



KAY IVEY  
GOVERNOR

# State of Alabama Department of Corrections

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JEFFERSON S. DUNN  
COMMISSIONER

March 20, 2020

Sheriff Derrick Cunningham  
President  
Alabama Sheriffs Association  
514 Washington Avenue  
Montgomery, AL 36104

## **Re.: The Department of Corrections' Response to COVID-19**

Sheriff Cunningham and the Sheriffs of the Association,

Effective today, the Department is placing a 30-day moratorium on new intakes from county jails based on the State of Emergency declared from the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This restriction includes, but is not limited to, new commitments, court returns, and parolees and probationers who are revoked or sanctioned to a dunk. During this time, the Department will continue to receive inmates with severe medical or mental health conditions subject to the usual review process by the Department's Office of Health Services. I ask the Sheriffs to continue the current practice of communicating with the Department's Transfer Division to take custody of these inmates and to provide all inmate clinical notes to the Department.

To date, the Department has no inmates with symptoms of, or a positive test result for, COVID-19. The common medical direction is to implement social distancing and isolation in an effort to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. To this end, the Department is implementing policies to isolate facilities and to maximize the ability to closely assess every person entering our facilities.

The Department recently implemented short-term measures to help isolate inmates and facilities. All visitation, inmate passes, Work Release and Work Center Programs, volunteer entry, non-emergent medical appointments/procedures, general legal visits, and most inter-facility transfers have been suspended for thirty (30) days. The Department, in an effort to screen for symptoms of the virus, is starting a process of taking the temperatures of all individuals entering facilities where inmates are housed and will decline entry to anyone with a fever that qualifies as a symptom of COVID-19. We are daily revising our strategy of prevention and containment.

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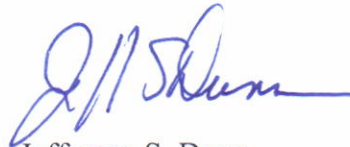
Sheriff Cunningham and the Sheriffs Association

Our current intake process presents many limitations in our ability to isolate inmates introduced into the Department's custody to screen for COVID-19 symptoms. Over the next thirty (30) days, our intake procedures will be reviewed and intake dorm space will be assessed for the feasibility to allow for proper procedures and space for the screening, isolation, and if necessary, quarantine of inmates affected, or suspected to be affected, by the coronavirus. At the end of this 30-day period, we will assess our interim intake process given the circumstances at that time.

The Department requests the collaborative assistance of the Sheriffs Association with these new policies and procedures during this unprecedented time. Please feel free to reach out to Deputy Commissioner Jeffery Williams with any questions or concerns at 334-353-4633 (office), 334-546-5943 (cell), or [jeff.williams@doc.alabama.gov](mailto:jeff.williams@doc.alabama.gov).

We appreciate your cooperation, and look forward to working closely together, as we take all steps necessary to stop COVID-19 from entering our facilities and to safeguard the health and safety of our inmates and staff.

Sincerely,



Jefferson S. Dunn  
Commissioner

CC: Office of Governor Kay Ivey  
Association of County Commissions of Alabama