



## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Dec. 15, 2021

### **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY COVID-19 UPDATE**

#### **Substantial increase in inmate vaccinations due to vaccine incentive program**

HONOLULU – On October 14, the Department of Public Safety (PSD) announced the implementation of a vaccine incentive program for inmates. Inmates in PSD custody on or after March 3, 2021, through December 31, 2024, who are still in custody, and fully vaccinated against COVID-19, are eligible to receive a one-time incentive award of \$50. The payments are deposited into the inmate's spendable trust account.

The number of inmates, both in state and at Saguaro Correctional Center in Eloy, AZ, who completed their vaccine doses and qualified for the incentive jumped from 2,530 reported on October 14 to 3,916 as of December 15. (Please note: this vaccination total should not be compared to the current inmate population. Inmates who were fully vaccinated and received the incentive may no longer be in custody as the inmate population is transient and changes by the hour as courts order intake and release throughout the day.)

"To see 1,386 more inmates choose to get vaccinated in this time since we started offering the incentive proves that this program is working. We hope to see more inmates take part in this program and make the important decision to safeguard themselves and those around them," said Tommy Johnson, PSD Deputy Director for Corrections.

PSD requested and received approval for \$615,000 in federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funds to be specifically used as an incentive initiative for offenders in custody. So far \$144,000 has been expended. This incentive payment is not available to state employees.

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) continues to encourage all staff to voluntarily get tested and receive the COVID-19 vaccination. According to the Governor's direction, all state employees are eligible for up to two hours of administrative leave (per dose) to take the COVID-19 vaccine during normal work hours, as operations permit.

COVID-19 testing is continuously being conducted in the state prisons and jails as well as in the contracted Saguaro Correctional Center in Eloy, AZ. The latest testing updates received for other correctional facilities are as follows:

**Kauai Community Correctional Center** – One (1) positive staff test result and two (2) negative inmate test results.

**Halawa Correctional Facility** – 26 negative inmate test results.

**Oahu Community Correctional Center** – 15 negative inmate test results.

**Maui Community Correctional Center** – 15 negative inmate test results.

**Women’s Community Correctional Center** – One (1) negative inmate test result.

**Hawaii Community Correctional Center** -- One (1) negative inmate test result.

In addition, the Department of Public Safety (PSD) Administration Division reports one (1) admin employee confirmed a positive test result. Notification was made to the Department of Health.

For more detailed inmate testing data, PSD’s Pandemic Plan and information on response efforts made to safeguard the inmates, staff and public, visit the dedicated COVID-19 webpage at: <http://dps.hawaii.gov/blog/2020/03/17/coronavirus-covid-19-information-and-resources/>.

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