



# **NEWS RELEASE**

## **STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER**

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## **MDOC Completes Testing of Every Prisoner in System** *Assistance from the Michigan National Guard ‘Invaluable’*

**LANSING, MICH.** Following the completion Friday of testing prisoners at Michigan Reformatory in Ionia for COVID-19, the Michigan Department of Corrections has completed its goal of testing every prisoner in its system.

The department had been testing symptomatic prisoners since late March and had done well more than a thousand tests. In mid-April, the MDOC started the mass testing of several facilities on its own as a continuation of its proactive measures to slow the spread of the virus in its facilities.

“When it comes to this virus, testing is critical to knowing exactly what you are dealing with and how to address it,” MDOC Director Heidi Washington said. “The vast majority of the prisoners we found who tested positive had no symptoms and were making it more challenging to control the spread of this illness.”

In order to accomplish this feat of testing every prisoner, the MDOC reached out to the Michigan National Guard for their assistance and they stepped up to the challenge.

“We simply could not have achieved this goal, this quickly without the assistance of the Michigan National Guard,” Washington said. “Their professionalism, expertise and proficiency were simply invaluable.”

In less than 15 days, the department was able to test every prisoner in the state. The collaboration with the Guard, in conjunction with the department’s emergency management section, frontline healthcare and facility staff enabled the detailed action plans to run flawlessly at facilities that stretched from near the Keweenaw Peninsula to near the Ohio border.

“This was an incredible display of partnership, and we are proud to work alongside the professionals in the Michigan Department of Corrections,” said Maj. Gen. Paul Rogers, Adjutant General and Director of the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. “The MDOC support to this mission was flawless, and these efforts will slow the spread of COVID-19 and safeguard Michigan communities.”

While the final results will likely not be known until next week as the labs process all of the results, so far, out of 38,130 prisoners who were tested at its 29 prisons, there are 3,263 prisoners who have tested positive, 18,316 who have tested negative, with 16,551 pending test results.

While every prisoner has now been tested at least once, many prisoners have been tested multiple times in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines in order to be returned to their prison's general population.

The assistance of the Guard has also allowed the department to offer voluntary testing of its employees across the state. So far, more than 1,000 MDOC employees have volunteered to be tested.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus).

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