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COVID-19

06/09/2020

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ICE offers voluntary COVID-19 testing to all detainees at 2 facilities

Agency plans to expand testing to other ICE detention facilities in coming months

WASHINGTON – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) began voluntary COVID-19 testing June 2 at the Northwest ICE Processing Center in Tacoma, Washington, and began offering voluntary COVID-19 testing Tuesday at the Aurora Contract Detention Facility in Aurora, Colorado, to all current detainees and new admissions to the facilities.

At Northwest ICE Processing Center, 459 of the 570 detainees housed there volunteered to be tested for COVID-19, with all but one test result coming back negative. ICE Health Service Corps personnel notified detainees of their test results Monday. The subject that tested positive arrived May 29 and has been not been admitted into general population, in accordance with agency guidance that encourages facilities to isolate new admissions into the detention network for 14 days. Detainees who initially declined the COVID-19 test can still request a voluntary test.

Testing at Aurora Contract Detention Facility was offered to all ICE detainees at the facility with results expected within a week.

“In the face of this pandemic, expanding testing for detainees is another proactive step ICE is taking to safeguard those in our custody,” said Henry Lucero, executive associate director for ICE’s Enforcement and Removal Operations. “ICE continues to demonstrate its commitment to the health and welfare of detainees and staff at our facilities by developing, implementing and refining protocols to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.”

ICE plans to evaluate COVID-19 testing at the initial two locations before expanding to other ICE detention facilities over the next several months.

Prior to implementation of expanded testing, facilities must ensure that staff have the proper personal protective equipment to ensure safety during testing and that operational plans are in place to properly house detainees based on test results.

ICE uses molecular testing methodologies recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to detect SARS-CoV-2 and technology that has been approved by and granted Emergency Use Authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, including a combination of the Abbott ID NOW

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instruments for Rapid RNA testing, as well as existing laboratory testing capabilities from commercial laboratories.

The agency's full response to COVID-19 can be viewed at [www.ICE.gov/COVID19](https://www.ice.gov/COVID19).

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