



County of Milwaukee
Office of the Sheriff

Earnell R. Lucas
Sheriff

DATE: Wednesday, December 2, 2020

TO: Committee on Judiciary, Safety and General Services

FROM: Theodore F. Chisholm, Chief of Staff, Office of the Sheriff
Inspector Aaron Dobson, Jail Commander, Office of the Sheriff

CC: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Board of Supervisors
Steve Cady, Director of Research and Policy, Office of the Comptroller
Allyson Smith, Committee Coordinator, Office of the Clerk

RE: December Cycle Report on the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Milwaukee County and the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office continue to experience significant operational challenges due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The unrelenting statewide increase in COVID-19 cases has significantly impacted correctional systems throughout Wisconsin, including Milwaukee County's pre-trial detention facilities.

The Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office continues to implement the aggressive COVID-19 mitigation protocols described in our report to the Committee on Judiciary, Safety and General Services in the October cycle. These measures include rigorous adherence to masking, distancing whenever possible, single-cell housing, disinfection protocols, and personal hygiene protocols, as well as the transfer of COVID-19-positive individuals to appropriate quarantine housing at the Milwaukee County House of Correction. Nevertheless, during the first week of November, the Milwaukee County Jail began to experience noticeable increases in COVID-19 exposures and test positivity among facility staff and persons in custody.

To reduce intra-facility transmission of COVID-19, on Thursday, November 5, the jail required the use of N-95 respirators by all personnel working in housing units; while masks have long been required in these units, N-95 respirators had been required only in certain circumstances including isolation, quarantine, and medical housing. In-custody individuals continue to wear three-ply surgical masks. Fresh masks are issued to in-custody individuals on a daily basis and upon request. The jail utilizes a significant amount of PPE on a daily basis and has relied on the support of the Countywide Procurement Team and on existing vendor contracts to ensure a viable ongoing supply.

The jail has also, in conjunction with the House of Correction, worked diligently and aggressively to secure additional testing resources from the State of Wisconsin. Facility-wide testing was conducted at the jail, starting in the week of November 15, which identified additional positive tests within the facility population and resulted in subsequent unit quarantines, transfers to housing at the House of Correction, and follow-up testing. Due to concurrent outbreak challenges at the House of Correction, the Milwaukee County Alternate Care Facility has been opened on the House of Correction campus, which is staffed partly by Sheriff's Office personnel.

As of Wednesday, December 2, the following statistics were current within the jail:

Positive Cases (In Custody)	38
Housing Units Quarantined	8
Housing Units Reserved as Isolation Space	1
Positive Cases (Staff)	19
Quarantines (Staff)	8