



May 7, 2020

Judge Arnulfo C. Luna  
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To the Honorable County Judge, Arnulfo C. Luna

Judge Luna,

On May 6, my staff received an inquiry signed by the Mayors of Dilley and Pearsall, two Frio County Commissioners, three Dilley City Councilmen, two Pearsall City Councilmen, and one candidate for the Dilley City Council. I wish to submit this document to you in response to that inquiry. Additionally, attached is our companies global response to this pandemic, which aligns with all of the tenets from the Center For Disease Control and Prevention regarding COVID-19.

Please feel free to use this information in the manner that you see fit. Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to let me know. Thank you.

Ray Castro   
Facility Administrator  
South Texas ICE Processing Center



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“As of May 7<sup>th</sup>, five employees at the South Texas ICE Processing Center have tested positive for COVID-19. All of the employees who tested positive are currently on self-quarantine at home in stable condition. One of the employees is currently receiving medical treatment at the San Antonio hospital and is also in stable condition.

As a services provider to the federal government, we would refer you to U.S Immigration and Customs Enforcement for information regarding the status of any detainee cases or information.

We have issued a statement on our website on the measures we have taken at our facilities to address the risks of COVID-19 (see attached). The South Texas ICE Processing Center, as well as all the ICE Processing Centers we manage around the country, have implemented all these measures and have continually communicated the guidance articulated in our COVID-19 statement to all those in our care and our employees. Furthermore, we fully disclosed all information related to COVID-19 cases to U.S Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as well as local health officials.

Consistent with all of our ICE facilities, the South Texas ICE Processing Center provides access to regular hand washing with clean water and soap in all housing areas and throughout the facility; provides 24/7 access to \*healthcare; has approximately double the number of healthcare staff, compared to correctional facilities; and is equipped with Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms.

We have also deployed personal protective equipment, including masks, for all staff and detainees at the South Texas ICE Processing Center. We take our responsibility to ensure the health and safety of all those in our care and our employees with the utmost seriousness, and we **will continue to work with the federal government and local health officials to implement best practices for the prevention, assessment and management of COVID-19, consistent with the latest guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.**”

\*Healthcare at South Texas ICE Processing Center is provided by the ICE Health Services Corp; <https://www.ice.gov/ice-health-service-corp>

# **GEO Group Has Taken Comprehensive Steps to Address and Mitigate the Risks of COVID-19 to Those in Our Care and Our Employees**

As the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted communities across the United States and around the world, our employees and facilities have also been impacted by the spread of COVID-19. Ensuring the health and safety of our employees and all those in our care has always been our number one priority. As a longstanding provider of essential government services, we have experience with the implementation of best practices for the prevention, assessment, and management of infectious diseases.

- All of our facilities operate safely and without overcrowded conditions.
- All of our facilities have access to regular handwashing with clean water and soap.
- All of our secure services facilities provide 24/7 access to healthcare.
- All of our U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") Processing Centers typically have approximately double the number of healthcare staff, compared to state correctional facilities.
- Most of our facilities are equipped with Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms.

From the outset of the COVID-19 global pandemic, our corporate, regional and field staff have implemented comprehensive steps to address and mitigate the risks of COVID-19 to all those in our care and our employees.

- We issued guidance to all our facilities, consistent with the guidance issued for correctional and detention facilities by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- We updated our policies and procedures to include best practices for the prevention, assessment, and management of COVID-19, including the implementation of quarantine and cohorting procedures to isolate confirmed and presumptive cases of COVID-19, including medical isolation and the use of Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms.
- We provided educational guidance to our employees and individuals in our care on the best preventative measures to avoid the spread of COVID-19 such as frequent and careful handwashing; avoiding touching areas of the face, including facial hair; avoiding individuals exhibiting flu-like symptoms; proper cough and sneeze etiquette; social distancing requirements; and adjustments to laundry and meal schedules.
- We increased the frequency of distribution of personal hygiene products, including soap, shampoo and body wash, and tissue paper, and we are ensuring the daily availability of bars of soap or soap dispensers at each sink for hand washing in all of our facilities.
- We deployed specialized sanitation teams to sterilize high-contact areas of our facilities and have developed intensive schedules and procedures for the cleaning and disinfecting of facility spaces above and beyond normal cleaning activities.
- We procured additional cleaning equipment and sanitation products that are proven healthcare grade disinfectants.

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- We advised our employees to remain home if they exhibit flu-like symptoms, and we have exercised flexible paid leave and Paid Time Off policies to allow for employees to remain home if they exhibit flu-like symptoms or to care for a family member.
- We engaged with our government agency partners to promptly suspend non-essential visitation at all of our facilities, and we have employed additional measures during the intake and entry process at all of our facilities to include screening specific to COVID-19, including temperature checks for all staff and any legally required visitors before entering our facilities, as well as, verbal medical screening questionnaires.
- We ordered and received swab kits for COVID-19 from a national supplier, and we enacted quarantine and testing policies for any employees who may have come into contact with any individual who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- At every one of our facilities, we have worked closely with our government agency partners and local health officials to develop COVID-19 emergency plans and testing policies for the individuals in our care.
- In March of 2020, we started procuring additional Personal Protective Equipment and began issuing it as clinically needed at facilities impacted by COVID-19.
- Over the course of April of 2020, we coordinated with our government agency partners to distribute Personal Protective Equipment, including facemasks to all staff, inmates, detainees, and residents as a precautionary measure at all of our Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities, ICE Processing Centers, U.S. Marshals facilities, state correctional facilities, local correctional facilities and jails, residential reentry centers, and youth services residential facilities.

We will continue to coordinate closely with our government agency partners and local health agencies to ensure the health and safety of all those in our care and our employees. We are grateful for our frontline employees who are making sacrifices daily to provide care for all those in our facilities during this unprecedented global pandemic.