

COVID-19 Survey Results: Menard Correctional Center

The John Howard Association (JHA) is an independent citizen correctional oversight organization that goes into prisons to monitor conditions of confinement and treatment of people who are incarcerated; we fight for a fair and humane system and for government transparency and accountability. For 119 years we have been the eyes and ears of the public inside Illinois' prisons, reporting what we see, hear and learn inside facilities and using this information to recommend policy and practice changes and advocate for system reform.

It is critical that we know and understand how people in prison are experiencing the COVID-19 health crisis and what the government must do to meet the health needs of people in prison. To further this end, JHA launched a special system-wide COVID-19 survey to enable us to hear directly from those who are in prisons about prison conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey results reported herein indicate how 1,023 people imprisoned at Menard Correctional Center responded to survey items contained within the COVID-19 survey during the time frame of April 24th to May 20th 2020. As of April 24th, 2020, there were 2,171 people imprisoned at Menard. Thus, this sample of survey respondents consists of 47.12% of Menard's prison population. COVID-19 surveys that were completed after May 20th will be accounted for in JHA's work and analyses conducted in the future, but are not reported below.

JHA provided prison administrators with enough survey packets (COVID-19 survey, informed consent notice/instruction sheet, and business reply envelope addressed to JHA) so that every person imprisoned at Menard had an opportunity to participate in the COVID-19 survey if they chose to do so. Because some people who submitted a survey did not answer all questions within the survey, the count of people who responded to each question is less than the overall sample of 1,023.

The results of the surveys JHA collected from people imprisoned at Menard Correctional Center are tabulated on the pages that follow.

Tables of Results by Individual Survey Items:

Q1: How did you get information from IDOC about COVID 19 prevention?		
Paper bulletin on unit	251	24.54%
Inmate info channel on TV	482	47.12%
Verbal communication by staff	124	12.12%
Other	355	34.70%
I did not get this information	63	6.16%
Total does not add to 100% for this question because more than one answer could be selected		

Q2: Did you have enough soap to regularly wash your hands in the last week?		
No	464	46.68%
Yes	492	49.50%
Unsure	38	3.82%
Total	994	100%
No response: 29 (2.83%)		

Q3: How often did you get cleaning chemicals from IDOC to clean your cell/sleeping area in the last week (examples: soap, bleach, Citral Green or peroxide)?		
Once a day	24	2.39%
2 to 3 times last week	85	8.47%
Once last week	676	67.40%
None	218	21.73%
Total	1003	100%
No response: 20 (1.96%)		

Q4: Did you get enough cleaning chemicals to thoroughly clean your cell/sleeping area in the last week?		
No, I did not get enough to make cell clean	562	56.60%
Yes	165	16.62%
Unsure	39	3.93%
No, I did not get any cleaning chemicals	227	22.86%
Total	993	100%
No response: 30 (2.93%)		

Q5: Did the common areas you have access to get cleaned at least two times a day in the last week (examples: dayrooms, showers)?		
No	437	44.32%
Some areas cleaned, but not all	196	19.88%
Yes, all areas were cleaned	92	9.33%
Unsure	261	26.47%
Total	986	100%
No response: 37 (3.62%)		

Q6: Have you tried to get medical care because of COVID-19 in the last week?		
No, because I did not want to	53	5.36%
No, because I was not sick	745	75.33%
Yes, but no response from staff	175	17.69%
Yes, and staff responded	16	1.62%
Total	989	100%
No response: 34 (3.32%)		

Q7: Would you tell IDOC staff (medical or security) if you were sick because of COVID-19?		
No	112	11.16%
Yes	823	81.97%
Unsure	69	6.87%
Total	1004	100%
No response: 19 (1.86%)		

Q8: Did you go to yard at least once in the last week?		
No, not allowed to	84	8.46%
No, did not want to	237	23.87%
Yes	672	67.67%
Total	993	100%
No response: 30 (2.93%)		

Q9a: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by washing their hands often?		
No	234	23.68%
Yes	214	21.66%
Unsure	540	54.66%
Total	988	100%
No response: 35 (3.42%)		

Q9b: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by covering their mouth with inside of arm when coughing/sneezing?		
No	337	34.46%
Yes	255	26.07%
Unsure	386	39.47%
Total	978	100%
No response: 45 (4.40%)		

Q9c: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by cleaning shared items after use (example: phones)?		
No	371	38.13%
Yes	322	33.09%
Unsure	280	28.78%
Total	973	100%
No response: 50 (4.89%)		

Q9d: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by staying at least 6 feet away from others when possible?		
No	485	50.10%
Yes	310	32.02%
Unsure	173	17.87%
Total	968	100%
No response: 55 (5.38%)		

Q10a: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by washing your hands often?		
No	18	1.81%
Yes	974	97.79%
Unsure	4	0.40%
Total	996	100%
No response: 27 (2.64%)		

Q10b: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by covering your mouth with inside of arm when coughing/sneezing?		
No	35	3.53%
Yes	946	95.46%
Unsure	10	1.01%
Total	991	100%
No response: 32 (3.13%)		

Q10c: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by cleaning shared items after use (example: phones)?		
No	121	12.36%
Yes	833	85.09%
Unsure	25	2.55%
Total	979	100%
No response: 44 (4.30%)		

Q10d: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by staying at least 6 feet away from others when possible?		
No	233	23.73%
Yes	699	71.18%
Unsure	50	5.09%
Total	982	100%
No response: 41 (4.01%)		

Q11: Could you take a shower at least 3 times last week?		
No	228	22.82%
Yes	771	77.18%
Total	999	100%
No response: 24 (2.35%)		

Q12: Did you get laundry service in the last week (whites and blues)?		
No, was not offered	71	7.24%
No, do not want to use laundry service	242	24.67%
Yes, and my laundry was cleaned	420	42.81%
Yes, but they did not use detergent	248	25.28%
Total	981	100%
No response: 42 (4.11%)		

Q13: Did you get at least one free phone call in the last week?		
No	599	61.88%
Yes	229	23.66%
Yes, but the call cut out early	48	4.96%
This does not apply to me	92	9.50%
Total	968	100%
No response: 55 (5.38%)		

Q16: Did commissary run on schedule this week?		
Yes, full shop	107	10.94%
Yes, limited shop	40	4.09%
Yes, but not my unit's shop week	74	7.57%
No	757	77.40%
Total	978	100%
No response: 45 (4.40%)		

Q14: Did you get a free video visit in the last week?		
No	659	66.84%
Yes, and it worked	87	8.82%
Yes, but bad service/ cut short	58	5.88%
This does not apply to me	182	18.46%
Total	986	100%
No response: 37 (3.62%)		

Q15: Could you send and get mail in the last week?		
No	80	8.12%
Yes	872	88.53%
This does not apply to me	33	3.35%
Total	985	100%
No response: 38 (3.71%)		