

## **SCI Huntingdon Fireside Chat**

**1-8-21**

Good afternoon and welcome to this week's Fireside Chat. As a reminder, the purpose of the Fireside Chat is to keep you informed with updates relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and institutional functions.

According to statistics in the state of Pennsylvania, Coronavirus cases continue to be on the rise. On January 5<sup>th</sup>, there were 8,991 new cases reported. January 6<sup>th</sup> saw an increase of 9,402 new cases and just yesterday an additional 9,856 cases of Coronavirus were reported.

Unfortunately, our Pennsylvania prison system has not been immune to the Coronavirus as state prisons continue seeing positive cases just like our communities. We remain in a statewide reset. This is not something just being done at SCI-Huntingdon, but a strategy every state prison has been directed to implement. We are running in 8 man cohorts. This will be re-evaluated on January 19<sup>th</sup>.

Despite the statistics, the Department of Corrections maintains its focus on mitigating the spread of the virus. The importance of wearing your mask, washing your hands often, and socially distancing yourself from others remains our best defense in our battle against Covid-19. This pandemic continues to create challenges and inconveniences for all of us, however, we are confident we will prevail if we remain patient, focused, resilient, and maintain self-care.

E Block is currently working in the Kitchen and we want to thank them for their efforts. The gym was opened up as we do have positive inmates in the isolation unit.

In an effort to continue limited institutional activity; yard, showers, phones, kiosks, and video visits will continue. Commissary and concessions remain in operation. Movies, Religious Services, and therapeutic videos from Dr. Conte continue to be shown over the inmate channel. Cable TV, 2 emails, and the approved allotment of envelopes will remain free at this time. Counseling services, therapeutic literature, and in cell activities remain available through Unit Team Staff. Psychological services, Psychiatry, and Medical Staff continue to carry out their duties.

Our Treatment Specialists and drug and alcohol counselors remain focused on ensuring Correctional Plan programming is being facilitated in cell. There has been no interruption with Parole Interviews or Parole Board hearings as Staff continue to maintain parole dockets. Our facility Chaplains remain committed to carrying out their mission. And last but not least, our Security Staff remains vigilant in maintaining and preserving a safe environment.

On a final note, we would like thank the Jaycees for the current hoagie sale. You are permitted to purchase 3 hoagies and a drink as explained on the hoagie cash slip. As a reminder, cash slips are due on your housing unit today and Activities Staff will be picking them up soon. We would also like to thank the inmate population for your sanitation efforts and patience as we all work through this pandemic.

Thank you and have a good week.