

# Waupun prison employee tests positive for coronavirus

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The Department of Corrections today confirmed an employee has contracted COVID-19, the first positive case within the agency.

The confirmation comes after WisPolitics.com reported Waupun Correctional Institution Warden Brian Foster sent an email late last night informing DOC personnel of the case at that prison.

“As everyone knows we are making many changes within the institution and we have implemented a significant cleaning process throughout the institution,” Foster wrote. “Our priority is the safety of everyone and we will continue to be proactive in our efforts as we deal with this ongoing issue.”

A DOC spokeswoman confirmed the case but said disclosing the name of the employee or the institution they worked at would violate “the (Americans with Disabilities Act’s) privacy protections and federal law.”

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Still, spokeswoman Anna Neal said DOC feels “equipped to deal with this situation.”

“Each division maintains detailed pandemic plans that outline protocols and isolation procedures on what to do if someone was infected,” she said. “DOC immediately notified all staff and persons in our care who have had contact with this person, and have directed staff who had immediate contact with the infected employee to self-quarantine.”

The positive case at the prison comes as the ACLU and others have been calling for the release of some prisoners to guard against a rapid spread of the disease in the prison system.

A 2019 report from the Legislative Audit Bureau found the institution had an average daily population of 1,258 inmates, 143 percent of its designed capacity.

See Foster's email and an attached document:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Foster-email.png>

<https://www.wispolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Notice-to-Employees.pdf>