



U.S. Department of Justice
Memorandum
Federal Bureau of Prisons

Correctional Programs Division

Central Office
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Washington, DC 20534

MEMORANDUM FOR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER DIRECTORS

FROM: [REDACTED] (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
[REDACTED] (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Operations Section Chief

SUBJECT: Procedures for Transfers or Release of Inmates to
the Community during COVID-19 National Pandemic

The following guidelines apply to all releases including transfers to Residential Reentry Centers (RRCs), placements on Home Confinement (HC), and Full Term or Good Conduct Time releases. Unit Team staff should review all releases for the next 30-60 days.

Staff should use the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> to review each state's resources and advisories and for guidance on appropriate management of inmates who are in quarantine or who are symptomatic.

1) RRC Transfers without HC:

- Unit Team staff must verify furlough transfer arrangements within 12 hours of the projected transfer to ensure the transfer method and route is still viable. If the route or schedule requires revision, the servicing Residential Reentry Management (RRM) office will be notified via email by Unit Team staff. The RRM office will reply to any modification requests within one day. In some instances, when public transit is not available or POV (inmate family) is not an option, staff may be required to transport the inmate.
- In rare instances, if no viable transportation options are available to the RRC, the date should be reviewed,

and if applicable a deferred date should be requested or a cancellation should be submitted to the servicing RRM office. When determining to defer the RRC date versus cancellation, staff should consider time remaining to serve, 2nd Chance Act review factors, and the CDC website.

- Inmates must be medically screened within 12 hours of their projected transfer. All inmates found to be symptomatic for COVID-19 will have their transfer delayed. Unit Team staff will communicate directly with RRM staff the need to delay the transfer and reschedule based on time remaining to serve.
- Special attention will be given to transfers to areas that have been designated as "Shelter-in-Place" localities; Inmates will be notified they may be required to shelter in place at the RRC. Furlough transfer documents should be given to the inmate, and he or she must be educated to present them upon request to any authority who challenges the inmates' approval to be in-transit.
- Institution staff should be mindful if an inmate fails to arrive at the designated RRC, the inmate remains the responsibility of the sending institution who must process the appropriate escape reports in accordance with Program Statement 5553.08, Escapes/Death Notifications.

2) HC Transfers

- On March 22, 2020, the Attorney General issued a memo directing the Bureau of Prisons to transfer inmates to HC where appropriate to decrease risks to their health. Per this memo, any inmate releasing to home confinement must first complete a 14-day quarantine period. Therefore, 14 days from the date an inmate is scheduled to transfer to HC, the inmate must be placed in quarantine.
- On the final day of quarantine, Unit Team staff must verify furlough transfer arrangements to ensure the transfer method and route is still viable. If the route or schedule requires revision, the servicing Residential Reentry Management (RRM) office will be notified via email by Unit Team staff. The RRM office will reply to any modification requests within one day. In some instances, when public transit is not available or POV (inmate family) is not an option, staff may be required to transport the inmate.
- Inmates must be medically screened within 12 hours of their projected transfer. All inmates found to be symptomatic for COVID-19 will have their transfer delayed. Unit Team staff will communicate directly with

RRM staff the need to delay the transfer and reschedule based on time remaining to serve.

- During the quarantine period, institution Health Services staff will, based on CDC guidance, make an assessment of the inmate's risk factors for severe COVID-19 illness, risks of COVID-19 at the inmate's prison facility, as well as the risks of COVID-19 at the location in which the inmate seeks HC. Release will be granted only if it is determined based on the totality of circumstances for each individual inmates that transfer to HC is likely not to increase the inmate's risk of contracting COVID-19.
- Special attention will be given to transfers to areas that have been designated as "Shelter-in-Place" localities; Inmates will be notified they may be required to shelter in place at their HC address. Furlough transfer documents should be given to the inmate, and he or she must be educated to present them upon request to any authority who challenges the inmates' approval to be in-transit.
- Institution staff should be mindful if an inmate fails to arrive at the designated address, the inmate remains the responsibility of the sending institution who must process the appropriate escape reports in accordance with Program Statement 5553.08, Escapes/Death Notifications.

3) Full Term/Good Conduct Time Releases:

- Unit Team staff must verify release arrangements within 12 hours of the projected release date to ensure the release method and route is still viable. Unit Team staff must work directly with the affected inmate if the route or schedule requires revision. In some instances, when public transit is not available or POV (inmate family) is not an option, staff may be required to transport the inmate. Additionally, Unit Team staff may need to arrange accommodations to include hotels near the institution to place inmates who release and are awaiting transportation.
- Inmates must be medically screened to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19 within 12 hours of release. For inmates who are symptomatic or in quarantine/isolation, the Health Services Administrator or designee must notify the Public Health authorities with jurisdiction over the area of the inmate's pending release address. Health services staff should inform them of the inmate's arrival in their area and the inmate's COVID status. Every effort must be made to

ensure the inmate's travel to his/her release address is conducted in a manner that reduces public exposure. This includes POV (inmate family) transport when possible and staff transporting the inmate to the release residence when necessary. Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment should be provided if the inmate is symptomatic.

- In cases where symptomatic inmates are being release via Parole, the Unit Team staff should coordinate with the U.S. Parole Commission to determine if parole action is warranted in order to allow the inmate to be quarantined in a Bureau institution.
- Unit Team staff shall stay in communication with the U.S. Probation Office (USPO) regarding all inmate release plans and updated reporting instructions. In instances where inmates are transient, Unit Team staff shall seek guidance from the U.S. Probation Office in the district of supervision on where the inmate should report. If necessary, the Unit Team staff shall make arrangements for inmates to reside in a shelter or hotel.

4) For Releases to Detaining Authority:

- Correctional Systems staff must contact the detaining authority 24 hours in advance to ensure there have been no changes with previously arranged inmate pick-ups (e.g., transporting officers). They should be advised the inmate will be medically screened within 12 hours of departure to determine if he/she is symptomatic for COVID-19 and request a medical/health services point of contact in the event the inmate is symptomatic. If the detaining authorities advise they are not picking up the inmate as previously arranged, staff are to advise the detaining authorities the inmate will be released as the Bureau has no authority to hold an inmate past his/her release date. In either case, staff are to document the name, position, agency, and telephone number of the detaining authority directly on the applicable DAL. If the detaining authority chooses not to pick up the inmate, ask the detaining authority to send documentation in writing that they no longer have interest in the inmate.
- All inmates must be medically screened to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19 within 12 hours of their projected transfer. All inmates found to be symptomatic for COVID-19 will require the Health Services Administrator or designee to notify the detaining agency's Health Services. Health services staff should inform them of the inmate's arrival and COVID status.

Every effort must be made to ensure the inmate's release is conducted in a manner that reduces public exposure as noted in prior sections of this memorandum.