

COVID-19 Survey Results: Decatur Correctional Center

The John Howard Association (JHA) is an independent citizen correctional oversight organization that goes into prisons to monitor conditions of confinement and treatment of people who are incarcerated; we fight for a fair and humane system and for government transparency and accountability. For 119 years we have been the eyes and ears of the public inside Illinois' prisons, reporting what we see, hear and learn inside facilities and using this information to recommend policy and practice changes and advocate for system reform.

It is critical that we know and understand how people in prison are experiencing the COVID-19 health crisis and what the government must do to meet the health needs of people in prison. To further this end, JHA launched a special system-wide COVID-19 survey to enable us to hear directly from those who are in prisons about prison conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey results reported herein indicate how 231 people imprisoned at Decatur Correctional Center responded to survey items contained within the COVID-19 survey during the time frame of April 24th to May 20th 2020. As of April 24th, 2020, there were 381 people imprisoned at Decatur. Thus, this sample of survey respondents consists of 60.63% of Decatur's prison population. COVID-19 surveys that were completed after May 20th will be accounted for in JHA's work and analyses conducted in the future, but are not reported below.

JHA provided prison administrators with enough survey packets (COVID-19 survey, informed consent notice/instruction sheet, and business reply envelope addressed to JHA) so that every person imprisoned at Decatur had an opportunity to participate in the COVID-19 survey if they chose to do so. Because some people who submitted a survey did not answer all questions within the survey, the count of people who responded to each question is less than the overall sample of 231.

The results of the surveys JHA collected from people imprisoned at Decatur Correctional Center are tabulated on the pages that follow.

Tables of Results by Individual Survey Items:

Q1: How did you get information from IDOC about COVID 19 prevention?		
Paper bulletin on unit	149	64.50%
Inmate info channel on TV	48	20.78%
Verbal communication by staff	25	10.82%
Other	49	21.21%
I did not get this information	12	5.19%
Total does not add to 100% for this question because more than one answer could be selected		

Q2: Did you have enough soap to regularly wash your hands in the last week?		
No	38	17.43%
Yes	174	79.82%
Unsure	6	2.75%
Total	218	100%
No response: 13 (5.63%)		

Q3: How often did you get cleaning chemicals from IDOC to clean your cell/sleeping area in the last week (examples: soap, bleach, Citral Green or peroxide)?		
Once a day	93	41.70%
2 to 3 times last week	64	28.70%
Once last week	50	22.42%
None	16	7.17%
Total	223	100%
No response: 8 (3.46%)		

Q4: Did you get enough cleaning chemicals to thoroughly clean your cell/sleeping area in the last week?		
No, I did not get enough to make cell clean	114	52.05%
Yes	79	36.07%
Unsure	5	2.28%
No, I did not get any cleaning chemicals	21	9.59%
Total	219	100%
No response: 12 (5.19%)		

Q5: Did the common areas you have access to get cleaned at least two times a day in the last week (examples: dayrooms, showers)?		
No	50	22.22%
Some areas cleaned, but not all	125	55.56%
Yes, all areas were cleaned	42	18.67%
Unsure	8	18.67%
Total	225	100%
No response: 6 (2.60%)		

Q6: Have you tried to get medical care because of COVID-19 in the last week?		
No, because I did not want to	13	5.91%
No, because I was not sick	177	80.45%
Yes, but no response from staff	19	8.64%
Yes, and staff responded	11	5.00%
Total	220	100%
No response: 11 (4.76%)		

Q7: Would you tell IDOC staff (medical or security) if you were sick because of COVID-19?		
No	16	7.24%
Yes	181	81.90%
Unsure	24	10.86%
Total	221	100%
No response: 10 (4.33%)		

Q8: Did you go to yard at least once in the last week?		
No, not allowed to	197	90.37%
No, did not want to	8	3.67%
Yes	13	5.96%
Total	218	100%
No response: 13 (5.63%)		

Q9a: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by washing their hands often?		
No	74	33.33%
Yes	74	33.33%
Unsure	74	33.33%
Total	222	100%
No response: 9 (3.90%)		

Q9b: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by covering their mouth with inside of arm when coughing/sneezing?		
No	108	49.32%
Yes	69	31.51%
Unsure	42	19.18%
Total	219	100%
No response: 12 (5.19%)		

Q9c: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by cleaning shared items after use (example: phones)?		
No	95	45.02%
Yes	86	40.76%
Unsure	30	14.22%
Total	211	100%
No response: 20 (8.66%)		

Q9d: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by staying at least 6 feet away from others when possible?		
No	167	77.67%
Yes	33	15.35%
Unsure	15	6.98%
Total	215	100%
No response: 16 (6.93%)		

Q10a: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by washing your hands often?		
No	1	0.45%
Yes	222	99.55%
Unsure	0	0%
Total	223	100%
No response: 8 (3.46%)		

Q10b: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by covering your mouth with inside of arm when coughing/sneezing?		
No	1	0.45%
Yes	221	99.55%
Unsure	0	0%
Total	222	100%
No response: 9 (3.90%)		

Q10c: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by cleaning shared items after use (example: phones)?		
No	26	11.82%
Yes	190	86.36%
Unsure	4	1.82%
Total	220	100%
No response: 11 (4.76%)		

Q10d: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by staying at least 6 feet away from others when possible?		
No	96	43.84%
Yes	114	52.05%
Unsure	9	4.11%
Total	219	100%
No response: 12 (5.19%)		

Q11: Could you take a shower at least 3 times last week?		
No	8	3.59%
Yes	215	96.41%
Total	223	100%
No response: 8 (3.46%)		

Q12: Did you get laundry service in the last week (whites and blues)?		
No, was not offered	11	5.07%
No, do not want to use laundry service	2	0.92%
Yes, and my laundry was cleaned	174	80.18%
Yes, but they did not use detergent	30	13.82%
Total	217	100%
No response: 14 (6.06%)		

Q13: Did you get at least one free phone call in the last week?		
No	122	56.74%
Yes	54	25.12%
Yes, but the call cut out early	12	5.58%
This does not apply to me	27	12.56%
Total	215	100%
No response: 16 (6.93%)		

Q14: Did you get a free video visit in the last week?		
No	113	52.80%
Yes, and it worked	15	7.01%
Yes, but bad service/ cut short	31	14.49%
This does not apply to me	55	25.70%
Total	214	100%
No response: 17 (7.36%)		

Q15: Could you send and get mail in the last week?		
No	16	7.48%
Yes	190	88.79%
This does not apply to me	8	3.74%
Total	214	100%
No response: 17 (7.36%)		

Q16: Did commissary run on schedule this week?		
Yes, full shop	8	3.79%
Yes, limited shop	96	45.50%
Yes, but not my unit's shop week	12	5.69%
No	95	45.02%
Total	211	100%
No response: 20 (8.66%)		