

RE-ENTRY GUIDE SUPPLEMENT

October 27, 2020

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
COVID-19	4
Identification	7
Housing	8
Employment	9
Treatment	9
Education	11
Halfway House	11
Deportation	13
Internet Access	14
Conclusion	14

Attachment with Additional Resources

This Supplement is provided due to the impact of COVID-19 on re-entry services and intended to be read in conjunction with the re-entry guide, titled “Your Re-entry” and dated December 12, 2018, that is available to you at the Federal Detention Center SeaTac.

Introduction

You are living through some particularly challenging times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been a new experience and we are continuing to learn and adapt as the pandemic evolves. We all are doing our best to figure out how to support our community, including incarcerated persons, by understanding the enormous shift that has changed the way we interact with one another, do our jobs, raise our children, and perform typical day-to-day tasks.

Our hope is that the information contained in this supplement to the re-entry guide will help you move forward in planning for your release under the current circumstances. Some of you will move on to reside at a halfway house, others at home with family, and some of you may be facing deportation. Many of you will be living in Washington, and others will be out of state or abroad. Whatever the case may be, our goal is to provide you with a general overview of the shift in landscape. There are general patterns we have observed in community agencies and the various services and resources you will likely access. As for creating your individualized release plan, we encourage you to work with your counselor, probation officer, attorney, and other service providers.

Times are changing, but we continue to root for you and have no doubt that with patience and determination, you will succeed!

In community,

U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Office for the Western District of Washington

U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington

Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Washington

Federal Bureau of Prisons at FDC SeaTac

COVID-19

The global pandemic has changed life for everyone. In the United States, decisions about how best to slow the spread of the disease and protect the health of the entire community are largely being made at the state and local level. As scientists and medical professionals learn more about the virus, guidance about best practices is changed and updated seemingly daily. You can learn about the guidance in your own community by visiting the websites of your local and state health departments. The websites for the State of Washington, King County, Pierce County, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), and the Bureau of Prisons are all listed below.

In general, if you are feeling ill with any symptoms of coronavirus (like fever, difficulty breathing, cough, fatigue, body aches, sore throat, loss of sense of smell or taste), or if you have been in close contact with anyone with such symptoms or who tests positive for COVID-19, you should stay home and immediately isolate yourself from others, including members of your own household as much as possible. Then, contact a health care provider or your local department of health for further instruction. In Washington, testing can be arranged for free. Your local health department may also be able to assist you in finding a safe place to shelter away from your household.

In addition to its effect on your physical health, the novel coronavirus is taking its toll on everyone's mental and emotional health and economic wellbeing. If you are struggling in any of these areas, you are not alone. Coping with this pandemic can be challenging for everyone. We encourage you to work with your counselor, probation officer, lawyer, or government and private organizations for assistance. And, if you have thoughts of harming yourself, remember you can always call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline for help. The number is 1-800-273-8255. You can also go to the emergency room at your local hospital.

Here are some changes in daily living that you should expect when you are released:

- Masks: You should wear a mask any time that you are indoors in a public space, including stores, restaurants, schools, workplaces, government offices, and common areas of buildings like apartments and hotels. You should also wear a mask any time you are

outdoors and cannot maintain a distance of at least six feet from others who are not part of your household.

- **“Social distancing”**: To prevent the spread of disease, people are being asked to limit their contact with other people. You should stay home as much as possible. When you must be out in public, you should wear a mask, stay at least six feet from others, and not get together in large groups. Keep meetings with other people short, and have as few as possible.

- **Schools**: Many schools in Washington have not be opened for in-person instruction this fall. Instead, all instruction is online. Other schools have opened, but changed the in-person procedures, such as having smaller class sizes, distancing children in the classrooms, and having all children wear masks. There will also be schools that combine these approaches, having some in-person instruction and some online instruction. You should contact your school or district to learn what your children’s schools are planning for the school year. (This applies to colleges, vocational schools, and technical schools as well.) Schools recognize that having children learn from home is a hardship for students and families alike. If you rely on your children’s schools for childcare, nutrition, and/or healthcare, or cannot access online instruction, contact your school. While each school is different, they have been working on ways to help families facing these challenges.

- **Restaurants**: Many restaurants are closed entirely. For those that are open, including fast food restaurants, they are mostly providing delivery and takeout. Some restaurants have reopened for sit-down meals, but they are limited to 25% to 50% of their capacity indoors. Restaurants may provide some more outdoor seating if tables can be separated. Only household groups are permitted to sit at the same table. You will be expected to wear a mask at restaurants, except when actually eating and drinking.

- **Businesses**: Many businesses remain closed. Those that are open will typically post their health and safety procedures online and/or at the front of the store. These may include using hand sanitizer, limiting the number of people inside, and/or limiting the length of time you may be inside. Currently, businesses are not allowed to admit customers who are not wearing masks.

- **Outdoor spaces**: Most outdoor spaces are open for activities that can be conducted while social distancing. For example, parks and beaches are open for walking, running, biking,

and swimming. However, playgrounds, soccer fields, and basketball and volleyball courts are largely closed. You may also find parking lots at many parks are closed in order to reduce the number of people at the parks. Because access to the parks is more limited, some cities have opened up additional areas for recreation, including residential streets to provide more space for safe walking, running, and biking.

The three most important things you can do to keep yourself and your loved ones healthy—and to slow the spread of disease in our community—are (1) wear a mask, (2) limit your contact with other people, and (3) wash your hands thoroughly and frequently. Only if we all do these three things can we stop the spread of this potentially deadly virus.

You can get more information from the following government agencies:

Washington State Department of Health:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

1-800-525-0127

text “coronavirus” to 211211

Public Health—Seattle & King County:

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19.aspx>

206-477-3977

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department:

<https://www.tpchd.org/healthy-people/human-coronavirus>

253-798-6500

CDC (National):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

800-232-4636

Bureau of Prisons:

<https://www.bop.gov/coronavirus/>

Identification

Having valid identification is critical. Before being hired for any job, you need to show proof of eligibility to work in the United States. The documents most commonly used are a state identification and a Social Security card (not a copy). You may need these for housing and other services too.

If releasing to Washington State, please request a red Bureau of Prisons' commissary identification card prior to exiting the institution. The Washington State Department of Licensing will accept the red BOP commissary card and written verification from U.S. Probation as proof of identification. This reduces the number of supporting documents needed as well as the wait time to receive state identification.

Specific to Washington State: Limited services are available in-person at a few Department of Licensing locations. These services are limited to Commercial Driver's License (CDL) knowledge and driving tests, first time driver licenses and identification cards, instruction permits, license reinstatements, occupational restricted licenses, and name changes. You must schedule an appointment for in-person services. All other services are online. If you do not have access to the internet, please call your probation officer, your attorney, or the local Federal Public Defender's Office for assistance. Phone numbers for many Federal Public Defender's Offices are included at the back of the 2018 Re-entry Guide.

If you can, apply for your Social Security card while still in custody with the Bureau of Prisons. The Social Security Administration allows you to apply for these documents while incarcerated. However, we appreciate that services while incarcerated are limited currently. If you need to apply after you are released and require assistance, please telephone your probation officer, your attorney, or the local Federal Public Defender's Office for assistance.

Housing

Shelter and housing services continue to operate during the pandemic with various changes depending on the agency and type of housing. For the most part, homeless and emergency shelters remain open and are taking added precautions for client and staff health and safety. There is likely more cleaning and sanitizing taking place, and many shelters have reduced their capacity to as low as 50%. Reduced capacity has allowed for empty beds between clients in dormitory-style settings, which is important for social distancing.

Transitional housing programs vary greatly in how they are responding. While sober living homes, like Oxford House, seem to have been minimally impacted, other transitional housing programs have paused intakes all together, and are not accepting new residents. Other programs are operating at reduced capacity. It is likely that transitional housing programs will impose health requirements upon acceptance to the program, such as proof of a negative COVID-19 test, a temperature reading, or they may ask the new client to quarantine temporarily. If you are asked to quarantine at your detention facility before releasing, some programs may accept documentation from the facility that you have already completed a quarantine prior to release. It would be ideal to obtain a copy of your health records from your detention facility upon release; the FDC will provide them upon request, and these records will include any information about quarantine and COVID-19 testing.

Long-term independent housing is generally unaffected by the pandemic, primarily because it allows people to more easily social distance. If you will be looking for your own apartment or house, you will encounter minimal changes except that most business is conducted on line. For example, many property management companies have shifted their applications to an electronic format. You also may not have the opportunity to tour available units in person. Independent housing agencies which provide vouchers or subsidies, such as government housing authorities, continue to operate mostly unchanged.

As with every other topic in this manual, this information will vary depending on the local landscape and status of the pandemic. Engaging with local social service agencies that operate housing programs is a great way to find out what changes will affect you. As a reminder,

a list of agencies is included in the 2018 Re-entry Guide. If you still have questions, please call your probation officer, your attorney, or the local Federal Public Defender's Office for further assistance.

Employment

While many people are facing challenges in regard to employment in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, many others continue to work, especially in jobs that are designated as "essential." These jobs include roles at medical centers, grocery stores, and public services, for example. In many places, non-essential businesses, like restaurants and retail stores, have also started to reopen. As such, there are still employment opportunities available.

If you need assistance finding employment, many of the community services available to assist with job hunting, interview preparation, resume writing, and other skills are still available. Some of these services have moved online. Call 2-1-1 to find out what employment assistance services are available in your area. Please also talk with your probation officer, your attorney, and the local Federal Public Defender's Office for assistance.

In addition, as you probably know, finding and keeping a job is much easier with a cell phone. If you do not already own a cell phone and will not have the financial ability to purchase one, you likely will qualify for the Lifeline program, also known as an "Obama Phone." You can visit www.assurancewireless.com to find out if you're eligible. This program provides a free phone, minutes, texts, and sometimes data.

Treatment

Treatment for a variety of behavioral health and medical issues continues to be available during this pandemic. It is important to consider, though, how these services have been impacted to ensure you get the treatment and support you need. For those of you releasing to states where you expect to qualify for Medicaid based on your income and family size (such as Washington), that enrollment can likely be done over the phone, as many physical offices remain closed. In many states, insurance coverage will become active almost immediately after your enrollment, and then you may be expected to submit supporting documents to confirm your eligibility. You

should work with your probation officer or another counselor to identify the specific process for your state.

Substance Use/Abuse Treatment

Treatment for substance use disorders remains widely available. For outpatient treatment options, such as counseling, sessions may be completed by phone or video chat. Some agencies may have transitioned back to in-person sessions with increased precautions in place, such as masks, shields, and increased sanitizing in the space.

For those of you looking to continue medication-assisted treatment (MAT), such as suboxone, methadone, or naltrexone, you may see changes in dispensing protocols depending on the substance. Some clinics may offer more “carry” options (options to take doses away from the clinic instead of at the clinic) to reduce the amount of time spent at the clinic. Others may see no changes.

In-patient treatment for alcohol and other substances mostly continues to operate in Washington. Some facilities briefly put a hold on admissions. Other facilities have remained open but are taking extra cleaning precautions, and may have reduced the number of patients they will accept at any given time to implement social distancing protocols. If in-patient treatment is required, work with your treatment provider, your probation officer, and/or your attorney to find the right program for you.

For those of you looking for support groups relating to substance use, such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, many of these groups are being offered online. There are many free resources to access online meetings.

Alcoholics Anonymous: <https://www.seattleaa.org/meetings/>

Narcotics Anonymous: <http://www.skcn.org/>

Mental Health Treatment

For outpatient mental health treatment such as counseling or therapy, providers continue to offer sessions by phone or video. This will depend on the specific provider and what they are

comfortable with. For people who do not have the electronic devices necessary to participate in a session this way, some clinics are offering sessions where the provider is in one room and the client in another, and they use a video chat program to communicate. For in-patient mental health treatment, hospitals remain open and ready to help people experiencing a mental health crisis.

Medical Services

Medical services are widely available and little has changed besides additional cleaning and sanitization. Some elective surgeries and other less essential procedures and services may be on hold. There also may be telehealth options (appointments by video or telephone) available.

Education

If you are looking for options to complete your GED, consider accessing www.ged.com, where you will find free classes, practice tests, and online study materials. Depending on your location, you may need to wait to take the exam as many testing centers are closed.

Most colleges and universities continue to offer classes through the pandemic with adjustments made to accommodate online learning. These options will be largely based upon your location and the specific institution.

Halfway House (Residential Re-entry Center)

If you are arriving at the RRC from a Bureau of Prisons institution where individuals have been in quarantine for 21 days prior to release, you might not be placed into quarantine again. Whether additional quarantine is required depends on which RRC—and in which state—you are transferring to, as different facilities have different guidelines based on their state's department of health guidelines. If you have not been in quarantine prior to your arrival, you will quarantine for a minimum of 14 days at the RRC to ensure that you do not infect other residents. You must also have had a negative COVID-19 lab test prior to transfer.

Upon entry into the RRC, you must complete a COVID-19 screening and get a temperature reading. Pre-release residents with symptoms are put in quarantine and tested; public law and pre-trial residents who display symptoms are turned away.

All RRC residents must wear a mask during transfer, at arrival, in common areas, and in community settings where social distancing is not an option. The RRCs provide masks and face coverings to all residents and staff. If you refuse to wear a mask, you may be refused entry, terminated from the program, or, if on pre-release, returned to custody.

The RRCs have implemented a number of changes to ensure the health of all residents; these are some of the changes that have occurred here in Seattle and Tacoma:

- Hygiene: To reduce the need for hygiene passes, the RRCs provide basic toiletries: toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shaving cream, razors, laundry detergent, feminine products, etc. Alternatively, you may ask friends or family to drop off hygiene items for you at the RRC. However, they may only drop off hygiene items; they may not visit at that time.
- Visitors: There is currently no visitation at either the Seattle or Tacoma RRC. However, as the state and counties move towards a broader reopening, the RRC expects to re-introduce visitation. Masks or other personal protective equipment and social distancing will be required.
- Meals: Meal times are staggered, and masks and social distancing are required in the common areas.
- Passes: Passes (overnight to a release address) are not approved at this time. Authorized absences will only be approved for essential activities such as employment, medical appointments, and other pre-approved/verified activities.
- Treatment: Most treatment agencies are conducting assessments, classes, and appointments online or by phone. The RRC has computers available for use to access treatment.
- Transfer to Home Confinement: Home confinement requests continue to be considered. Weekly check-ins with RRC case managers are being conducted, sometimes virtually (online or by phone) and sometimes on-site.

Deportation

If you are facing deportation at the conclusion of your sentence, you will first be taken to a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office in Tukwila for initial processing. You will likely be served with a charging document, called a Notice to Appear, which starts your immigration case. The immigration judge will decide whether you will be detained or released on bond during your immigration case. If you want the assistance of an attorney at any time in this process, be sure to make that known. You can call the Federal Public Defender's Office at (206) 553-1100 and ask for the duty attorney, or call the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP) at (253) 383-519 or (877) 814-6444. Note, due to the volume of calls, NWIRP will not be able to return any calls; however, if you leave your name and nine-digit A-number, you will be scheduled for a Legal Orientation Rights Presentation ASAP.

If you are detained pending the completion of your immigration proceedings, you will be housed at the Tacoma ICE Processing Center, previously called the Northwest Detention Center. Upon arrival, you will be given a medical intake screening and offered a voluntary COVID-19 test. You will also be quarantined for two weeks, even if you were in quarantine at the FDC first, and even if your COVID-19 test comes back negative.

According to local ICE officials and/or the ICE website, ICE is taking the following steps to reduce the spread of disease:

- Designation: If ordered detained, you will likely remain at the Tacoma ICE Processing Center—and not moved to a different facility—until the conclusion of your case.
- Immigration Proceedings: Your court proceedings will take place in the immigration facility. The hearings have been taking place via videoconferencing in order to keep separation between the participants. ICE estimates that the proceedings typically take about 90 days for immigrants who are detained. It may take more or less time, depending on the specifics of your case and whether you decide to submit any applications that may allow you to remain in the United States.
- Health Care: When you arrive at the facility, you will undergo a health assessment to determine whether you may be at higher risk of serious complications if you get exposed to the coronavirus. If the assessment determines that you are at higher risk of serious

complications, ICE will conduct a custody reassessment to determine whether some form of release is appropriate.

- Safety Measures: In response to the coronavirus and to allow for social distancing, ICE reports it has reduced the total population of its facilities across the country. Additionally, masks and cleaning supplies are provided.
- Visitation: Visitation is currently suspended. However, ICE reports that detainees have access to phone and video calls as well as email, and is currently working with its communication providers to provide free phone and video calls. Additionally, attorney-client visits are permitted, although these mostly take place by phone or video in an effort to keep everyone safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Internet Access

As you have read, many services have moved online because of the pandemic. If you do not have internet access, you may be able to obtain free access in your city. For example, Seattle Public Libraries allow cardholders to check out portable wifi hotspots for free; while the libraries are closed, you can arrange to check one out with curbside pickup. Wifi is also free to access at any branch: <https://www.spl.org/using-the-library/reservations-and-requests/reserve-a-computer/computers-and-equipment/spl-hotspot>. While the libraries are closed, the Seattle Public Library still has its wifi on and it can be accessed from outside the building, 24/7 in most locations. If you are not in Seattle, check with your local library to see if they can help you with internet access. Other service providers may also know how to obtain free internet access, and you may also call your attorney or your probation officer for further assistance.

Conclusion

While it seems like the coronavirus has changed everything, there are many things that have stayed the same. First among these is everyone's sincere desire for your successful transition back into the community. You don't have to do it alone. Reach out to your counselor, probation officer, lawyer, family, friends, social services, and other sources of support.