



COOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Thomas J. Dart, Sheriff

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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312-603-4242

Correctional Officer Tests Positive for COVID-19

COOK COUNTY, IL – Cook County Sheriff Thomas J. Dart today announced that a correctional officer has tested positive for COVID-19. The correctional officer, who had recently worked in the Residential Treatment Unit and Cermak Hospital, is in isolation at home.

The Sheriff's Office used video to identify anyone who may have come into close contact with this correctional officer. After consultation with the Chicago Department of Public Health, a small number of staff have been advised to stay home, although none were symptomatic. The Chicago Department of Public Health advised that these employees could have come to work if they were asymptomatic, but out of an abundance of caution, the Sheriff's Office told the employees to self-quarantine at home for 14 days.

The areas where the officer worked were promptly re-cleaned and disinfected.

Cermak Health Services and the Sheriff's Office have been providing comprehensive education to staff on how to reduce chances of exposure and infection, and the office is continually updating communications with staff to include the latest best practices for combatting the virus.

Earlier this month, Sheriff Dart instituted a number of measures at Cook County Jail to prevent the spread of the virus, such as suspending detainee social visits, creating housing tiers for new inmates booked at the jail where they are observed for seven days for symptoms of the virus, and consulting with Harry Grenawitzke, a nationally renowned environmental health expert and former Department of Justice monitor.

As expected by public health experts, COVID-19 has made its way into correctional facilities across the nation, including in Georgia, Michigan, New Jersey and New York.

The Sheriff's Office is prepared to respond in the event any detainees or additional staff become ill with COVID-19 at Cook County Jail.