




STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION



Ned Lamont
Governor

Rollin Cook
Commissioner

TO: All Staff
FROM: Rollin Cook, Commissioner 
DATE: March 16, 2020
SUBJECT: Coronavirus Memo #4 - Work Schedules

Let me begin by expressing my sincere appreciation for the awesome extra efforts being made across our organization throughout the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Each one of you has answered the call and continued to perform your duties without hesitation. I am very proud to serve with all of you.

Next, I want to discuss the most recent, and perhaps most significant, development of the COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to the challenges around staffing and personnel. Over the weekend Governor Lamont closed all of the State's public schools at least through the end of March. Additionally, he has authorized up to 14 days of paid leave as an option for state employees who need to be out of work because they are sick with COVID-19, are caring for a family member who is sick with COVID-19, or must provide childcare/eldercare because of school and/or nursing facility closures.

I will reiterate that this option applies to all of our employees. We are seeking clarification regarding specific details pertaining to this authorized leave, and will share as soon as possible, but rest assured it applies to everyone at this time.

As a career correctional officer, I fully appreciate how difficult it is to have to choose between staying home with loved ones and performing your sworn duty as public servants. As first responders, correctional professionals have a duty to serve and none of us take that responsibility lightly. In the past, whenever there was a crisis, whenever there was a need you – the dedicated men and women of the finest correctional agency in the country – always rose to the challenge. I have no reason to believe things would be any different during our current challenges.

This is an unprecedented healthcare emergency that will require us all to work collaboratively. We have the honorable responsibility to keep our correctional facilities running in a safe, secure and humane fashion. We consider this current pandemic a call to duty and must have the integrity to see it through.

Again, I understand this will not be easy for those of you who now have the additional burden of having to care for children home from school or displaced senior loved ones. I firmly believe

Phone: 860.692.7482 ♦ Fax: 860.692.7483
24 Wolcott Hill Road ♦ Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109

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that as you have done in the past, somehow, somehow you will find a way, once again, to fulfill your commitment to the citizens of Connecticut during this current emergency.

In an effort to assist you with your obligations outside of work, we are working closely with the unions in hopes of formulating creative adjustments to active agreements which would provide some flexibility to standard work schedules.

As previously stated, I have been extremely proud of the willingness of staff to step up to the plate and do whatever is needed for the greater good and in service to their correctional brothers and sisters. Moving forward, I am comforted by the firm belief that I can count on all of you to do your part (and then some) in helping to get us all through this current challenge. When this pandemic is behind us, we will all be better off with the knowledge that together we can do anything.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter.