



State of Utah

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Utah Department of Corrections Reports 16 Total COVID-19 Related Deaths

After receiving examination results, Corrections reports 16 total COVID-19 related deaths

DRAPER – The Utah Office of the Medical Examiner (OME) recently released examination results for several offenders who died while in the custody of the Utah Department of Corrections.

The OME has determined that five additional fatalities were COVID-19 related. The Office also stated that two previously reported COVID-19 related deaths were due to other, non-COVID factors.

The UDC is still awaiting the OME's final report on two previously reported deaths.

The UDC is updating its metrics accordingly. The number of COVID-related deaths now stands at 16 incarcerated individuals, housed either at the Utah State Prison (USP) in Draper or the Central Utah Correctional Facility in Gunnison (CUCF). Many of the 16 had other complicating comorbidities listed in the OME reports as contributing to their death.

“We express our deepest condolences to the families and friends who have lost an incarcerated loved one from this pandemic,” said Brian Nielson, executive director for the Utah Department of Corrections.

Moving forward, UDC will continue to share written updates on deaths of individuals who were COVID-19 positive at the time of their passing or not considered recovered. However, the numbers will not be reflected in the public COVID-19 tracking sheet until the official cause has been determined by the OME.

In an effort to respect and maintain individual's private medical information, UDC will not be releasing specific information on the additional deaths. However, all occurred between

December 2020 and January 2021. Four individuals were between the ages of 65 and 84, and one individual was between the age of 45 and 64. All were male.

UDC continues to work closely with the Utah Department of Health and local health officials on movement, testing and vaccinations. Approximately 184 individuals have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine between USP and CUCF.

“Incarcerated individuals’ health remains our top priority as we continue to navigate through these difficult times,” Nielson said. “We are heartened to see a light on the horizon as more and more individuals receive the COVID-19 vaccination within our facilities and within the community.”

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Utah Department of Corrections

Mission Statement: Our dedicated team of professionals ensures public safety by effectively managing offenders while maintaining close collaboration with partner agencies and the community. Our team is devoted to providing maximum opportunities for offenders to make lasting changes through accountability, treatment, education, and positive reinforcement within a safe environment.