

Pandemic Management Protocols at Richmond City Justice Center

[View documentary of COVID-19 protocols at the Justice Center](#)

The Richmond City Justice Center has received praise from the Richmond City Health Department for its proactive and aggressive response to the pandemic:

- The Richmond City Sheriff's Office issued its first COVID-19 Precautions and Safety Alert on March 12, 2020.
- The Richmond City Sheriff's Office is in weekly contact with the Virginia Department of Health.
- Incoming residents are quarantined in a separate area of the jail for the length of time required by CDC and VDH guidelines in effect at the time. This was originally 14 days and is currently 10 days.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies are consistently provided to residents and staff.
- Regular disinfecting of high-touch surfaces in common areas is carried out according to a specific schedule. Residents can clean their personal spaces as frequently as they like. The cleaning protocol is described in detail in the RCSO COVID-19 documentary linked above.
- Large-scale COVID-19 testing was first made available in the 2nd quarter of 2020 in response to an increase in the infection rate in the community at large. Residents testing positive are isolated for a minimum of 10 days and receive appropriate medical evaluation and care from the on-site medical provider. This was a 14-day isolation at the beginning of the pandemic, and is now 10 days per CDC and VDH guidelines. Standard procedure, whether pandemic-related or not, is for residents whose illness warrants it to be transferred to VCU Medical Center. This determination is made by the on-site medical provider.
- Residents coming into close contact with residents who tested positive are placed in quarantine for a minimum of 10 days and are also tested.
- The isolation pods and the quarantine pods are separate from each other and separate from the general population of the Justice Center.
- The first vaccination day for residents took place on January 26, 2021 through the State Health Department. It included an educational component to encourage residents to take advantage of the opportunity. To lead by example, Sheriff Irving received her first vaccination at that event. A video recap of that event is linked below.
- A subsequent vaccination event offered second doses to those residents who had their first dose on 1/26, and also offered first doses to those not yet vaccinated. Second doses have also occurred for that group.
- As of May 2021, the on-site medical provider for the Richmond Justice Center will be authorized to administer vaccines as requested. Since each vial contains 10 doses, a bi-weekly vaccination schedule is being considered to ensure no wasted dosages.

- Justice Center staff have been receiving their vaccines through sites administered by the Health Department as part of the priority status group.
- No COVID-19 deaths have occurred at the Richmond City Justice Center.
- All visitors to the Justice Center must undergo a COVID-19 screening.
- Community Partner access for inmate re-entry programs and other events has remained virtual throughout the pandemic. Protocol for resumption of in-person programming, anticipated to occur in July 2021, is currently being considered and could possibly include a vaccination requirement.
- Ongoing planning continues to address protocol and procedures should a new surge occur in the rate of infection in the community at large.

Resources:

First vaccination event at RCSO, January 2021: <https://youtu.be/uqwF8vN7xQM>

Sheriff's Pulse Check video, November 2020: <https://youtu.be/CiKgd09FekU>

RCSO COVID-19 Documentary, October 2020: <https://youtu.be/5ZgaFsLAnHc>

Press Release, July 2020: <https://www.facebook.com/irvingforsheriff/posts/4025813947492923>

RCSO Safety Alert, March 12, 2020: <https://www.facebook.com/irvingforsheriff/posts/3488714541202869>