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PRESS RELEASE

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Subject: COVID positive inmates

Last week, the first known COVID case of an inmate incarcerated at the Monroe County Correctional Centers was confirmed through testing. Two male inmates who shared a cell in a medium security cell block reported symptoms to medical staff. Both inmates have been transferred to medical cells for observation.

A few days later, two inmates from a different cell block had symptoms that prompted testing. They also tested positive for COVID. They have been likewise separated for medical reasons. The inmates who tested positive have no, or mild symptoms, and there is little present concern about their health being in danger.

The Monroe County Correctional Center has been in contact with the Indiana Department of Health about presence of COVID positive inmates. Additional guidelines for precautionary measures were relayed to jail command. State Department of Health schedule personnel to come to the Correction Center today, to test inmates in the blocks in which the positive cases emerged, as well as any Center employees who chose to be tested.

Forty four inmates were offered the test. Twenty seven submitted to having samples collected. They will be informed of the results, which should be available next week.

The Monroe County Correctional Center has maintained a sanitation process well before the COVID outbreak. In the recent months, the facility has been equipped with ionization within the air handling system; which kills virus as it passes through. UVC lighting units are used throughout the cell blocks, classrooms, and recreation areas on a routine basis.

Correctional staff are instructed to wear N-95 level masks when having direct contact with an inmate, and wear masks during other work routine. A criticism of staff “not always” wearing masks is a misrepresentation of the reality of the procedures that are in practice.

The Sheriff and Command at the Monroe County Correctional Center shall continue to work with Monroe County and Indiana Departments of Health, as we address this present medical event.

At present, we have not received information on a vaccination schedule for inmates. Vaccinations will be made available at the earliest opportunity to any inmate who chooses to receive one.

Sheriff Brad Swain

