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Re: Letter to Steve Kopelman regarding COVID-19 Preparation and Response

Dear Ms. Moskowitz and Mr. Jones:

I am responding on behalf of San Juan County to your letter to Steve Kopelman dated March 10, 2020.

The County has been an active participant in meetings with the San Juan County Office of Emergency Management to coordinate with local government, schools, San Juan Regional Medical Center, first responders and other local stakeholders in responding to the health threat posed by COVID-19. The County has also held internal meetings with its departments, including the San Juan County Adult Detention Center ("ADC"), the San Juan County Juvenile Services Center ("JSC"), and the San Juan County Alternative Sentencing Division ("ASD"), (collectively, "the Facilities") to prepare for the arrival of COVID-19.

I will now respond to the specific issues you raised in your letter.

Education of persons in County custody. Persons in the custody at our facilities have access to news broadcasts on television (ASD and JSC) and on tablets provided to detainees (ADC). We have also posted the attached poster from the CDC entitled "COVID-19, Stop the Spread of Germs" in Facility restrooms, hallways and pods. This poster explains actions that people can take to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The County also plans to post this poster on tablets accessible to detainees at ADC. The smaller poster with the San Juan County logo regarding handwashing will be posted in each restroom in the County, including the Facilities.

Education of the Staff. In addition to the poster and access to news coverage described above, County staff has been kept informed on COVID-19 developments through meetings and emails. Please see attached Press Release as an example. The Health Services Administrator ("HSA") and Director of Nursing ("DON") of Wellpath (the County's medical contractor) take part in a weekly national conference call where they receive the latest guidance on how to treat persons who have contracted the virus. The HSA and DON then push that information out to their medical staff.

Staffing Plans. To keep as many of the staff available to work and care for inmates, the County's and Wellpath's plan is to first focus on protecting staff from contracting COVID-19. All appropriate PPE

is issued to the staff and safety precautions are followed. If the number of staff must be reduced due to sickness, the County and Wellpath plan to reduce the number of mandatory posts and to move some appropriately certified administrative staff to the floor to fill positions of those who are sick.

Staffing Plans for Services Provided by Inmates. ADC Inmates provide services primarily in the kitchen and on road crews. To avoid exposure of inmates to COVID-19, ADC plans to shut down its road crews. This will provide more inmates available for kitchen work. Inmates at JSC and ASD do not work.

Provision of Hygiene Supplies. ADC and ASD: Every inmate has access to soap and water in the bathrooms in the pods, and soap is checked and replaced on a regular basis. Soap is also provided in the Commissary. JSC: Every juvenile has his/her own sink and soap in his/her room. Soap and water are also provided in the communal bathroom. Each juvenile receives a hygiene pack upon entering the facility. The Facilities will endeavor to maintain soap supplies, but will subject to the same scarcities as the general public.

Screening and Testing of People in Custody. Please see the handout entitled "COVID-19 L.E. Pre-Booking Screen" which details the steps to be taken by law enforcement when booking inmates. To summarize, all inmates at ADC will have their temperature taken while still in the police officer's vehicle. If the inmate is running a fever, he/she will be fitted with a mask and will go to the negative air-flow cell. Inmates at ASD and JSC are also screened for COVID-19 before booking. Juveniles with fever will go to JSC's negative air-flow cell, and inmates at ASD will go to ADC's negative air-flow cell. At ADC, inmates are re-evaluated at day 14. Inmates at each facility can be re-evaluated at any time if they exhibit influenza-like illness.

Housing of Persons Exposed to the Virus. Those exposed to the virus will be held in negative air-flow rooms. If the number of inmates exceeds the capacity of these rooms then there are contingency plans to quarantine inmates. ASD inmates will be quarantined at ADC. At JSC, inmates have their own rooms. In addition, due to COVID-19, release will be sought for as many juveniles as possible to minimize the JSC population.

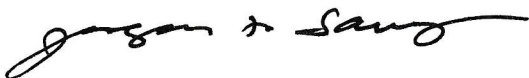
Treatment. Treatment is evidence-based, available immediately, and in compliance with scientifically-based public health protocols. The County and Wellpath provide healthy nutrition, hydration and education. As treatment conditions change, the facilities will contact the CDC for guidance.

Vulnerable Populations. Inmates are screened and classified as they enter the facilities, and they are placed appropriately.

Data Collection. As stated earlier, the facilities have been active participants in public health planning meetings and data will be collected pursuant to CDC and New Mexico Department of Health standards for tracking.

I hope this letter has answered your questions about the County detention facilities' preparation for COVID-19. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely,



Joseph F. Sawyer
Deputy County Attorney

Enc. as stated

Cc: Mike Stark, County Manager