

Resumption of County Intake

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Division of Adult Institutions and California Correctional Health Care Services (CCHCS) are working to resume intake operations in a safe and controlled manner that protects the health and well-being of all who live and work in state prisons. Since March, the majority of individuals sentenced to state prison have been retained in county jails pending transfer to CDCR. A limited reopening occurred in May but, out of an abundance of caution, was halted to allow CDCR/CCHCS to implement robust testing and transfer protocols. These adjustments were aimed at limiting the risk of COVID-19 transmission within California's prisons.

CDCR recognizes the burden placed upon counties housing individuals in local facilities after sentencing, and the burden placed on those individuals and their loved ones in these times of great uncertainty. CDCR has implemented a reimbursement process to county jails to mitigate the fiscal impact associated with these delayed transfers.

Transferring individuals from county jails who are currently awaiting placement in a state prison allows CDCR to continue the important classification and risk assessments performed during the Reception Center process. This process prepares individuals for placement in appropriate housing and rehabilitative programs at their designated institution.

CDCR has worked closely with the California State Sheriffs' Association and public health experts to develop a plan to resume intake in a controlled, limited manner beginning the week of August. 24. Intake will be prioritized for those counties identified as having the greatest need to create space in their facilities.

CDCR and CCHCS continue to take unprecedented steps to fight COVID-19. These efforts include the suspension of visiting and outside volunteers, limiting group programs, mitigating movement to only essential transfers between prisons, and suspending intake and out-to-court returns from county jails. CDCR and CCHCS have developed comprehensive testing and treatment protocols, and provide increased disinfecting supplies and cloth facial barriers to staff and incarcerated people to ensure the safety of all.

In an abundance of caution, and in collaboration with counties, the medical clearance process prior to transfer shall include COVID-19 testing and symptom screening prior to transfer, use of personal protective equipment (PPE) during transfer, and a quarantine period upon arrival.

Intake will begin with testing, symptom screening, and transfer of 50 individuals from San Joaquin County and 50 from Kings County. Intake will only be accepted at North Kern State Prison and Wasco State Prison Reception Centers (RC). CDCR will continuously evaluate this process and will increase, decrease, or suspend intake in accordance with health care and public health guidance.

Selection

- Priority will be given to counties currently conducting COVID-19 testing who agree to test and transfer individuals within seven days of administering the test and who complete a symptom screening the day of transfer.
 - Test results will be provided to health care staff at the RC will be required.
- Priority will be given to counties extremely limited on jail space.
- Prioritization of which individuals to transfer will be at the counties' discretion.

Testing

- All incarcerated people will require COVID-19 testing prior to transfer, except for resolved cases.
 - If someone has previously tested positive for COVID-19 and the case has been resolved, county jails will provide the name to the Intake Control Unit. These identified individuals will require approval through health care staff at the RC. Reception Center.
- Active positive cases must NOT be transferred.
- Those refusing to test shall NOT be transferred at this transitional point.

Transfer

- County medical staff shall send testing results for each transferring person (name, testing date, and results) in advance to RC health care colleagues prior to arrival.
- A manifest of people transferring shall be sent in advance to the RC Classification and Parole Representative.
- Transports shall occur within seven days of test administration, and only those with a negative test or resolved case may be approved.
- No transfer should occur out of infected quarantine or isolation areas.
- COVID-19 symptom screening should occur within 24 hours prior to transfer.
- All incarcerated people and transportation staff must wear N95 masks during transfer.
- All new arrivals will be screened and tested for COVID-19 upon arrival and then multiple times while in quarantine.
- All new arrivals will be quarantined in cell-based housing for 14 days after arrival in designated quarantine housing.
- Arrivals will be released from quarantine after 14 days if they are asymptomatic and test negative for COVID-19.

If an individual has a need to transfer from county detention directly to specialized housing for a higher level of care, advance authorization is required by the CCHCS Director of Health Care Services and Director of Health Care Operations and Corrections Services. The same testing, transfer, and quarantine protocols will be followed.

To learn more about CDCR/CCHCS response efforts on COVID-19, visit www.cdcr.ca.gov/covid19.