



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
**WASHINGTON STATE PENITENTIARY**  
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DATE: April 11, 2018

TO: Washington State Penitentiary Staff and Incarcerated Population

FROM: Rob Herzog, Assistant Secretary – Prisons Division  
Danielle Armbruster, Assistant Secretary – Reentry Division  
Scott Edwards, Assistant Director – Correctional Industries  
Don Holbrook, Superintendent, Washington State Penitentiary

RE: Food Service – Responsive Actions

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On April 1, 2018, Washington State Penitentiary (WSP) West Complex and South Complex began a peaceful food refusal event focused on perceived and real concerns with food quality and nutritionals. A series of meetings between facility staff and Offender Communication Liaisons (OCL) for the affected living units identified specific concerns including food quality, limited meal variety, and a desire for overall healthier nutrition. The population also made specific requests including, but not limited to, hot breakfast (in lieu of breakfast "boats") with cold milk, improved food quality, and better communication. On April 6, 2018, a DOC team consisting of Rob Herzog, Danielle Armbruster, Don Holbrook and Scott Edwards met with the OCL for each close and medium custody units. The purpose of the meetings was to convey the agency's ownership of these issues and to outline a corrective action plan to address the population's concerns. The meetings represented a positive dialogue with OCL members and a commitment by DOC to work collaboratively to improve the WSP Food Service program. The following represents specific concerns, actions taken, and the long-term plan to sustain improved food service operations at (WSP).

#### **POPULATION CONCERNS AND RESPONSIVE ACTIONS**

**BREAKFAST MEAL** -- The population requested a hot breakfast in lieu of the cold breakfast "boat" as well as cold milk. Following collaboration between DOC staff in Administration, Custody,

Correctional Industries, and Programming areas, our institution was able to identify a solution with immediate implementation. Effective April 13, 2018, the population will receive a serving of hot oatmeal with occasional fruit mix-in as well as a carton of cold milk for breakfast. The population will receive peanut butter, jelly, two slices of bread, breakfast bar, and muffin in addition to the hot oatmeal and a cold milk. Going forward, our corrective action plan includes evaluating options for enhanced hot breakfast meals; however, this may require new equipment and/or capital investment. It is our intention to identify long term solutions for hot breakfast (and better meal variety) over the next 60 days.

**FOOD QUALITY** – The population expressed concerns about food quality, including soggy entrees, over-cooked vegetables, and substandard produce. During OCL meetings, the agency recognized WSP is a unique institution, with its cross-quadrant structure, operational practices, and reliance upon satellite feeding contributing to food quality deficiencies (primarily delays between meal preparation and actual serving of the meal). We also recognize our food service operation is contributing to this issue by operating with less than effective standard operating procedures and internal controls to ensure high-quality meals are served to the population.

Our corrective action plan will address this issue in several ways. First, we are evaluating our facility's operations, including meal delivery systems (e.g., equipment and infrastructure) and daily practices (e.g., count, hours of operation). Correctional Industries is also evaluating its food service quality control, with a robust focus on raw materials focusing on produce (e.g., variety, effective procurement, and quality inspections), meal preparation practices and procedures (e.g., timing and methods), and finished products (e.g., plating and service). We are encouraged by an initial plan already in effect, with our facility's intent to achieve wholesale sustainable practices in food quality within the next 60 days. Going forward, our facility will establish structured OCL meetings on a consistent schedule (e.g., monthly). The purpose of the meetings is to maintain a constructive dialogue with our staff and incarcerated population about food service, with opportunities to receive feedback on meal quality, menu variety, and new food offerings in development. This will include food sensory opportunities, with tastings for staff and the incarcerated to ensure quality and standards are maintained.

COMMUNICATION ON NUTRITIONALS – The population expressed concerns about the nutritional value of the meals provided, suggesting DOC is not following Executive Order 13-06 (EO) and Policy 240.100. During the OCL meetings, we sought to heighten awareness about the menu's nutritional values, citing how far we've come over the last 20 years in nutritional improvements. That said, we recognize the agency could better communicate with staff and the population about the menu we serve, and our corrective action plan includes a multi-faceted approach to achieve and sustain that objective. First, we are sharing full menu nutritionals for both West Complex and East Complex food service representing a meal by meal nutritional analysis for the menu in effect at the time of the food refusal event. These will be available in each living unit to check out for review. Going forward, as DOC Health Services partners with Food Service to achieve menu updates, revised nutritional analyses will be shared. We are also distributing more information about EO compliance and the current state of our food service operations (e.g., past vs. present conditions). It is important for our staff and the incarcerated to understand how menu nutritionals have improved over the last 20 years, with future OCL meetings including improved communication on nutritional values.

Food Service has collaborated, and will continue to collaborate, with custody, non-custody staff and the incarcerated population to find effective solutions to challenges in our system. We will continue to work toward improved communication and long-term sustainable practices that will benefit the entire facility.

Thank you all for your commitment and ongoing support.

cc: Stephen Sinclair, Secretary – Dept of Corrections  
Jeremy S. Barclay, Director of Communications – Dept of Corrections  
Jeannie Miller, Director – Correctional Industries  
Jamie Dolan, Food Service Administrator