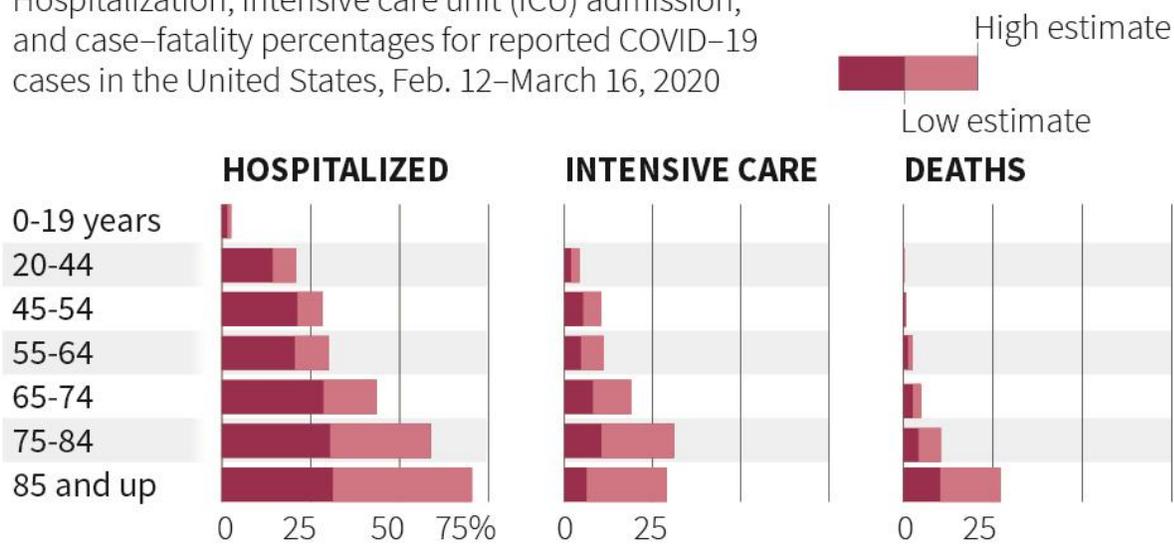
Los adultos mayores y las personas con afecciones crónicas subyacentes graves, como enfermedades cardíacas, enfermedades pulmonares o diabetes, parecen tener un mayor riesgo de presentar complicaciones más graves.

Certain groups of people are more vulnerable to developing severe symptoms, including:

- Older adults (65 and older)
- People with chronic health problems such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes
- People with weakened immune systems

Severity by age group in the U.S.

Hospitalization, intensive care unit (ICU) admission, and case-fatality percentages for reported COVID-19 cases in the United States, Feb. 12–March 16, 2020



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Staff, 19/03/2020



- **31-59% of adults 65-84 years old with COVID19 require hospitalization**
- **11-31% of adults 65-84 years old require admission to intensive care unit**

How does the virus spread?

The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact (within about 6 ft) through “respiratory droplets” released when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby or be inhaled.

Frequently-asked questions about spread of coronavirus

Can someone spread the virus without being sick?

People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (sickest), but people with mild symptoms and people who show no symptoms (asymptomatic) **can** spread the virus.

Can the virus be spread from contact with contaminated surfaces/objects?

Information on this is changing, but recent evidence from the National Institutes of Health shows the virus **can** remain “detectable and stable” on various surfaces including copper (up to 4 hours), cardboard (24 hours), and plastic and stainless steel (2-3 days). So it may be possible to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching your own mouth, nose, or eyes.

Can you catch coronavirus by eating food handled or prepared by others?

It's not clear whether the virus can be spread through food handled or prepared by an infected person, but it is considered unlikely/rare. For hot food, the virus would likely be killed by cooking. This may not be the case with uncooked foods like salads or sandwiches.

Can coronavirus travel through the air?

Information about this is still emerging, but a recent NIH study shows the virus **can** stay present in the air for up to three hours, concluding that airborne spread of the virus is “plausible.”

Cómo se propaga el COVID-19

Los conocimientos actuales sobre cómo se propaga el virus que causa la enfermedad del coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) se basan en su mayoría en lo que se sabe sobre coronavirus similares.

Propagación de persona a persona

Se cree que el virus se propaga principalmente de persona a persona.

- Entre las personas que tienen contacto cercano entre ellas (dentro de unos 6 pies de distancia).
- Mediante gotitas respiratorias que se producen cuando una persona infectada tose o estornuda.
- Estas gotitas pueden llegar a la boca o la nariz de las personas que se encuentren cerca o posiblemente entrar a los pulmones al respirar.

Propagación mediante el contacto con superficies u objetos contaminados

Podría ser posible que una persona contraiga el COVID-19 al tocar una superficie u objeto que tenga el virus y luego se toque la boca, la nariz o posiblemente los ojos, aunque no se cree que esta sea la principal forma en que se propaga el virus.

¿Cuándo se produce la propagación?

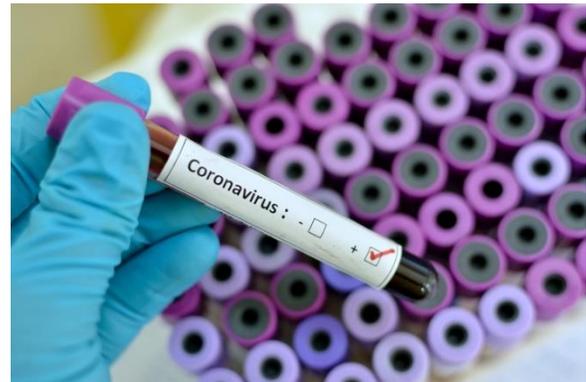
- Se cree que las personas son más contagiosas cuando presentan síntomas más fuertes (están más enfermas).

- Podría ser posible que haya algo de propagación antes de que las personas presenten síntomas; ha habido informes sobre esto con relación a este nuevo coronavirus, aunque no se cree que esta sea la principal forma en que se propaga el virus.

How is COVID19 diagnosed and treated?

Diagnosis

Laboratory tests can identify the virus that causes COVID-19 in respiratory samples. State and local public health departments have received tests from the Center for



Disease Control. These tests are Real-Time Reverse Transcriptase (RT)-PCR Diagnostic Panels, that can provide results in 4 to 6 hours.

NCDPS has stated that COVID-19 tests are being done “as necessary”–let us know if you or someone else have symptoms of COVID19 and have not been given a test or have been told no tests are available.

Treatment

There is no specific treatment or vaccine at this time.

Section 2: How to Avoid Spread & Infection

The best way to stay healthy is to avoid exposure and infection by following these practices:



- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds** – especially before eating or touching your face, eyes, or mouth and after touching frequently-used surfaces (cell doors, counters, phones, bathroom surfaces).
- **NCDPS says it is making a non-alcohol based hand cleanser available to all inmates**; let us know if you are not receiving this product on demand!
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth especially with unwashed hands.
- Whenever possible stay 6 feet away from others (“physical distancing”)
- Cover cough or sneeze with your **elbow** – do not cough/sneeze into your hand or the air
- Sanitize surfaces in your cell with disinfectant every day. If possible, sanitize eating surfaces before eating. **NCDPS says that it has made disinfecting spray available – let us know if you are not being provided with necessary supplies!**
- Do not share glasses, utensils, dishes, towels, or bedding that has not been cleaned/sanitized between uses.

Everyone should follow these practices, but it is especially important if you are over 65 or have a chronic health problem (heart or lung disease, diabetes, weakened immune system).

Tome medidas para protegerse

Límpiese las manos con frecuencia

- **Lávese las manos** frecuentemente con agua y jabón por al menos 20 segundos, especialmente después de haber estado en un lugar público, o después de sonarse la nariz, toser o estornudar.
- **Evite tocarse los ojos, la nariz y la boca** con las manos sin lavar.

Evite el contacto cercano

- **Evite el contacto cercano** con personas que estén enfermas.
- Mantenga una **distancia entre usted y las otras personas** si el COVID-19 se está propagando en su comunidad. Esto es especialmente importante para las personas que tengan un mayor riesgo de enfermarse gravemente.

Tome medidas para proteger a los demás

Quédese en casa si está enfermo

- **Quédese en casa** si está enfermo, excepto para conseguir atención médica. Sepa qué hacer si se enferma.

Cúbrase la boca al toser y estornudar

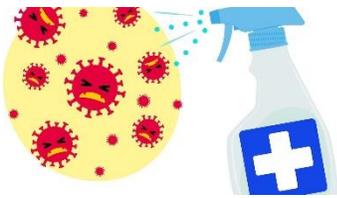
- **Cúbrase la boca y la nariz** con un pañuelo desechable cuando tosa o estornude, o use la parte interna del codo.
- **Bote los pañuelos desechables que haya usado a la basura.**



- De inmediato, **lávese las manos** con agua y jabón por al menos 20 segundos.

Use una mascarilla si está enfermo

- **Si está enfermo:** Usted debería usar una mascarilla cuando esté cerca de otras personas (p. ej., compartiendo una habitación o un vehículo) y antes de entrar al consultorio de un proveedor de atención médica. Si no puede usar una mascarilla (por ejemplo, porque le causa dificultad para respirar), debe hacer todo lo posible por cubrirse la nariz y la boca al toser y estornudar, y las personas que lo estén cuidando deben ponerse una mascarilla si entran a su habitación. Sepa qué hacer si se enferma.
- **Si NO está enfermo:** No necesita usar una mascarilla a menos que esté cuidando a alguien que está enfermo (y que no puede usar una). Es posible que las mascarillas empiecen a escasear y deberían reservarse para los cuidadores.



Limpie y desinfecte

- **Limpie Y desinfecte las superficies que se tocan frecuentemente todo los días.** Esto incluye las mesas, las manijas de las puertas, los interruptores de luz, los mesones, las barandas, los escritorios, los teléfonos, los teclados, los inodoros, los grifos, los lavamanos y los lavaplatos.
- **Si las superficies están sucias, límpielas:** use agua y jabón o detergente antes de desinfectar.

Section 3: Latest News

- What NCDPS is telling people
- Resistance News

What NCDPS is telling people

The following is from NCDPS website:

April 6, 2020:

- 2-week moratorium on accepting inmates from county jails.
- Reducing offender transfers **between** prisons beginning April 7 to contain additional spread.
- **Providing additional personal protective equipment (PPE):**
 - **Distributing washable face masks to all staff and offenders at three prisons** where offenders have tested positive for COVID-19 – Caledonia Correctional Institution (CI), Johnston CI and Neuse CI. The goal is to issue these face masks to all staff **and** all offenders.
 - **Increasing Correction Enterprises' production of PPE for prisons.** Correction Enterprises is now producing each week more than 3,600 clear face shields; 6,000 washable face masks; 500 hospital-style gowns; and more than 6,000 four-gallon cases of disinfectant spray, in addition to large quantities of hand lotion.

March 31, 2020:

- **Medical screenings for all staff entering a prison** beginning April 1.
- **Reducing offender interactions** at all prisons.

- **Providing additional PPE:**
 - **Distributing washable face masks to staff** at Central Prison, NCCIW, and Wake Correctional Center where COVID-19 community cases are rapidly increasing.
 - **Ordering additional PPE for staff**, including 100,000 medical-grade surgical masks, 15,000 N95 masks, 5,000 face shields, and 4,000 gowns.
 - Increasing Correction Enterprises' production of washable masks, face shields, and washable gowns.
- **Communicating COVID-19 risk information:**
 - Distributing informational posters regarding proper PPE usage to all prisons and fact sheets on sanitation expectations and prisons cleaning procedures.
- **Providing double rations of soap** to all offenders.
- **Limiting staff gatherings to fewer than 10 people** and requiring social distancing.
- **Designating two COVID-19 response coordinators at each prison.**

March 25, 2020

- **Suspending the work release program** to limit offenders' potential exposure to COVID-19. Monitoring will continue to determine if exceptions are required for essential job functions.
- **Reducing offender movements and interactions** in prisons with medically vulnerable offenders.
- **Limiting educational and self-improvement programming** to reduce the number of outside staff entering a prison. [BC1]

Resistance News: Campaigns for Mitigation & Early Release

All across the country, people are being **released from prisons and jails** in the wake of this outbreak. As abolitionists, we want to see everyone released, but we take heart at seeing the small gains made toward decarceration in a short period of time, and we will keep building momentum for more and more people to walk free.

North Carolina

- A coalition of civil rights groups and inmate family members filed an emergency lawsuit with the NC Supreme Court to force Gov. Roy Cooper to reduce the state prison population.
- Advocates held a car demo outside of the Governor's Mansion to demand release of prisoners. Demonstrators circled the mansion in vehicles, honked horns and piled pallets at the gate.
- An inmate at the Federal Correctional Complex in Butner escaped and has not been found. Butner has the largest outbreak among federal prisons with 76 cases (inmates & staff).
- At Neuse Correctional Institution inmates organized a protest after two inmates tested positive for COVID-19. Inmates came from different dorms then came outside and refused to go back in their dorms despite orders from the warden and staff.

Other States

- Mass call-in campaigns in dozens of states & counties demanding release of some or all prisoners.

- The governors of PA and NJ are offering temporary release on house arrest or parole for eligible people, including those with nonviolent offenses within 9 months of parole eligibility, inmates 65 or older, pregnant women, and the chronically ill.
- More than 1,500 people have been released from New York City's jails in three weeks, shrinking the number of incarcerated to its lowest level in 70 years. This included 329 "violent felony detainees" and 207 "non-violent felony" detainees.
- On April 10, prisoners at Lansing Correctional destroyed various areas of the facility and chased guards out of the unit with grievances of inadequate medical care & 12 confirmed cases.
- Approximately 1,700 people have been released from Los Angeles County jails, reducing the inmate population by 10%.

Section 4: What you and your loved ones can do

- Self-Advocacy
- Communicate and Document
- COVID19 Report Form

Self-Advocacy

If you are not getting the care you need, or staff are not adhering to the policies/practices stated above, you can:

- File an internal grievance form according to facility standards
- Have family members or friends call and email NCDPS Chief Deputy Secretary of Corrections: 919-825-2759 (ask for Tim Moose) // timothy.moose@ncdps.gov

- Inform local media, especially about failure to properly isolate and test sick people
- **If you are parole-eligible and/or in a high-risk group such as 65+ or with chronic illness, write and call Governor Roy Cooper to seek clemency/commutation.** The North Carolina Constitution grants clemency authority with the Governor in all criminal and penal cases (NC Constitution, Article III, Section 5); all inmates are eligible to apply for Governor's clemency. To apply, state law requires a letter requesting a commutation of sentence be written to the Governor by the applicant or by someone on his or her behalf. The letter should state the reasons for seeking clemency and applicant's address.

Governor's Clemency Office
4294 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-4294
Phone: 919-324-1456
Fax: 919-715-8623
E-mail: clemency@nc.gov

Communicate & Document

- Send us a letter documenting what is going on in your facility; let us know if staff are not adhering to stated policies and practices. You can also use the enclosed **report form**. Send letters and report forms to:

Blue Ridge ABC
c/o Firestorm Books
610 Haywood Road
Asheville, NC 28806



- There will be a national grievance filing day on May 7, 2020 directed toward the Department of Justice – this relates to all prison conditions, including but not limited to COVID19 response. If you or a family member would like to receive a grievance form let us know at the address above!
- Kite Line Radio has a hotline to report on COVID19 inside; messages will be played on-air. Call: (765) 343-6236

COVID19 REPORT FORM

First Name:

Last Name:

Pronoun:

DOB:

ID#:

Location:

Facility:

Housing Unit:

State:

Federal Prison Y/N

Do you have pre-existing immune system complications? Y/N

Do you have Coronavirus symptoms? Y/N

Fever Y/N

Dry Cough Y/N

Trouble Breathing Y/N

How many days have you had symptoms?

Have you seen a doctor?

Have you been tested for COVID19? What kind of treatment are you getting?

Have you been placed in isolation?

Are you on lockdown? Y/N How many days have you been on lockdown?

Notes/Additional Information:

