

COVID-19 Guideline for In-Person Marriages in Prisons

Version 2, Revised 12/6/2022

Introduction

- The purpose of this guideline is to balance the need for in-person marriages in prison settings with the appropriate COVID-19 mitigation strategies while reducing the risk of *serious illness caused by COVID-19*.

Ceremony in Prisons

- Marriage ceremonies in prison will be applied for, arranged, and conducted in accordance with DOC 590.200 Marriages and State Domestic Partnerships.
- Ceremonies will be scheduled outside of the normal visit schedule.

COVID-19 Risk Reduction Strategies

- All outside participants and guests attending the ceremony must have a negative COVID-19 rapid antigen test onsite the day of the ceremony prior to entering the facility.
- Prior to the ceremony, the Incarcerated Individual *will be offered the opportunity to be tested by rapid antigen test for COVID-19 24-48 hours prior to the ceremony. Testing will not be mandatory, but strongly encouraged. Declination of test by the incarcerated individual would not prevent the marriage ceremony from occurring.*
- *During times when facility and/or community COVID-19 levels are in the yellow or red all participants, to include the couple to be married, must wear a DOC-issued surgical mask at all times while onsite and throughout the entire ceremony process. If the facility and/or community COVID-19 levels are green, masks would become optional.*
- *During times when facility and/or community COVID-19 levels are in the yellow or red, masks may be removed briefly for pictures and for a ceremonial physical kiss as part of the ceremony process without the requirement of an intake separation period following the ceremony.*