

COVID-19 Survey Results: Western 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 776 people imprisoned at Western 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 1,575 people imprisoned at Western. Thus, this sample of survey respondents consists of 49.27% of Western'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 Western 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 776.

The results of the surveys JHA collected from people imprisoned at Western 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	498	64.18%
Inmate info channel on TV	296	38.14%
Verbal communication by staff	112	14.43%
Other	154	19.85%
I did not get this information	14	1.80%
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	208	27.55%
Yes	515	68.21%
Unsure	32	4.24%
Total	755	100%
No response: 21 (2.71%)		

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	310	42.12%
2 to 3 times last week	196	26.63%
Once last week	75	10.19%
None	155	21.06%
Total	736	100%
No response: 40 (5.15%)		

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	471	62.30%
Yes	77	10.19%
Unsure	17	2.25%
No, I did not get any cleaning chemicals	191	25.26%
Total	756	100%
No response: 20 (2.58%)		

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	129	17.18%
Some areas cleaned, but not all	282	37.55%
Yes, all areas were cleaned	207	27.56%
Unsure	133	17.71%
Total	751	100%
No response: 25 (3.22%)		

Q6: Have you tried to get medical care because of COVID-19 in the last week?		
No, because I did not want to	47	6.28%
No, because I was not sick	597	79.71%
Yes, but no response from staff	95	12.68%
Yes, and staff responded	10	1.34%
Total	749	100%
No response: 27 (3.48%)		

Q7: Would you tell IDOC staff (medical or security) if you were sick because of COVID-19?		
No	55	7.32%
Yes	642	85.49%
Unsure	54	7.19%
Total	751	100%
No response: 25 (3.22%)		

Q8: Did you go to yard at least once in the last week?		
No, not allowed to	65	8.58%
No, did not want to	213	28.10%
Yes	480	63.32%
Total	758	100%
No response: 18 (2.32%)		

Q9a: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by washing their hands often?		
No	108	14.54%
Yes	247	33.24%
Unsure	388	52.22%
Total	743	100%
No response: 33 (4.25%)		

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	177	23.92%
Yes	261	35.27%
Unsure	302	40.81%
Total	740	100%
No response: 36 (4.64%)		

Q9c: Did the inmates around you follow good health practices in the last week by cleaning shared items after use (example: phones)?		
No	215	29.29%
Yes	333	45.37%
Unsure	186	25.34%
Total	734	100%
No response: 42 (5.41%)		

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	280	38.20%
Yes	319	43.52%
Unsure	134	18.28%
Total	733	100%
No response: 43 (5.54%)		

Q10a: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by washing your hands often?		
No	11	1.46%
Yes	737	97.49%
Unsure	8	1.06%
Total	756	100%
No response: 20 (2.58%)		

Q10b: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by covering your mouth with inside of arm when coughing/sneezing?		
No	20	2.66%
Yes	726	96.67%
Unsure	5	0.67%
Total	751	100%
No response: 25 (3.22%)		

Q10c: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by cleaning shared items after use (example: phones)?		
No	124	16.76%
Yes	595	80.41%
Unsure	21	2.84%
Total	740	100%
No response: 36 (4.64%)		

Q10d: Did you follow good health practices in the last week by staying at least 6 feet away from others when possible?		
No	133	18.17%
Yes	564	77.05%
Unsure	35	4.78%
Total	732	100%
No response: 44 (5.67%)		

Q11: Could you take a shower at least 3 times last week?		
No	40	5.24%
Yes	724	94.76%
Total	764	100%
No response: 12 (1.55%)		

Q12: Did you get laundry service in the last week (whites and blues)?		
No, was not offered	22	2.92%
No, do not want to use laundry service	17	2.26%
Yes, and my laundry was cleaned	581	77.16%
Yes, but they did not use detergent	133	17.66%
Total	753	100%
No response: 23 (2.96%)		

Q13: Did you get at least one free phone call in the last week?		
No	361	50.14%
Yes	226	31.39%
Yes, but the call cut out early	82	11.39%
This does not apply to me	51	7.08%
Total	720	100%
No response: 56 (7.22%)		

Q16: Did commissary run on schedule this week?		
Yes, full shop	11	1.49%
Yes, limited shop	608	82.27%
Yes, but not my unit's shop week	49	6.63%
No	71	9.61%
Total	739	100%
No response: 37 (4.77%)		

Q14: Did you get a free video visit in the last week?		
No	412	55.60%
Yes, and it worked	56	7.56%
Yes, but bad service/ cut short	136	18.35%
This does not apply to me	137	18.49%
Total	741	100%
No response: 35 (4.51%)		

Q15: Could you send and get mail in the last week?		
No	62	8.30%
Yes	665	89.02%
This does not apply to me	20	2.68%
Total	747	100%
No response: 29 (3.74%)		