



NYSCOPBA President responds to recent uptick of COVID-19 cases in state prisons

Union calls for suspension of inmate visits

For Immediate Release

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Albany, NY – NYSCOPBA is calling for the immediate suspension of inmate visitation at correctional facilities that have seen a recent uptick in positive COVID-19 cases among in the inmate population. Recently, Elmira Correctional Facility saw an uptick in both staff and inmate positive tests, with more than 30 positive cases and more than 120 individuals under quarantine. At Greene Correctional Facility more than 70 inmates have tested positive in the last two weeks and there are close to 300 tests pending. More facilities are on the brink.

Experts predicted a new wave of COVID-19 this Fall, and that prediction is coming to fruition. COVID-19 cases are on the rise in the U.S. over the past seven days. Governor Cuomo unveiled new lockdown measures for recent “micro-clusters” in and around the New York City area that are surging, and similar lockdown measures should be applied to State Prisons where the coronavirus is surging. Visitation should be immediately suspended at hotspot facilities and DOCCS should require anyone who visits an incarcerated inmate provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test within the last 14 days.

Nursing homes across the state have had serious restrictions placed on them when it pertains to family visitation. Should similar standards be put in place at state prisons for those wishing to visit convicted felons? Staff should expect no less protections from our Governor and DOCCS.