



ORANGE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHERIFF-CORONER DON BARNES

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Orange County Jail institutes changes, makes accommodations in response to COVID-19

SANTA ANA, Ca. (March 20, 2020): Based on directives handed down by federal, state and local authorities, the Orange County Sheriff's Department has implemented measures in response to COVID-19 to protect the health and safety of the public, personnel and those in our custody in Orange County Jail facilities.

As health authorities continue to assess the evolving situation and adopt new recommendations, the Sheriff's Department will continue to re-evaluate these temporary protocols and make changes, as necessary, with safety remaining the department's primary mission.

"The Orange County community is facing an unprecedented challenge, and the Sheriff's Department has worked effectively and expediently in our response across divisions," said Don Barnes, Sheriff-Coroner. "The custody setting presents unique and complex dynamics that we proactively are addressing to protect those in our custody and who work in our facilities. We also are making accommodations to preserve aspects proven to be important for rehabilitation."

To date, no inmates have been diagnosed with COVID-19, but in the interest of health and safety, the Sheriff's Department has instituted the following:

- Enhanced screening for jail intake in partnership with the Orange County Healthcare Agency.
- Temperature screening for every person who enters our jail facilities, including inmates, Sheriff's personnel and outside agencies booking an inmate.
- If an inmate shows flu-like symptomology, the inmate will be rehoused and isolated from the general population. The Health Care Agency's Correctional Health Services staff will monitor the inmate and will determine if a COVID-19 test is necessary. Once the inmate is not symptomatic, they will be cleared for rehousing.
- Ensure all inmates are receiving adequate cleaning materials for housing areas and soap for personal hygiene.
- Temporarily suspended visitation, with the exception of attorney, bail bonds and law enforcement visits.
- Temporarily suspended programming conducted by outside volunteers and contractors. The Sheriff's Department currently is looking into ways to enhance programming, including



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religious services, while following the directives of our healthcare partners. Programs administered by Sheriff's Department personnel are ongoing.

- All contractor access has been suspended, with the exception of specific projects vital to addressing the COVID-19 issue.
- Each inmate will receive two, free five-minute calls per week.
- Inmates unable to purchase stationary supplies will be provided pre-stamped envelopes, paper and pencils.

For the latest updates on COVID-19 in Orange County and additional health and safety information, visit www.ochealthinfo.com/novelcoronavirus.

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