**UPDATE SECURITY GUIDANCE (PRISONS OUTSIDE OF THE LTHSE)**

We have be liaising closely with prisons this week and listening to your feedback and suggestions about searching.   Health and Safety colleagues have also worked alongside us to support or security requirements with standard operating procedures to safely carry out tasks.   Social distancing remains the Government’s and HMPPS’s strategy, however we recognise that by its very nature, searching of the person brings staff into close contact with prisoners and visitors.   This new guidance is aimed at complementing the social distancing strategy and detailing safeguard when close contact has to happen.

**SOP**

Enclosed in a new health and safety SOP which adds an additional layer of PPE for staff conducting close contact activities with prisoners who are neither confirmed Covid-19 or symptomatic, such as searching of the person.   The SOP details what type of PPE should be worn by staff when in contact with difference cohorts.



**FREQUENCY OF SEARCHING**

Our ambition remains to maintain the highest possible level of operational security as we proceed through this emergency, whilst recognising that competing pressures and priorities mean that the wellbeing and welfare of staff and prisoners will always remain a priority.    Governors are reminded that they can revisit their LSS to ensure that moving through this emergency, searching is managing the different risk and is achievable.   **During this period, Governors do not need approval of any interim LSS by the Prison Group Director, but they should record any changes in their decision log.**   The National Security Framework does mandate searching of the person at the following times and should continue to be the minimum that we expect prisons to deliver:

* Upon initial reception                                    Full search
* Transfer in from another prison                Level B
* Return from RoTL (closed)                                           Full search
* Return from external agency, i.e. police                Full search
* Transfer out to another prison                                   Full search

All of these particular different circumstances have been impacted on by our current operating arrangements.   Fewer people are arriving from court, transfers are only happening to free up local spaces and in exceptional circumstances and regimes have been curtailed reducing prison movement.

For as long as possible, we want prisons to maintain their own risk assessed searching of prisoners (through their LSS), however we recognise that this is dependent upon sufficient staff and PPE available to complete them.   Below is a prioritisation flow which prisons must follow moving through this emergency.

1. Continue to deliver all elements of your current LSS (including all mandated activities), or move to
2. Deliver all elements of a local revised Covid-19 LSS (including all mandated activities), or move to
3. Deliver all mandated searching of prisoners only.

Prisons are also encouraged to maximise the use of technology and security aids, such as mobile phone poles and detectors, and prison dogs where they are still available as further ways to maintain the integrity of the prison security.

The policy team have written a new methodology for completing a full search which allows staff to remain two metres away from a prisoner, and does not require staff to wear a face mask, but will still require them to wear gloves.   **This methodology should only be used if there is a situation when there is insufficient PPE to conduct a normal full search and a record must be kept when this methodology is used.**



Work continues with central operations team for women’s prisons to develop full searching alternatives for women in custody, should these be required.

**DELIVERY DRIVERS**

We are aware that delivery drivers are instructed by their companies to maintain social distancing of two metres distance from staff.   This makes our normal entry procedures of a rub down search impossible.   Enclosed are guidelines for gate entry searching which introduces a new ‘visual search’ to replace rub down searching.   **This visual search of delivery drivers may start immediately.** Operational Support Grades (and other staff) conducting these searches do not require face masks as they are not breaching social distancing (of two metres), but should wear gloves which are changed between each search.   These staff are also reminded that when searching the vehicle itself, gloves should be worn wherever possible.   All other normal elements of delivery driver entry, such as identification checks, must still be carried out.



**REVIEW OF SECRETED ITEMS POLICY**

All prisons currently have a secreted items policy which may rely on segregation units or other areas, to isolate people who are believed to or confirmed to have an unauthorised article.   It is vital that staff know what is expected of them right now if they suspect that an item is secreted, and Governors are encouraged to ensure that key staff, for instance reception staff, are clear on any new arrangements or expectations during this time.