



The FRAKES Files

20-20

Director Scott R. Frakes
November 10, 2020

Dear NDCS Teammates,

New directed health measures will go into effect tomorrow aimed at slowing the spread of the coronavirus across the state. Risk dials (which measure increases or decreases in cases on a weekly basis) have been inching up recently and the state has been hitting new daily highs for the number of reported COVID-19 cases. Whether you want to characterize this as the second wave, third wave or a new wave... Nebraska is certainly in the middle of it.

Once again, we must strike a balance between what we need to do to protect public health and the need to retain some normalcy in our lives. The holidays will make those decisions even more challenging. I fault no one for wanting to spend time with family and friends, but as part of an essential workforce, we need to continue to act responsibly. WEC is the latest facility to experience an uptick in staff illnesses. Hopefully, as in other facilities, the number of cases will ease and operations will return to a manageable level. I appreciate those staff members who have volunteered to go to WEC and lend a helping hand during this time of need.

Please continue to do those things that have been effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19:

- Wear a mask/don the appropriate PPE at work
- Avoid the Three C's: Crowded places, close contact and confined spaces
- Utilize universal health precautions: Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds, disinfect commonly used surfaces, self-assess your symptoms, and stay at home if you are sick

While the flu vaccine does not protect against COVID, it could help prevent you from getting sick from the influenza virus. Do not take your health for granted. Do whatever is necessary for the benefit of you and your family.

The State Charitable Giving Campaign is underway. This year, dollars will go to programs helping people impacted by COVID-19. The campaign will continue through November 25. I realize that many staff members have been impacted this year due to the virus. If you are able to participate in this year's campaign, I encourage you to do so.

In the midst of what has been a strange and uncertain year, I have been proud of the fact that our staff members have time and time again, risen to our many challenges. I recently had the chance to read some summaries provided by our wardens concerning staff members who have gone above and beyond within their facilities. In large and small ways, our team members have helped keep the wheels rolling, even though at times, it felt like we were standing completely still.

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Please do not stop that momentum. I realize that we are all running on fumes and wondering when this will come to an end? While I cannot answer that question, we know we will get through this. Yesterday's announcement on the progress towards developing a successful vaccine is very encouraging. We must be willing to continue to make small sacrifices now, knowing that the long-term reward is keeping yourself, your family, and your friends healthy.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Frakes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a long, sweeping underline.

Scott R. Frakes