

## COVID-19 UPDATES: AS MDOC CASES INCREASE, MCO ADVOCATES FOR FRONT LINE STAFF

MCO leaders are continuing to advocate for members as cases of COVID-19 emerge in prisons around Michigan.

Here are updates from this week on the COVID-19 pandemic:

- On March 25, MCO President Byron Osborn sent an open letter to MDOC Director Heidi Washington.

He asked for protective equipment for staff, changes in prisoner movement for activities, and for the inclusion of MCO state and chapter leaders as the MDOC continues to develop protocols. The letter also asks for modifications to the screening process for staff entering facilities and for temporarily reducing instances of staff touching prisoners and their property. These suggestions stem from the idea that social distancing should be practiced in prisons to the extent possible to slow the spread of the virus. The letter should be posted on your facility's union bulletin board, or

you can read it in our [Facebook group](#).

- As of this writing, more than a dozen inmates have tested positive for the virus. They are housed at Parnall, Lakeland, Newberry, Women's Huron Valley, Kinross, Macomb, and Woodland. Inmates and staff who had close contact with them have been notified to quarantine.

- At least seven MDOC staff members have tested positive.

- Three patients at the Center for Forensic Psychiatry have also tested positive.

- Don't forget to take this [important survey](#) for all corrections staff to share their views on how COVID-19 is being handled at their facility.

- MCO has been interviewed by several news outlets. We're making sure the public understands this virus can rapidly spread in a prison, but front line staff are still working to keep communities safe. Read our comments now:

[MDOC: 3 New Prisoners, 1 Parolee Tests Positive For COVID-19](#) (Gon-gwer)

[First Michigan prisoner tests positive for coronavirus](#) (Detroit Free Press)

[Marquette Branch Prison could house inmates isolated for COVID-19](#) (TV-6 Marquette)

- SEIU has expanded some of their discounts in response to the virus.

[Check out their new offers.](#)

- Members, please bring any COVID-19 related concerns to your chapter officials.

**This situation is rapidly evolving; by the time you read this, there may be new information. Join our members-only [Facebook group](#) for the latest updates.** Again, MCO leaders thank all frontline staff for their continued dedication to protecting the public in this time of crisis. We will continue to advocate for members and share info as this pandemic continues to unfold.

## REST IN PEACE, OFFICER MCCALLUM AND GATEKEEPER HAIGHT

In the last week of March, MCO honors two Michigan corrections officers who have died in the line of duty.

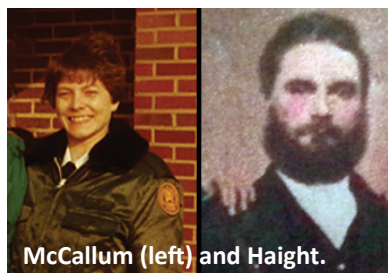
Josephine McCallum was murdered at the former State Prison of Southern Michigan in Jackson on March 24, 1987. McCallum was the only officer in the activities building when she was brutally attacked, raped, and left to die. Inmate Edward Hill was convicted in her murder and sentenced to life in prison.

George Haight, a gatekeeper, was poisoned by an inmate March 27, 1893 at the Michigan State Penitentiary in Jackson. Haight ate tainted food prepared by

inmate Robert Irving Latimer. Latimer served Haight, the captain, and other workers food poisoned with prussic acid.

Haight was survived by a wife and five children. Haight's death was forgotten for more than 100 years, until corrections officers uncovered it in 2013.

McCallum, Haight, and two other Michigan corrections officers who made the ultimate sacrifice – Earl DeMarse in September 1973 and Jack Budd in December 1987 – are honored on MCO's Fallen Officers' Memorial. [Read more about Michigan's fallen corrections officers on our website.](#) May all our fallen officers rest in peace.



McCallum (left) and Haight.

## UPDATED CONTRACT AVAILABLE NOW

The MCO contract has been updated to reflect language secured during negotiations last fall. [Access the contract now.](#)

Economic provisions include six percent in hourly rate increases through fiscal year 2022.

You should have received an email March 25 at your .gov email with a link to the updated contract. Or, you can [read a summary of the changes and access the updated contract](#) now on our website. If you did not get the email at your .gov address, please check your spam folder. If it's not there, please let us know so we can check our records.