

10 Bristol County Sheriff staff members, 15 inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 Since May 12

Ten Bristol County Sheriff's Office staff members and 15 county inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 since May 12.

Additionally since May 12, the BCSO has completed COVID testing for ICE detainees as recently ordered by a federal judge in Boston. Eight detainees refused the test; they are being housed in single cells and being monitored by health care professionals. All are asymptomatic. The 65 other ICE detainees in Bristol County have tested negative.

Including the 15 positive tests since May 12, the total number of county inmates who have tested positive is 24. Twenty of them remain in single cells where they are being monitored by medical professionals. Four individuals have been released as their sentences were completed. Prior to their release, the BCSO provided notification of the positive test to the person picking them up and the state Department of Public Health, which in turns notifies the communities they are returning to.

Of the 10 staff members to test positive since May 12, seven are security officers, including four corrections officers, one lieutenant, one sergeant and one captain. The other staff members are a teacher, a communications dispatcher and a classification counselor. All are expected to return to duty in the coming weeks.

In total, 28 BCSO staff members have tested positive for COVID-19, of which 10 have recovered and returned to the facility.

"The COVID pandemic has hit Bristol County, Massachusetts, and our nation pretty hard," Bristol County Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson said. "In the middle of this epidemic, our essential staff of more than 600 people is doing an amazing job in these challenging times."

Over the past few months, the Bristol County Sheriff's Office has instituted many protocols to protect inmates, detainees and staff from the Coronavirus outbreak. Some of those measures include:

- All employees were given masks that must be worn inside the secure perimeter of our facilities. All inmates and detainees have also been given masks to wear for protection.
- All areas of the facility are being cleaned\disinfected every day on every shift.
- All staff members are being screened before entering the buildings; new arriving inmates are being screened before being accepted into custody.
- In-person visitation has been suspended to limit the number of people coming in and out.