



## **COVID-19 RESPONSE**

### **May 19, 2020**

The St. Lucie County Sheriff is committed to providing you with information and transparency regarding the Department's COVID-19 (coronavirus) response.

As of May 19, 2020, we have confirmed a total of 2 incarcerated individuals who have tested positive for the coronavirus. In the early hours of May 14, two inmates reported not feeling well and were immediately moved to Medical and placed in isolation. Due to the efforts of our staff and Wexford Medical, both seem to have recovered from the illness; however, they still remain in medical isolation. There are three additional inmates with similar symptoms who are isolated in Medical as well. We are awaiting their test results.

In addition to inmate cases, there are two contract staff members (Aramark) who have tested positive. They have both been out of work since Wednesday, May 13. No Sheriff's Office staff have displayed any symptoms or have tested positive at this point.

The Sheriff's Office is working closely with the St. Lucie County Department of Public Health and Wexford Medical to conduct strategic COVID-19 testing. We anticipate positive cases to continue to occur in the days and weeks ahead, as has transpired already throughout Florida and the United States. The early decisions and interventions have helped to mitigate the spread of the virus at the institutional level. Continuing to implement the best practices suggested by experts in both security and healthcare, the Sheriff's Office is requiring all incarcerated individuals to wear a mask when out of their housing units as part of our control initiative. All new intakes are quarantined for 14 days before being moved to general population. Random temperature checks continue to take place throughout the facility and all staff are temperature checked when they come to work. Additionally, inmate workers are checked for symptoms before starting their respective shifts.

Effective today, the kitchen will be closed to Inmate workers. Food will be prepared exclusively by Aramark staff and placed in an exclusion zone. Inmate workers will pick up food carts and distribute throughout the facility. This will result in some changes to the normal food menu. Please keep in mind, these are temporary measures to best protect inmates and staff alike. We will resume normal operations as soon as it is practical and safe to do so.

Please continue doing your part to stay healthy by complying with all temperature checks, washing your hands and practicing social distancing. We understand the difficulties and stress that this unprecedented event causes and appreciate your patience. Please know the Sheriff's Office will continue to evaluate what measures need to be taken to battle this pandemic and keep the people who live and work in our facility safe and healthy.