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San Diego County Sheriff's Department – Media Relations

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www.SDSheriff.net

April 3, 2020

Statement About Positive Tests for COVID-19

Late Thursday afternoon, April 2nd, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department was notified an inmate in our custody tested positive for COVID-19. The inmate was booked into Sheriff's custody on Monday March 30th for domestic violence charges. Because the inmate was showing flu-like symptoms, he was provided a mask to wear during the booking process. The inmate was subsequently placed in an isolation cell and has been housed in that cell ever since.

Since it was recognized up front the inmate might be ill and precautions were taken, the risk to Sheriff's staff and other inmates was minimized. Inmates who may have had contact with the affected inmate have been identified and isolated as a precaution.

Sheriff's employees who may have been exposed were identified and asked to self-quarantine at home. The arresting agency was also notified of the potential exposure to their officers. The Sheriff's Department will continue our efforts to maintain the safety of all inmates, staff, and visitors to our seven detention facilities.

The Sheriff's Detention Services Bureau has implemented several mitigating measures to address COVID-19 concerns. Considering those in custody may initially present as being healthy or they could potentially be exposed, we have enacted processes to quickly and safely isolate those potentially ill persons and reduce the likelihood of further spread. Temperature checks are conducted while the persons are still in the patrol vehicles prior to booking. Any persons with symptoms are issued a barrier mask, evaluated by medical staff and isolated if needed. In this instance, the protocols put in place worked and we were able to minimize the exposure to other inmates and staff right at intake.

Unrelated to this inmate testing positive, four Sheriff's employees have tested positive for COVID-19. All of these employees are doing fine and Sheriff's Medical Liaison Unit is following up with their progress. This is all the information we will release about these employees out of respect for their privacy and in keeping with privacy laws. The Sheriff's Department has more than 4,200 employees.

County health officials have repeatedly stressed the importance of following all public health orders currently in effect. Where COVID-19 cases may appear doesn't change the fact we all need to be doing our part to prevent the spread of the virus. Stay at home unless you must travel to an essential job or to access necessities such as food, health care or to take care for elderly or disabled friends or family. If you must go out, always maintain a safe social distance of six feet.

If the location of where the exposure occurred required extra safeguards or precautions, the Sheriff's Department would notify the public. All standard protocols are being followed with known positive tests. A



close contact investigation is conducted, those identified are notified and asked to isolate or quarantine themselves, they are to monitor themselves or be monitored for symptoms and then tested on orders of a medical provider. All positive tests are reported to Public Health.

The Sheriff's Department wants to remind everyone good hygiene is key to protecting yourself from COVID-19. Wash your hands often and avoid touching your face, mouth and eyes. Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing. Disinfect your home or workspace regularly. Help "flatten the curve" and stop the spread of COVID-19.

As of April 3, 2020:

Number of beds reserved for COVID-related precautions:	228
Number of inmates in isolation for COVID-related precautions:	36
Number of inmates tested for COVID-19:	46
Number of inmates tested positive:	1
Number of inmates tested negative:	45
Number of Sheriff's employees tested positive for COVID-19:	4

To learn more about all the steps being taken to keep everyone in our custody safe and healthy, visit www.sdsheriff.net and explore our COVID-19 section. For the latest updates on COVID-19 in San Diego County, visit www.coronavirus-sd.com.

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