COVID Outbreak Discovered in the Main Jail

Santa Barbara, Calif. – Sheriff’s Office Custody staff have identified a COVID outbreak in the Main Jail. On Wednesday, December 8, 2021, Custody staff identified a COVID positive inmate in the Male Basement Dormitory. This area of the jail is a dormitory type housing area with bunks where 51 inmates, including the COVID positive inmate, were being housed.

The initial COVID positive inmate has been re-housed and inmates who were exposed to him are currently being tracked and tested. Four additional COVID positive inmates have been identified from that housing area. Prior to testing positive, the initially detected inmate in this outbreak was recently transported to an in-person court appearance, where he had contact with other inmates from various parts of the facility during those court appearances.

Custody staff are working with our Wellpath healthcare partners in efforts to test much of the inmate population, as well as monitoring and caring for the five COVID positive inmates that have been identified. We are also coordinating with the Santa Barbara Court and the Public Defender’s Office to adjust court appearances to minimize the spread of the virus through the movement of inmates.

All staff, both professional and sworn, who work in positions that have direct inmate contact are regularly tested and are required to wear an N95 mask while working. The Sheriff’s Office will provide regular updates on the status of this outbreak.

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