



March 30, 2020

Director David Shinn
Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation, and Reentry
1601 W. Jefferson
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Director Shinn:

In the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we are grateful for your swift action and efforts to reduce the risk the coronavirus poses to people housed in the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation, and Reentry (ADCRR), and to the corrections professionals who care for them. Unfortunately, Arizona law does not give you medical and geriatric prisoner release tools available to others in your position across the country, but we appreciate that you are taking this crisis seriously and taking steps available to you to protect our state prison system.

We are writing to request that you continue these efforts by making available more information that will be useful to the families of both prisoners and staff as the crisis unfolds. As you know, the Arizona Department of Health Services created a webpage¹ to monitor and track relevant statewide and county data on COVID-19 – including total tests, deaths, and new cases. It is a valuable tool both for Arizonans to track the spread of the virus, and for state and local officials to adjust policies in response to changing information.

More than 42,000 prisoners are housed in ADCRR, and thousands more ADCRR employees have daily contact with facilities. All could be directly affected by COVID-19 inside Arizona's prisons. An ADCRR dashboard similar to the Department of Health Service's would be useful to keep families of incarcerated loved ones, as well as families of corrections professionals, apprised of what is happening inside state prisons in real time. This information would provide comfort to worried families, minimize calls and inquiries for more information and data, reduce rumors, and quiet fears. The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, led by Correctional Leaders Association president John Wetzel, recently created a similar dashboard.²

At a minimum, the dashboard would be updated daily and include, by facility, and for both prisoners and corrections staff:

- Total number of tests, including total numbers of positives and negatives
- New cases
- Hospitalizations, including transfers to community medical facilities
- Quarantines/lockdowns

¹ <https://azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/index.php#novel-coronavirus-home>

² <https://www.cor.pa.gov/Pages/COVID-19-Dashboard.aspx>

- Deaths
- Number of recoveries

On behalf of thousands of families around Arizona, we are grateful for the steps you have already taken to protect their loved ones in your care. Now, on their behalf, we are asking you to create a dashboard to track and publish relevant data related to the impact of COVID-19 inside the ADCRR. Families deserve consistently updated information about the health and well-being of their loved ones, and lawmakers need real-time data to create appropriate policy responses.

Sincerely,

Molly Gill
Vice President of Policy, FAMM

Lillian Coppess
President, The S.T.A.R.T. Project