

Lake County Sheriff's Office

Christopher Covelli, Sergeant
Public Information Officer
Desk: 847.377.4180
Fax: 847.984.5738
Date: September 4, 2020



25 S. Martin Luther King Jr., Ave
Waukegan, Illinois 60087

www.lakecountyil.gov/sheriff

John D. Idleburg
Sheriff

MEDIA RELEASE

UPDATE: COVID-19 Mitigation Proving Successful

The Lake County Sheriff's Office and Lake County Health Department are reporting that results from COVID-19 testing at the Lake County Jail have been received. Approximately 600 inmates, correctional employees, facilities staff, and contractors who enter the jail facility were tested last week for COVID-19. Results indicate that one inmate, one correctional officer, and one contractual employee tested positive. All three were asymptomatic. The inmate was placed in medical isolation and the correctional officer and contractual employee are isolating at home.

The inmate who was positive was newly remanded inmate who was being held in the jail's previously established 14-day quarantine pod, used for newly remanded inmates.

Follow-up testing at the jail will occur next week for all staff, and for 28 inmates who had close contact with the inmate who tested positive. These inmates will also be required to quarantine for another 14 days to prevent the virus from spreading in the jail.

Sheriff John Idleburg said, "As I have said many times, it is an absolute priority of mine to keep our employees and jail inmates safe. We implemented a very robust mitigation program at the onset of COVID-19, and the hard work continues to pay off. We continue doing everything we can to keep COVID-19 out of our jail."

"Identifying only three cases among 600 people tested demonstrates the effectiveness of our collaborative effort with the Sheriff's Office and the mitigation measures that they put in place this spring," said Mark Pfister, Executive Director at the Health Department. "Our next step is increasing education efforts for staff and contractors at the jail to reinforce the message that even interactions with your most trusted friends, co-workers and family members can lead to COVID-19 infection, and that can have serious ramifications when providing services in a congregate facility."

Lake County Jail Increases COVID-19 Mitigation Procedures (issued:

8/24/20)

The Lake County Sheriff's Office has continued following vigorous protocols in our ongoing efforts to best mitigate the risks from COVID-19 spreading among employees and jail inmates. Sheriff John Idleburg and his administrative team have been working in close collaboration with the Lake County Health Department in the mitigation effort.

In mid-July, an off-duty correctional officer began experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. The correctional officer took a COVID-19 test and learned he was positive. He did not return to work for 14-days following his positive test.

As a preventative measure and with the expansion of COVID-19 testing availability, in early August all Lake County Jail employees were provided COVID-19 tests. Of the nearly 140 tests provided, two correctional officers and one administrative assistant tested positive. All three were asymptomatic and had no signs of illness. Those employees were immediately placed in quarantine-protocol and were restricted from returning to work for 14-days.

To further strengthen our mitigation efforts the sheriff's office in collaboration with the Lake County Health Department will be providing COVID-19 tests to all inmates, correctional employees, facilities staff, and contractors who enter the jail facility.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic a total of six inmates, nine correctional officers, and one correctional administrative assistant have tested positive.

Sheriff John Idleburg added, "I view it as a top-priority to keep my employees as safe and healthy as possible, as well as the inmates in the jail who we are responsible to protect. Overall, our mitigation efforts have proven to be successful and we look forward to the ongoing increased testing in our facility."

###