



## Press Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### Wayne County Update on Neuse Correctional Institute

**Wayne County, NC** – Many residents have been concerned with the recent spike in positive COVID-19 cases after the North Carolina Department of Public Safety enacted a proactive mass testing of the entire offender population at Neuse Correctional starting on April 15. Currently, there are 465 inmates that have tested positive for COVID-19 and one death has been reported. The safety of our citizens, inmates at NCI, and staff of NCI continue to be a priority for all parties, and local & state officials remain in constant contact on this situation.

All healthy offenders have been separated from those who have tested positive in order to stop the further spread of the virus at the facility. While they may be contagious, around 98% of the offenders who have tested positive at the prison have shown no symptoms. Additional custody and medical staff have been reassigned to the facility to help the existing staff in caring for the offenders. Any offender who develops symptoms is moved into medical isolation at the prison for more advanced care, in keeping with the guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control. Staff members who have tested positive are being isolated at home. All offenders and the entire staff have face masks and the medical staff have medical-grade personal protection equipment.

“This situation is concerning but not a cause for panic,” said Todd Ishee, Commissioner of Prisons. “We are working in conjunction with our great partners in Wayne County and with the excellent team at the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. We have quarantine and isolation protocols in place, operating in keeping with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control. And we have dispatched reinforcements for the staff at Neuse Correctional. The security and medical teams are providing top-notch service in the face of the what are likely some of the most challenging times in their professional lives. They are the unsung heroes of North Carolina’s law enforcement community.”

The best source of information on the response by the Division of Prisons can be found here: <https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/adult-correction/prisons/prisons-info-covid-19>



