

COVID-19 UPDATES: MCO AND NATIONAL CORRECTIONS GROUPS DEMAND SAFETY PROTECTIONS

ALL CORRECTIONS STAFF URGED TO SIGN OUR RESOLUTION NOW!

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

- More than 150 inmates and more than 40 MDOC staff have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Parnall has the most cases of inmate infections with at least 70. At least 150 additional staff are in quarantine due to possible exposure.

- MCO President Byron Osborn wrote a letter to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer this week asking for restoration of leave credits used due to the pandemic and for hazard pay. From the letter:

“The commitment being made by our members and their families to persevere every day and continue to provide critical service to Michigan’s citizens during this time of crisis is, in my opinion, a great testament to their dedication and professionalism. As this pandemic continues to spread, these employees will be under extreme pressure and anxiety as the risks associated with our work increase far beyond the usual risks that are inherent in our profession.”

Read the entire letter in our members-only [Facebook group](#).

- **One Voice and the American Correctional Officers Intelligence Network have joined forces to send a list of demands to the National**

Governors Association. We are requesting corrections staff receive adequate masks, gloves, and PPE, in addition to hazard pay and the restoration of leave credits used due to the virus. Read [the letter and resolution](#). MCO encourages all corrections staff to [sign the resolution here](#).

President Osborn, MCO Executive Director Andy Potter, and Thumb Officer LaRonda Velaga spoke at a virtual press conference today about the letter and the perilous conditions COs are walking into every day.

- MSI has been producing masks since last weekend for staff and prisoner use. Once everyone receives three masks, MDOC will require masks to be worn. MCO recommends all officers wear a mask. Officers may wear their own masks as well.

- MCO leaders have launched a nation-wide search for protective masks for officers. We recently made a connection with a Michigan company that seems promising. More info will be shared when it’s available.

- MCO leaders are continuing to advocate in the media for officers. Read our comments now:

[Michigan prisons will require inmates, employees to wear masks dur-](#)

[ing virus crisis](#) (Detroit News)

[Michigan speeds parole reviews but few prisoners qualify](#) (Detroit News)

[As a Mom Working In a Prison, I Worry About Bringing Coronavirus Home](#) (The Marshall Project)

[Michigan prisons keep GED classes going despite fears of coronavirus](#) (Bridge MI)

[As coronavirus spreads in Michigan’s prisons, fear brews among families, officers](#) (Detroit Free Press)

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

- At CFP, chapter officials are in constant communication with the facility administration. At least 15 patients have been confirmed to have the virus.

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 would like to express our gratitude for all frontline staff working during this pandemic. We are sharing your concerns with the governor and other elected leaders, MDOC and MDHHS administration, the media, and the public.

IN MEMORIAM: DETROIT CTO DAMON BURTON



Corrections Transportation Officer Damon Burton passed away this week due to complications from COVID-19.

CTO Burton worked out of the Detroit Reentry Center. He had

been with the MDOC since 1989. He was well-known around the Detroit area and had a reputation as being professional and friendly.

A memorial service will be streaming at 11 a.m. April 8. [Find out how to](#)

[watch](#).

Please pray for peace for his family and friends. Rest in peace, CTO Burton.



Photo: The House of Johnson Funeral Home