

**Early Experiences with  
COVID-19 at  
CBP Border Patrol Stations  
and OFO Ports of Entry**





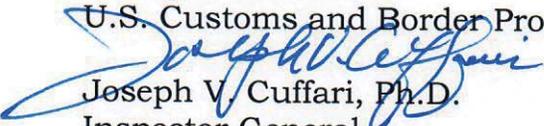
## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

Washington, DC 20528 / [www.oig.dhs.gov](http://www.oig.dhs.gov)

September 4, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mark A. Morgan  
Acting Commissioner  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

FROM:   
Joseph V. Cuffari, Ph.D.  
Inspector General

SUBJECT: *Early Experiences with COVID-19 at CBP Border Patrol Stations and OFO Ports of Entry*

Attached for your information is our final report, *Early Experiences with COVID-19 at CBP Border Patrol Stations and OFO Ports of Entry*. We incorporated the formal comments from U.S. Customs and Border Protection in the final report.

Consistent with our responsibility under the *Inspector General Act*, we will provide copies of our report to congressional committees with oversight and appropriation responsibility over the Department of Homeland Security. We will also post the report on our website for public dissemination.

Please call me with any questions, or your staff may contact Thomas Kait, Assistant Inspector General for Special Reviews and Evaluations, at (202) 981-6000.

Attachment



# DHS OIG HIGHLIGHTS

## *Early Experiences with COVID-19 at CBP Border Patrol Stations and OFO Ports of Entry*

September 4, 2020

### Why We Did This Inspection

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared novel coronavirus 19 (COVID-19) a pandemic on March 11, 2020, noting it was not just a public health crisis, but one that would affect every sector of society. We surveyed personnel at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) facilities from April 22 to May 1, 2020, regarding their experiences and challenges managing COVID-19.

### What We Recommend

We make no recommendations.

#### **For Further Information:**

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202) 981-6000, or email us at [DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov](mailto:DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov)

### What We Found

The 136 Border Patrol stations and 307 Office of Field Operations (OFO) ports of entry that responded to our survey described various actions they have taken to prevent and mitigate the pandemic's spread among travelers, detained individuals, and staff. These actions include increased cleaning and disinfecting of common areas and having personal protective equipment for staff, as well as supplies available to those individuals with whom they come into contact. However, facilities reported concerns with their inability to practice social distancing and the risk of exposure to COVID-19 due to the close-contact nature of their work. Regarding staffing, facilities reported decreases in current staff availability due to COVID-19, but have contingency plans in place to ensure continued operations. The facilities expressed concerns regarding staff availability, should there be an outbreak of COVID-19 at the facility. Overall, the majority of respondents reported their facilities were prepared to address COVID-19. The observations contained in the report, which are primarily based on survey responses from facilities, provide an early perspective on CBP's efforts during the pandemic. While we make no recommendations, our intention is to inform agency decision makers as they consider additional actions to respond to the pandemic.

### CBP Response

CBP's response recapped various measures described in this report that Border Patrol agents and OFO have taken to "prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among travelers, persons in custody, and CBP staff."



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## Abbreviations

CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
COVID-19	novel coronavirus 19
ICE	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
OFO	Office of Field Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PPE	personal protective equipment
TEDS	<i>National Standards on Transport, Escort, Detention and Search</i>
U.S.C.	United States Code
WHO	World Health Organization



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### Background

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared novel coronavirus 19 (COVID-19) a pandemic on March 11, 2020, noting it was not just a public health crisis, but one that would affect every sector of society. On that day, roughly 118,000 people had confirmed cases of COVID-19 worldwide, and 4,291 people had died from the virus. Four months later, on July 13, 2020, there were almost 11 million confirmed COVID-19 cases worldwide, with 3.2 million cases and 134,000 related deaths in the United States alone.

Because COVID-19 spreads easily, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) faces unique challenges in preventing further transmission of the disease. These challenges are two-fold, mitigating the risk of infection and transmission of COVID-19 not only among CBP personnel, but also among the individuals with whom they come into contact. Specifically, CBP processes thousands of travelers each day at Office of Field Operations (OFO) ports of entry, such as airports and land borders, and detains inadmissible aliens<sup>1</sup> encountered at or between ports of entry. Regarding detained individuals, Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry are designed for short-term holding and lack the space needed to maintain effective social distancing among those in custody. CBP employees are also at risk of coming into contact with COVID-19 due to their job responsibilities. For example, Border Patrol agents come into close contact with inadmissible aliens during apprehension between ports of entry, transportation, processing, and detention at stations. OFO officers come into close contact with individuals when they conduct customs and immigration screenings of travelers and detain inadmissible aliens at ports of entry.

CBP is responsible for ensuring its holding facilities at Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry comply with the *National Standards on Transport, Escort, Detention, and Search* (TEDS), which specify how individuals should be treated in CBP custody, including general medical requirements related to contagious diseases.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued interim guidance on the management of COVID-19 in detention facilities, including recommendations for enhanced cleaning and disinfecting, social distancing strategies, infection control, screening

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<sup>1</sup> Inadmissible aliens are aliens who are ineligible for visas or admission, including aliens present in the United States without being admitted or paroled, and aliens not in possession of a valid visa or border crossing card. 8 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 1182(a)(6)(A), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(7)(B)(i)(II). CBP holds inadmissible aliens in short-term detention pending release, removal, or transfer to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement or U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for long-term detention.

<sup>2</sup> Under TEDS standards, if a Border Patrol agent or CBP officer suspects — or a detainee reports — that a detainee may have a contagious disease, the detainee should be separated whenever operationally feasible, and all other appropriate precautions must be taken and required notifications made according to the operational office's policies and procedures. TEDS 4.10 *Secure Detention Standards: Medical: Contagious Disease*



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procedures, and care of confirmed and suspected cases.<sup>3</sup> A CBP official stated that although the CDC guidance is directed at correctional and detention facilities, and was not intended for CBP's short-term holding facilities, the guidance still informs CBP's decisions when dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic response. Regarding worker safety, CDC also provides guidance for law enforcement personnel, including Border Patrol agents, on preventing the spread of COVID-19. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides recommendations for controlling and preventing the spread of COVID-19 among border protection workers such as CBP officers.<sup>4</sup> These recommendations include using physical barriers to separate employees from incoming travelers and limiting travelers as they pass through screening areas.

In April 2020, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) initiated a limited-scope review of CBP's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic at its facilities, with respect to travelers, detained individuals, and staff. OIG surveyed personnel at 136 Border Patrol stations and 311 OFO ports of entry regarding their experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic from April 22 to May 1, 2020. We received 136 surveys from Border Patrol, for a 100 percent response rate, and 307 surveys from OFO for a 99 percent response rate. We also reviewed COVID-19 guidance distributed to CBP facilities during the early stages of the pandemic and interviewed the CBP Chief Medical Officer. Our analysis provides a snapshot of steps CBP and its facilities have taken to manage COVID-19, as well as challenges they face in staffing, resources, and facility operations. The information presented in this report represents the experience and perspective of CBP facilities at a particular point in time — April 22 to May 1, 2020. These observations, which are primarily based on survey responses from facilities, provide an early perspective on CBP's efforts during the pandemic. While we make no recommendations, our intention is to inform decision-makers at the agency as they consider additional actions to respond to the pandemic.

### Results of Inspection

CBP personnel at the Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry who responded to our survey described various actions they have taken to prevent and mitigate the pandemic's spread among travelers, detained individuals, and staff.<sup>5</sup> These actions include increased cleaning and disinfecting of common areas, and having personal protective equipment for staff, as well as supplies available to those individuals with whom they come into contact. However, facilities reported concerns about their inability to practice social distancing and the risk of exposure to COVID-19 due to the close-contact nature of their

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<sup>3</sup> *CDC Interim Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Correctional and Detention Facilities*, March 23, 2020

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/border-protection-transportation-security.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Appendix C contains the full survey results.



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work. Regarding staffing, facilities reported decreases in current staff availability due to COVID-19, but have contingency plans in place to ensure continued operations. The facilities expressed concerns regarding staff availability, should there be an outbreak of COVID-19 at the facility. Overall, the majority of facilities stated they were prepared to address COVID-19.

### **Border Patrol and OFO Described Actions Taken to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 among Travelers and Detained Individuals, but Social Distancing Is a Challenge**

Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry reported various actions they have taken to prevent and mitigate the pandemic's spread among staff and detained individuals. For example, they have worked to reduce the detained populations at their facilities and decreased the number of individuals traveling to the United States through ports of entry. For those individuals who are in custody, almost every facility reported it conducts risk assessments to determine their potential exposure to COVID-19. Facilities also generally reported they had adequate supplies to lessen the spread of COVID-19, and have taken other steps, such as increasing the cleaning and disinfecting of common areas. Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry reported their major concern was the inability to practice social distancing and implement other physical restrictions to limit the spread of COVID-19.

### **CBP Reduced Its Detained Population and Restricted Travel through Ports of Entry to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19**

To limit the spread of COVID-19, CBP reported it has worked to reduce the number of individuals detained in its holding facilities and the number of individuals traveling through ports of entry. Title 42, Section 265 of the United States Code allows the Government to suspend the introduction of individuals from foreign countries to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. On March 20, 2020, under that authority and in response to COVID-19, the CDC issued an order<sup>6</sup> temporarily prohibiting the introduction of certain persons from foreign countries traveling from Canada or Mexico, regardless of their countries of origin, and who would otherwise be introduced into congregate settings.<sup>7</sup> Under Title 42 and the CDC Order, CBP has expelled (i.e., Title 42 expulsions) thousands of inadmissible aliens back to their home countries. Of the 136 Border Patrol stations surveyed, 47 percent (64) reported Title 42

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<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services CDC, Order Under Sections 362 & 365 of the *Public Health Service Act*, (42 U.S.C. 265, 268), *Order Suspending Introduction of Certain Persons From Countries Where a Communicable Disease Exists*. The original Order was extended for 30 days on April 20, 2020, and indefinitely on May 19, 2020.

<sup>7</sup> Specifically, the order prohibited the following individuals from entering the United States: aliens seeking to enter the country at ports of entry who do not have proper travel documents; aliens whose entry is otherwise contrary to law; and aliens apprehended near the border who are seeking to unlawfully enter the country between ports of entry.



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expulsions totaling 11,454 individuals; more than 75 percent of these expulsions occurred along the Southwest Border. Seven percent (22) of OFO ports of entry reported Title 42 expulsions totaling 1,474 inadmissible aliens.<sup>8</sup> According to CBP, aliens subject to the order would “not be held in congregate areas for processing and instead [would] immediately be expelled to their country of last transit.” With these processes in place, CBP estimated the average time from initial encounter with an inadmissible alien to expulsion from the United States was less than 2 hours.

In addition, travel through ports of entry has been restricted. On March 20, 2020, jointly with Canada and Mexico, the United States restricted all non-essential travel (i.e., travel that is considered tourism or recreational in nature) across the border.<sup>9</sup> This restriction has further reduced the number of individuals that OFO encounters and processes at ports of entry. On April 20, 2020, there were 220,000 passenger vehicle occupants and pedestrians at ports of entry, compared to roughly 546,000 the year before.

Finally, Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry have seen a major decline in apprehensions (unrelated to Title 42 expulsions) along the Southwest and Northern borders. In March 2020, there were 31,275 apprehensions; in April, that number decreased 92.5 percent to 2,328. Combined, Title 42 expulsions, travel restrictions, and reduced apprehensions have greatly reduced CBP’s detained alien population and the number of travelers through ports of entry.

### **Facilities Reported Conducting Risk Assessments and Having Testing Protocols in Place for Detained Individuals**

Ninety percent of all responding Border Patrol stations (122 of 136) and OFO ports of entries (277 of 307) reported they conduct risk assessments on those individuals detained in CBP custody to determine their potential exposure to COVID-19. Generally, these testing protocols include determining individuals’ travel history and whether they were previously exposed to COVID-19, screening individuals for COVID-19 symptoms when they are initially processed at a facility, and continued monitoring for potential COVID-19 symptoms for as long as they remain in CBP custody. However, it was rare for facilities to have the capacity to test detained individuals for COVID-19 on site. Specifically, only three (2 percent) Border Patrol stations and five (3 percent) OFO ports of entry reported they were able to test detained individuals on site for COVID-19, but none had testing kits available on site at the time of our survey. At the time of our survey, Border Patrol stations reported that 9 of the

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<sup>8</sup> According to data available on CBP’s website, there were 14,856 Title 42 expulsions in April 2020, and 19,707 Title 42 expulsions in May 2020.

<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2020/03/20/joint-statement-us-mexico-joint-initiative-combat-covid-19-pandemic> and <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2020/03/20/joint-statement-us-canada-joint-initiative-temporary-restriction-travelers-crossing>.



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109 detained individuals had been tested. OFO ports of entry reported that 1 of the 23 detained individuals had been tested. Border Patrol officials stated that as of July 13, 2020, 58 detained individuals across all Border Patrol stations had tested positive for COVID-19.

### **Facilities Reported They Had Adequate Supplies, Cleaned Areas More Frequently, and Took Other Actions to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19**

Most facilities reported they had adequate supplies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among detained individuals. On average, more than 98 percent of Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry responded they had sufficient stocks of masks for individuals who exhibited symptoms of COVID-19. Most stations and ports of entry also reported having enough liquid soap and hand sanitizer available. Table 1 describes the availability of supplies for detained individuals at Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry.

**Table 1. Availability of Supplies for Detained Individuals at Border Patrol Stations and OFO Ports of Entry, April 22–May 1, 2020**

	<b>Border Patrol Stations</b>	<b>OFO Ports of Entry</b>
<b>Masks</b>	99.3% (135 of 136)	98.4% (302 of 307)
<b>Liquid soap</b>	92.6% (126 of 136)	95.4% (293 of 307)
<b>Hand sanitizer</b>	80.9% (110 of 136)	94.1% (289 of 307)

Source: OIG analysis of survey responses

Although 93 percent of Border Patrol stations reported an increase in frequency of cleaning and sanitizing the vehicles used to transport inadmissible aliens to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, only 74 percent reported they had increased the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing their holding facilities. Most (91 percent) OFO ports of entry reported they had increased cleaning and sanitizing in processing and holding areas. Almost all Border Patrol stations (99 percent) and OFO ports of entry (94 percent) reported that overall, their facilities were doing enough to maintain clean and sanitized environments.

When asked, CBP personnel responding to our survey provided various additional measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- instituting remote processing of inadmissible aliens;
- processing inadmissible aliens and conducting other work in outdoor environments when possible;
- asking passengers to remain in their vehicles during secondary processing;



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- limiting the number of visitors to facilities; and
- conducting daily staff musters (briefings) telephonically, outdoors, or eliminating them altogether rather than conducting them in person.

### **Facilities Were Concerned with the Inability to Practice Social Distancing and Implement Other Physical Restrictions**

Even with actions that Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry have taken, almost 20 percent (26) of Border Patrol stations and 5 percent (15) of OFO ports of entry still reported they were not prepared to handle COVID-19. Specifically, they remained concerned about their ability to practice social distancing and their limited space to quarantine or isolate detained individuals. Generally, the nature of detention in Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry makes social distancing impractical, as the facilities have limited holding cells for short-term custody, which are meant to hold multiple individuals segregated by age, gender, and/or family status. Border Patrol stations are typically designed to hold a maximum of 150 to 300 individuals in separate holding areas, whereas in ports of entry, inadmissible aliens are typically held in small holding areas next to normal processing areas. Both were designed for short-term holding and lack the space needed to maintain effective social distancing. In addition, detention settings such as Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry may have limited medical resources. Although CBP is required to provide access to medical care, only select facilities have on-site medical staff. For example, as OIG's visits to CBP facilities in 2019 indicated, only 10 of 21 facilities had on-site medical personnel.<sup>10</sup> Typically, medical care for serious conditions is provided by local medical facilities.<sup>11</sup> Combined, these factors create unique challenges for Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry to mitigate the risk of infection and transmission of COVID-19.

The ability to maintain social distancing was a primary concern for Border Patrol stations responding to our survey, as Border Patrol agents require continuous contact with inadmissible aliens during apprehension, transportation, processing, and release. Table 2 describes the concerns of survey respondents regarding their ability to practice social distancing between Border Patrol agents and inadmissible aliens while performing various job duties.

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<sup>10</sup> In its management response, CBP stated that since the OIG's 2019 visits, it now had more than 1,000 contracted medical staff in 65 facilities along the Southwest border.

<sup>11</sup> *Capping Report: CBP Struggled to Find Adequate Detention Conditions During 2019 Migrant Surge* (OIG 20-38), June 12, 2020



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**Table 2. Ability to Practice Social Distancing between Staff and Inadmissible Aliens at Border Patrol Stations, April 22–May 1, 2020**

	<b>Border Patrol Stations</b>
<b>During apprehension</b>	29.4% (40 of 136)
<b>During transportation</b>	69.9% (95 of 136)
<b>During processing</b>	48.5% (66 of 136)
<b>During removal or release</b>	55.9% (76 of 136)

Source: OIG analysis of survey responses

Similarly, we asked OFO ports of entry if they were able to maintain proper social distancing between staff and travelers during the screening process — 98 percent responded they could.

We also asked Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry whether it was possible to maintain social distancing between the detained individuals themselves (other than family members) in holding areas. Thirty percent (38) of Border Patrol stations and 5 percent (16) of OFO ports of entry reported they were not able to provide social distancing among detained individuals due to limited space in holding areas.

Some survey comments from Border Patrol and OFO reported the following challenges regarding social distancing:

- “Small facility makes social distancing a challenge.”
- “The station has two detention cells and will not be able to maintain social distancing among detained individuals with groups of four or more.”
- “Only two small holding cells make it imposable [sic] to maintain social distancing.”
- “The ability to effectively apply social distancing measures for simultaneously/concurrently arriving flights.”
- “[Maintaining] a safe distance between individuals is difficult as we need to interact with people, ask questions, review documents, and perform searches.”



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### Facilities Had Contingency Plans and Protective Equipment for Staff, but Expressed Concerns with Staff Availability and Risk of Exposure if COVID-19 Spreads

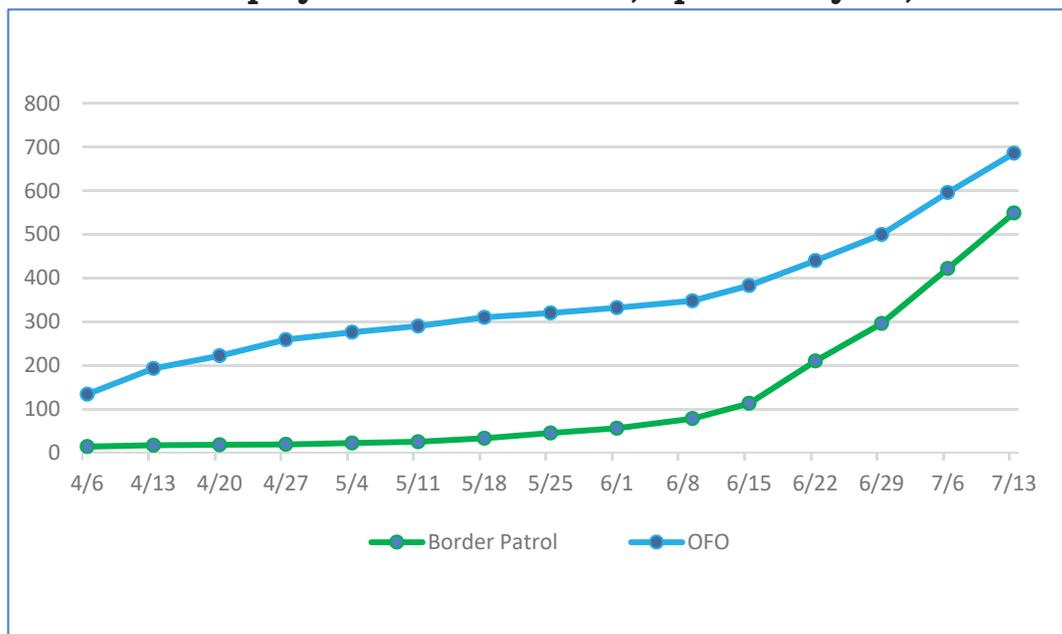
Facilities reported decreases in current staff availability due to COVID-19, either because staff are self-quarantining or are unavailable to work due to other community mitigation measures. Still, many facilities reported having contingency plans in place to ensure continued operations.

#### Facilities Reported Decreases in Staff Availability Due to COVID-19

In response to our survey, 7 percent (10) of Border Patrol stations and 8 percent (24) of OFO ports of entry reported they had staff members who had tested positive for COVID-19. In total, at the time of our survey, respondents reported 16 Border Patrol agents and 228 OFO officers as having confirmed cases of COVID-19.

According to CBP data, 148 Border Patrol and OFO employees had tested positive for COVID-19 as of April 6, 2020. Fourteen weeks later, on July 13, 2020, the total number of Border Patrol and OFO employees with COVID-19 had risen to 1,235. Eight employees had died as a result of COVID-19. Figure 1 shows the rise in number of Border Patrol and OFO employees with COVID-19 from April 6 to July 13, 2020.

**Figure 1. Increase in Number of Border Patrol and OFO Employees with COVID-19, April 6–July 13, 2020**



Source: OIG analysis of CBP data



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In response to our survey, about 37 percent of Border Patrol stations and almost 35 percent of OFO ports of entry also reported they had staff who were either in precautionary self-quarantine, or had staff members who were unavailable to work due to community-spread mitigation measures. In total, Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry reported that more than 1,650 employees were unavailable to work because of the pandemic. Table 3 shows the number and percent of Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry whose staff were affected by COVID-19.

**Table 3. Border Patrol Stations and OFO Ports of Entry with Staff Affected by COVID-19, April 22–May 1, 2020**

	<b>Border Patrol Stations</b>	<b>OFO Ports of Entry</b>
<b>Staff members tested positive for COVID-19</b>	7.4% (10 of 136)	7.8% (24 of 307)
<b>Staff members were in precautionary self-quarantine</b>	24.3% (33 of 136)	19.2% (59 of 307)
<b>Staff members were unavailable to work</b>	12.5% (17 of 136)	15.6% (48 of 307)

Source: OIG analysis of survey responses

During the pandemic, Federal agencies could also allow employees to use weather and safety leave,

*in circumstances in which allowing an employee to travel to or perform work at the normal worksite would pose significant safety risks for the employee, other employees, or the general public.<sup>12</sup>*

Officials from Border Patrol and OFO stated that their staff used weather and safety leave when appropriate, such as when an employee was considered high-risk because of potential exposure and needed to self-quarantine. In addition, OFO initially allowed officers at ports of entry to also use weather and safety leave to reduce potential exposure to travelers who could be carrying COVID-19 and to increase social distancing by reducing staff at ports of entry. On April 6, 2020, OFO recalled officers along the Northern and Southwest borders who were in a weather and safety leave status “to enhance the security posture in those environments in response to requests for assistance from U.S. Border Patrol.”<sup>13</sup> In response to our survey, 68 percent (210) of OFO ports of entry reported that prior to the April 6, 2020 recall, staff had used weather and safety leave due to the COVID-19 outbreak. About 87 percent (267) of the ports of entry reported that if weather and safety leave became available again

<sup>12</sup> Weather and safety leave is statutorily-authorized paid leave excusing absences related to weather emergencies and safety events. See <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/covid-19/fact-sheet-additional-guidance-in-connection-with-the-covid-19-emergency/>.

<sup>13</sup> Letter to IG Joseph V. Cuffari from Todd C. Owen, Executive Assistant Commissioner, OFO on May 5, 2020



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for purposes of reducing potential exposure and increasing social distancing, they would use it.

### **Most Facilities Had Prepared Contingency Staffing Plans, but Some Facilities Expressed Concerns about Staffing Shortages**

When asked about contingency staffing plans during the pandemic, facilities described various solutions, including requesting staff from other facilities, modifying staffing models, reassigning staff from neighboring facilities, or requesting resources from other Federal partners such as U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or the Department of Defense. Survey responses included:

- “Early in the pandemic we initiated an alternate work site plan that had the vast majority of employees at Sector HQ begin teleworking to insure [sic] that any COVID-19 infection did not impact the ability of the Sector to operate.”
- “Depending on the extent of the impact, the mandatory border security requirements would be identified and additional personnel would be requested from adjacent stations and/or sector staff. A shift staffing re-balance could also be initiated should the conditions arise to an emergent situation.”

Although most facilities responded they were prepared to handle the pandemic, approximately 9 percent expressed concern about staffing and reported that maintaining minimum staffing would be a major challenge if the pandemic were to spread. Survey responses included:

- “Port staffing prior to COVID-19 pandemic is 40%. If an officer tests positive everyone in the port will have been exposed.”
- “[One CBP officer] contracting COVID-19 could ... essentially wipe out 50% or more of the staff very quickly. This would adversely impact the level of service that could be provided.”
- “Bringing detailed personnel from across the United States, could have brought COVID-19 to a community that had no cases. Detailed personnel spent upwards of 5 days driving across the country, potentially spreading the virus to areas that had little or no outbreaks.”



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### Facilities Have PPE and Supplies but Remain Concerned about Safety and Risk of Exposure

We asked facilities whether they had enough personal protective equipment (PPE)<sup>14</sup> and other supplies on hand for all staff. The majority of the Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry reported they had enough PPE, such as gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies, on hand for those staff who dealt directly with travelers or detained individuals, as well as for those who do not. Table 4 describes PPE availability at Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry for staff who interacted with travelers or detained individuals.

**Table 4. Availability of PPE and Supplies at Border Patrol Stations and OFO Ports of Entry, April 22–May 1, 2020**

	<b>Border Patrol Stations</b>	<b>OFO Ports of Entry</b>
<b>Disinfectant cleaning agents</b>	90.4% (123 of 136)	99.0% (304 of 307)
<b>Face shields or goggles</b>	91.9% (125 of 136)	88.0% (267 of 307)
<b>Hand sanitizer</b>	84.6% (115 of 136)	91.2% (280 of 307)
<b>Nitrile or latex gloves</b>	98.5% (134 of 136)	99.4% (305 of 307)
<b>N95 respirators</b>	99.3% (135 of 136)	98.4% (302 of 307)
<b>Standard surgical masks</b>	94.1% (128 of 136)	94.8% (291 of 307)

Source: OIG analysis of survey responses

Survey results described other protective equipment or supplies available at facilities to help prevent or mitigate the spread of COVID-19 based on guidance they received. These measures included:

- “Currently in discussion with airport operators to install [Plexiglas] in primary booths.”
- “When there was a shortage of disinfectant cleaning supplies, we mixed bleach dilutions per recommended guidelines for spray bottles until new supplies were received.”

<sup>14</sup> To help stop the spread of COVID-19, the CDC recommends the use of PPE, such as gloves and a face mask. See *Interim Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Correctional and Detention Facilities*, March 23, 2020.



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- “Specific transport vehicle, mobile processing computer for open air processing, negative pressure cells,<sup>15</sup> Tyvek suits,<sup>16</sup> boot cover and vehicle foggers.”<sup>17</sup>
- “A limited number of [Tyvek] suits are available for use along with a commercial ozone generator.<sup>18</sup> The detention and processing areas along with the front foyer are equipped with negative air pressure to ensure the main facility is not contaminated.”

The largest concern for Border Patrol station staff was the physical limitations of their facilities to quarantine or isolate detained individuals. Almost half (67) of the Border Patrol stations described holding cell issues, long-term detention capability, and proximity to medical facilities as the major challenges they faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Border Patrol personnel reported:

- “In an effort to maintain CDC guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic the isolation and quarantine of detainees would quickly saturate holding cells and USBP holding capacity would be maximized and the system overwhelmed.”
- “This facility is not designed to accommodate subjects whom [sic] need to be isolated and/or quarantined. Specifically, should the facility need to isolate and/or quarantine multiple subjects/groups, the facility would exceed detention capacity in a short period of time in order to comply with CDC guidelines.”
- “The facility is not engineered for proper isolation or quarantine.”
- “Should subjects be held for quarantine or isolation purposes related to COVID 19 for significant periods of time (a week or longer), the facility would become quickly overwhelmed and operations would likely be forced to shift to another facility.”

More than 25 percent (79) of OFO ports of entry said their major challenge regarding the pandemic was risk of exposure due to their interaction with travelers. OFO personnel highlighted the following concerns:

- “The major challenge currently facing the POE [port of entry] is the hundreds of travelers the employees are coming in contact with daily and

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<sup>15</sup> According to the CDC, a negative pressure room is used to isolate individuals with a suspected or confirmed airborne infectious disease. The rooms have negative pressure in the room and direct exhaust of air from the room to the outside of the building, <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/glossary.html>.

<sup>16</sup> Tyvek suits are single-use, disposable gowns, which CDC recommends as PPE for law enforcement personnel, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/guidance-law-enforcement.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Vehicle foggers release a disinfectant that kills germs and disinfects air and surfaces.

<sup>18</sup> An ozone generator is a machine that can be used to purify the air people breathe.



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the handling of documents and all personal effects during inspection. The interaction may be as quick as a couple of minutes to several... hours. The traveler may be asymptomatic at the time of inspection or detention. Detection of possible COVID-19 exposure is never known until the officer starts feeling symptomatic. Concern for employees and immediate family members in high risk categories.”

- “The nature of passenger processing requires close proximity to travelers.”
- “Distancing with travelers and officers in the booths, personal searching, baggage searching, detaining, arresting, and transporting travelers. Morale, due to employees feeling nervous or scared to perform their duties with the public.”
- “Even though the [port of entry] follows all possible safety measures there is a high risk of exposure due to the need to follow enforcement guidelines for inspecting travelers, luggage and vehicles which requires close proximity interaction. There is also the unknown [sic] factor of what exposure the traveler has been in contact with.”

### **CBP Has Provided Guidance Regarding COVID-19 to Personnel at Border Patrol Stations and OFO Ports of Entry**

In January 2020, CBP started providing guidance to Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry. The guidance includes best practices for staff regarding preparedness, prevention, and management of COVID-19 at facilities. For example, CBP created a Job Hazard Analysis, which categorized the risks of CBP staff based on their job responsibilities, and described protective measures CBP staff should take based on these risks. CBP also provided guidance for supervisors to assess their employees’ risk of COVID-19 exposure, and described various actions supervisors should take depending on the risk. In addition, CBP issued information on how to track incidents of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 exposure among employees. CBP also provided CDC guidance to staff, including measures for law enforcement personnel to protect against COVID-19 contamination and personal decontamination techniques.

CBP also issued direction regarding how to deal with possible COVID-19 exposure among travelers and detained individuals. For example, Border Patrol sent guidance to stations about assessing and managing individuals who traveled from at-risk countries or who displayed symptoms of COVID-19. The guidance included providing masks to the individuals, isolating the individuals if possible, and consulting with local medical contract personnel if available. Guidance for OFO ports of entry included recognizing travelers who displayed COVID-19 symptoms, isolating them, and requesting a medical evaluation or assistance.



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According to our survey results, 99 percent (135) of Border Patrol stations and 98 percent (301) of OFO ports of entry stated they had received COVID-19 guidance from CBP headquarters. Every Border Patrol station and OFO port of entry reported receiving guidance from their respective headquarters offices.

### **CBP's Comments and OIG Analysis**

CBP management provided written comments on a draft of this report. We included a copy of CBP's comments in their entirety in appendix B. We also received technical comments and incorporated them in the report where appropriate. CBP expressed four specific concerns with the report. CBP's concerns, as well as our response, are described below.

First, CBP was concerned the draft report implied Border Patrol had not taken a comprehensive approach to managing the pandemic. However, determining the comprehensiveness of the Border Patrol's approach to managing the pandemic was not a specific objective of our review, and we made no conclusion in our report in this regard. We appreciate CBP's description of the administrative, work practice, and engineering controls it has implemented to prepare for and manage the pandemic at its detention centers nationwide. This information is in addition to the various measures already described in our report, such as Job Hazard Analyses.

CBP disagreed with the survey methodology we used for our review, as well as the lack of independent verification of the survey responses. As we explained in our initial meeting with CBP at the beginning of our review, our work and the resulting report are based primarily on the survey responses and we never intended to provide an in-depth assessment of CBP's ability to manage the pandemic at its facilities. Given the review's limited scope and objective, the purpose of our report is to illustrate CBP officials' perspectives and personal experiences with COVID-19 at a specific point in time. We aimed to accomplish this review expeditiously and provide the survey information we received while it was still relevant and useful to help guide CBP's response to the pandemic. Some survey questions sought opinions and beliefs (for example, "Do you believe the facility is prepared to handle the COVID-19 pandemic?") and by their nature are not verifiable. Factual survey questions would require inspections to corroborate answers, make visual observations (in-person or virtually), interview staff and detainees, and review documentation. Given the hundreds of respondents from CBP's detention centers nationwide, we could not verify the accuracy of the responses with our available staff resources in the allotted timeframe.

Further, CBP stated the draft report did not accurately describe the current availability of medical resources at its facilities. CBP asserts we conflated the TEDS provision regarding accessible medical care to include a requirement that CBP have medical staff on-site. We appreciate CBP's update regarding the



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number of medical personnel currently working in facilities along the Southwestern Border, and have added corresponding language in the body of the report as appropriate. However, we disagree with the assertion that the draft report conflates the TEDS standards to also require that CBP have medical staff on-site. Our report clearly states that medical care for serious conditions is provided by local medical facilities. We also describe a lack of on-site medical staff as one of the unique challenges CBP facilities face during the pandemic.

Finally, CBP expressed concerns that our draft report did not provide specific details regarding opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of CBP operations. In providing the survey responses from CBP officials at facilities nationwide, we have given CBP considerable information as a basis for further analysis and decision-making to improve its facility operations during the pandemic. Given the unverified nature of our findings, the abbreviated timeframe for completing the review, and the limited scope and objective for the review, we did not consider recommendations appropriate.



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### **Appendix A** **Objective, Scope, and Methodology**

The Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General was established by the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Public Law 107-296), by amendment to the *Inspector General Act of 1978*.

We initiated this review to determine how both CBP and ICE are managing the pandemic at their facilities. Our observations regarding ICE facilities can be found in OIG 20-42. We conducted our fieldwork in April and May 2020.

To learn about CBP facilities' experience with COVID-19, we asked CBP to forward an electronic survey to one individual at each Border Patrol station and OFO port of entry who had knowledge of (1) the daily operations of the facility and (2) how the facility was responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. CBP sent the survey on April 22, 2020, to those individuals at 136 Border Patrol Stations and 392 OFO ports of entry. Border Patrol respondents included Patrol Agents in Charge, Deputy Patrol Agents in Charge, Supervisory Border Patrol Agents, Watch Commanders, and Special Operations Supervisors. OFO respondents included Port Directors, Assistant Port Directors, Chief CBP Officers, and Watch Commanders.

We chose to conduct the inspection via survey because of inherent risks associated with on-site inspections, and because the survey allowed us to quickly gain real-time information about CBP facilities. Of the 135 Border Patrol stations on our original list, we removed 1 when we learned it did not have a holding area. We later added 2 Border Patrol stations that were missing from the original list, which gave us a total of 136 Border Patrol stations. We received responses from personnel at all 136 Border Patrol stations, resulting in a 100 percent response rate. Of the 392 OFO ports of entry on our original list, we later determined that 13 facilities were no longer in use and 1 location was a duplicate. Respondents from another 77 ports of entry were ultimately combined with others to reflect responses from 10 ports of entry in total, as the ports were physically located together and were supported by the same employees. Of the 311 remaining ports of entry, 4 facilities did not respond, despite three follow-up attempts by e-mail and telephone. Ultimately, we received responses from 307 OFO ports of entry, for a 99 percent response rate. We received all survey responses between April 22 and May 1, 2020.

The responses in the survey represent the experiences of the 136 Border Patrol stations and 307 OFO ports of entry at a particular point in time (April 22 to May 1, 2020). We did not independently verify the information provided by Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry.



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In addition to our survey of CBP Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry, we also reviewed CBP guidance related to COVID-19 and interviewed the CBP Chief Medical Officer.

We conducted this inspection under the authority of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, and according to the *Quality Standards for Federal Offices of Inspector General* issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.



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**Appendix B**  
**CBP Comments to the Draft Report**

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20229



**U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection**

July 31, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: Joseph V. Cuffari, Ph.D.  
Inspector General

FROM: Henry A. Moak, Jr.   
Senior Component Accountable Official  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

SUBJECT: Management Response to Draft Report: "Early Experiences  
with COVID-19 at CBP Border Patrol Stations and OFO Ports  
of Entry" (Project No. OIG-20-031-SRE-CBP, ICE(a))

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft report. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) appreciates the work of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) in planning and conducting its review and issuing this report.

CBP is pleased with OIG's acknowledgment of the actions taken to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among travelers, persons in custody, and CBP staff. Specifically, the OIG's draft report recognizes that CBP personnel at temporary holding facilities at U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) stations and Office of Field Operations (OFO) ports of entry (POEs) (who responded to the OIG's survey) described increased cleaning and disinfecting of common areas; the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff; and supplies (e.g., liquid soap and hand sanitizer) for staff and those individuals with whom CBP staff come into contact. These practices comply with the "U.S. Customs and Border Protections National Standards of Transport, Escort, Detention, and Search (TEDS)" policy, dated October 2015, which documents the treatment requirements for individuals in CBP custody, including general medical requirements related to contagious diseases. CBP believes that the extremely positive responses by USBP stations and OFO POEs to the OIG's survey were the result of CBP maintaining existing standards, policies, oversight, planning, and guidance prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CBP works closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and adheres to CDC guidelines (as identified in the OIG's draft report) regarding the availability and proper use of PPE, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting, social distancing



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strategies, infection control, screening procedures, and care of confirmed and suspected individuals to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Senior CBP leadership, however, is concerned that portions of the OIG's draft report imply that CBP's USBP is not taking a comprehensive approach to protecting staff or applying fundamental protection methods included within the hierarchy of controls related to mitigating exposures to occupational hazards as described by the CDC, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The reality is CBP uses administrative and work practice controls, as well as engineering controls (neither of which is mentioned in the draft report) that are potentially more effective protection methods than solely protecting the staff through the use of PPE and increased cleaning and disinfecting protocols, the only protective measures mentioned in the report.

More specifically, CBP implemented a comprehensive approach, including collaborating with medical experts to conduct Job Hazard Analyses and PPE Assessments that ensure protective measures are consistently implemented for a healthy and safe work environment. In addition to these administrative, work practice, and engineering controls, USBP established protective measures to ensure each worksite has PPE that is readily available to all staff. For example, CBP issued comprehensive guidance to all staff early in the pandemic on the risk-based, job-specific use of PPE and continues to update that guidance as warranted. CBP also continues to ensure that resources remain available to procure additional PPE, as needed.

Further, senior CBP leadership believes that several portions of the OIG's draft report are potentially misleading and unreliable because 1) Appendix A, "Objectives, Scope, and Methodology" does not provide any information about how the OIG designed the survey instrument, and 2) as the OIG itself noted, it did not include any independent verification of survey accuracy from the responses received. For example, in response to Question 27 for the USBP, the OIG reported that, "All facilities responded no to the question. There were 3 facilities that reported having the capacity to test detained individuals for COVID-19 (Question 27), but reported having 0 available testing kits." It is important to note that USBP has not authorized any of its agents to conduct COVID-19 testing because CBP works with CDC and local health systems to coordinate testing for persons in custody with suspected COVID-19 through local medical treatment facilities; thus it is not necessary to have testing kits available on-site at USBP stations. It appears the three responses regarding CBP testing were the result of miscommunication or misinterpretation of the question.

In addition, the OIG's draft report makes potentially misleading points that temporary holding settings such as USBP stations and OFO ports of entry may have limited medical resources, and although CBP is required to provide access to medical care, only select facilities have on-site medical staff. This is concerning because it seems that the OIG has conflated the TEDS provision that stipulates medical care must be accessed in a timely



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manner to require CBP have on-site medical staff. In fact, all CBP facilities nationwide provide timely access to medical care.

CBP leadership is also concerned that OIG's draft report states only 10 of 21 CBP facilities had on-site medical personnel when OIG visited CBP facilities in 2019. This information is significantly out of date, and thus misleading too. The reality is CBP currently has more than 1,000 medical personnel on contract working at over 65 facilities along the Southwestern Border, with more than 350 staff members providing 24/7 onsite medical support each day.

Lastly, CBP leadership is disappointed that, although the OIG's survey results disclosed possible opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of CBP operations, the OIG did not provide CBP any specific details concerning where those opportunities existed, which limits the usefulness of this report.

CBP takes seriously its responsibility to keep staff, persons in custody, and travelers safe during this unprecedented time with the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic at our vast and varied work locations. CBP is committed to continuing to follow and update its guidance, in accordance with CDC, NIOSH, and OSHA recommendations as those change. CBP is proud of the difficult and vigilant work its agents, officers, and support staff perform to ensure the health and safety of everyone they contact and to carry out our mission of protecting the American people, safeguarding our borders, and enhancing the nation's economic prosperity.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. CBP previously submitted technical comments addressing several accuracy and contextual concerns under a separate cover for OIG's consideration prior to finalizing this report. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.



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## Appendix C Survey Results

Our survey to Border Patrol stations and OFO ports of entry contained both multiple-choice and open-ended questions. For multiple-choice questions, we provide a table of the responses. For open-ended questions calling for a numeric response, we provide a table categorizing the response, followed by the range of responses and the total. Responses to open-ended questions calling for a descriptive or narrative answers were too lengthy for inclusion. Therefore, we include examples of representative responses throughout the report.

### Border Patrol Stations

#### QUESTIONS ABOUT FACILITY STAFF

1. Total number of staff who **have been tested** for COVID-19:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one employee has been tested	76	55.9%
None tested	60	44.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 22 employees who had been tested at the time of our survey. The total number of staff who were reported tested was 279.*

2. Total number of facilities with staff who **have tested positive** for COVID-19:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one employee tested positive	10	7.4%
None tested positive	126	92.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 4 employees who had tested positive for COVID-19 at the time of our survey. The total number of staff who were reported tested positive was 16.*

3. Total number of staff who **are in precautionary self-quarantine**:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one employee is in precautionary self-quarantine	33	24.3%
None are in precautionary self-quarantine	103	75.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 20 employees who were in precautionary self-quarantine at the time of our survey. The total number of staff who were reported in precautionary self-quarantine was 100.*



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4. Total number of staff who **are unavailable to work** due to community mitigation measure (considered non-essential; absent for child care due to school closures, weather and safety leave, etc.):

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one employee is unavailable to work	17	12.5%
No employees are unavailable to work	119	87.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 10 employees who were unavailable to work at the time of our survey. The total number of staff who were reported unavailable to work was 39.*

5. Have any staff used “weather and safety leave” to limit risk of exposure to COVID-19 before it was rescinded on April 6th?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	48	35.3%
No	88	64.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

6. If “weather and safety leave” were still available, do you believe staff would use it?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	84	61.8%
No	52	38.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

7. What are the facility’s contingency staffing plans in the event there is not sufficient staff to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses and a limited number were included in this report.*

### QUESTIONS ABOUT STAFF RESOURCES AND GUIDANCE

8. Do you believe the facility has enough of the following protective equipment and supplies on hand for **staff who interact with detained individuals to use**?

8a. Nitrile or latex gloves

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	134	98.5%
No	2	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>



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8b. Standard surgical masks

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	128	94.1%
No	8	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

8c. N95 respirators

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	135	99.3%
No	1	0.7%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

8d. Hand sanitizer

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	115	84.6%
No	21	15.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

8e. Face shields or goggles

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	125	91.9%
No	11	8.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

8f. Disinfectant cleaning agents

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	123	90.4%
No	13	9.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

9. Do you believe the facility has enough of the following protective equipment and supplies on hand for **staff who do not interact with detained individuals** to use?

9a. Nitrile or latex gloves

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	136	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

9b. Standard surgical masks

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	129	94.9%
No	7	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>



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9c. N95 respirators

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	134	98.5%
No	2	1.5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

9d. Hand sanitizer

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	115	84.6%
No	21	15.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

9e. Face shields or goggles

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	122	89.7%
No	14	10.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

9f. Disinfectant cleaning agents

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	125	91.9%
No	11	8.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

10. Describe any other protective equipment or supplies available at the facility to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses and a limited number were included in this report.*

11. Have all staff been trained in the proper fitting, use, and disposal of the above protective equipment?

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	129	94.9%
No	7	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

12. Are staff able to maintain proper social distancing between staff and detained individuals during:

12a. The apprehension of individuals?

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	40	29.4%
No	96	70.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>



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12b. The transportation of apprehended individuals?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	95	69.9%
No	41	30.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

12c. The processing of apprehended individuals?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	66	48.5%
No	70	51.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

12d. The removal or release of detained individuals?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	76	55.9%
No	60	44.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

13. Has the facility increased the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing **holding facilities** to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	101	74.3%
No	35	25.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

14. Has the facility increased the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing **vehicles** to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	127	93.4%
No	9	6.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

15. Overall, do you believe the facility is doing enough to maintain a clean and sanitized environment for all staff?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	134	98.5%
No	2	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

16. Has the facility received guidance from the following offices that addresses how to prevent, control, and mitigate an outbreak of COVID-19 in the facility?

16a. CBP headquarters

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	135	99.3%
No	1	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>



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16b. Border Patrol headquarters

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	136	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

16c. Border Patrol sector

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
Yes	135	99.3%
No	1	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

**QUESTIONS ABOUT DETAINED INDIVIDUALS AT THE FACILITY**

17. Total number of detained individuals:

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
At least one detainee at facility	15	11%
No detained individuals are at facility	121	89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 29 detained individuals at their facilities at the time of our survey. The total number of individuals who were reported detained in the Border Patrol facilities was 109.*

18. Total number of detained individuals who **have been tested** for COVID-19:

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
At least one detainee has been tested	8	5.9%
No detainee has been tested	128	94.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 2 detained individuals who had tested for COVID-19 at their facility at the time of our survey. The total number of detained individuals who were reported tested was 9.*

19. Total number of detained individuals who **have tested positive** for COVID-19:

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Percentage of Facilities</b>
At least one detainee has tested positive	1	0.7%
No detainee has tested positive	135	99.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*One facility responded that it had 1 detained individual who had tested positive for COVID-19.*



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20. Total number of detained individuals who **are in isolation** for suspected COVID-19 symptoms or exposure:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
No detainee is in isolation	136	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they did not have any detained individuals in isolation at their facility at the time of our survey.*

21. Total number of detained individuals who **are being monitored** for suspected COVID-19 symptoms or exposure:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
No detainee is being monitored	136	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they did not have any detained individuals being monitored at their facility at the time of our survey.*

22. Total number of **Title 42 expulsions**:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one detainee has been expelled	64	47.1%
No detainee has been expelled	72	52.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had expelled anywhere from 0 to 1,532 detained individuals under Title 42 expulsions. The total number of Title 42 expulsions reported was 11,454.*

23. Do you believe the facility has enough of the following resources to maintain proper hygiene and protection among detained individuals?

23a. Masks for detained individuals who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms or test positive for COVID-19:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	135	99.3%
No	1	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

23b. Liquid soap for detained individuals to use:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	126	92.6%
No	10	7.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>



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23c. Hand sanitizer for detained individuals to use:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	110	80.9%
No	26	19.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

24. Is the facility able to maintain social distancing among detained individuals (except among family members), from point of apprehension to release?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	98	72.1%
No	38	27.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

### QUESTIONS ABOUT FACILITY'S MEDICAL PRACTICES

25. Does the facility conduct risk assessments on detained individuals to determine potential COVID-19 exposure?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	122	89.7%
No	14	10.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

26. What is the protocol, if any, to determine whether a detained individual should be tested for COVID-19?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses we did not include in this report.*

26a. If the facility has testing protocols in place, how many detained individuals have met the testing protocols but have not been tested?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one detainee met testing protocols	1	0.7%
None of the detainees met testing protocols	135	99.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 2 detained individuals who met testing requirements but were not tested. The total number of detained individuals who were reported to have met testing requirements but were not tested was 2.*

27. Does the facility have the capacity to test detained individuals for COVID-19 on site?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	3	2.2%
No	133	97.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>



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27a. If yes, how many on-site COVID-19 testing kits does the facility have?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
The facility did have testing kits	0	0%
The facility did not have testing kits	136	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

*All facilities responded no to the question. There were 3 facilities that reported having the capacity to test detained individuals for COVID-19 (Question 27), but reported having 0 available testing kits.*

### OVERALL QUESTIONS

28. Do you believe the facility is prepared to handle the COVID-19 pandemic?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	110	80.9%
No	26	19.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

29. What are the major challenges, if any, facing the facility regarding the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses and a limited number were included in this report.*

30. What other measures other than the ones described above has the facility taken to prepare for, prevent, control, and mitigate an outbreak of COVID-19 in the facility?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses and a limited number were included in this report.*

31. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the facility's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses we did not include in this report.*



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## OFO Ports of Entry

### QUESTIONS ABOUT FACILITY STAFF

1. Total number of staff who **have been tested** for COVID-19:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one employee has been tested	113	36.8%
None tested	192	62.5%
No response	2	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 196 employees who had been tested at the time of our survey. The total number of staff who were reported tested was 1,233.*

2. Total number of facilities with staff who **have tested positive** for COVID-19:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one employee tested positive	24	7.8%
None tested positive	283	92.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 76 employees who had tested positive for COVID-19 at the time of our survey. The total number of staff who reported tested positive was 228.*

3. Total number of staff who **are in precautionary self-quarantine**:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one employee is in precautionary self-quarantine	59	19.2%
None are in precautionary self-quarantine	248	80.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 160 employees who were in precautionary self-quarantine at the time of our survey. The total number of staff who were reported in precautionary self-quarantine was 658.*

4. Total number of staff who **are unavailable to work** due to community mitigation measure (considered non-essential; absent for child care due to school closures, weather and safety leave, etc.):

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one employee is unavailable to work	48	15.6%
No employees are unavailable to work	259	84.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 169 employees who were unavailable to work at the time of our survey. The total number of staff who were reported unavailable to work was 647.*



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5. Have any staff used “weather and safety leave” to limit risk of exposure to COVID-19 before it was rescinded on April 6?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	210	68.4%
No	97	31.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

6. If “weather and safety leave” were still available, do you believe staff would use it?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	267	87%
No	40	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

7. What are the facility’s contingency staffing plans in the event there is not sufficient staff to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses and a limited number were included in this report.*

### QUESTIONS ABOUT STAFF RESOURCES AND GUIDANCE

8. Do you believe the facility has enough of the following protective equipment and supplies on hand for **staff who interact with detained individuals to** use if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in the facility?

8a. Nitrile or latex gloves

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	305	99.3%
No	2	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

8b. Standard surgical masks

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	291	94.8%
No	16	5.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

8c. N95 respirators

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	302	98.4%
No	5	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>



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### 8d. Hand sanitizer

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	280	91.2%
No	27	8.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 8e. Face shields or goggles

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	267	87%
No	40	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 8f. Disinfectant cleaning agents

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	270	87.9%
No	37	12.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

9. Do you believe the facility has enough of the following protective equipment and supplies on hand for **staff who do not interact with detained individuals** to use if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in the facility?

### 9a. Nitrile or latex gloves

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	304	99%
No	3	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 9b. Standard surgical masks

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	295	96.1%
No	12	3.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 9c. N95 respirators

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	303	98.7%
No	4	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 9d. Hand sanitizer

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	287	93.5%
No	20	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>



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## 9e. Face shields or goggles

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	276	89.9%
No	31	10.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 9f. Disinfectant cleaning agents

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	272	88.6%
No	31	10.1%
No response	4	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

10. Describe any other protective equipment or supplies available at the facility to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses and a limited number were included in this report.*

11. Have all staff been trained in the proper fitting, use, and disposal of the above protective equipment?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	303	98.7%
No	4	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

12. Are staff able to maintain proper social distancing between staff and detained individuals during the screening process?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	300	97.7%
No	7	2.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

13. Has the port of entry increased the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing **processing and holding areas** to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	279	90.9%
No	28	9.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

14. Overall, do you believe the facility is doing enough to maintain a clean and sanitized environment for all staff?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	289	94.1%
No	18	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>



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15. Has the port of entry received guidance from the following offices that addresses how to prevent, control and mitigate an outbreak of COVID-19 in the facility?

15a. CBP headquarters:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	301	98%
No	6	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

15b. OFO headquarters:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	307	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

15c. OFO regional office:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	307	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

### QUESTIONS ABOUT DETAINED INDIVIDUALS AT THE FACILITY

16. Total number of detained individuals:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one detainee at facility	8	2.6%
No detained individuals are at facility	299	97.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 8 detained individuals at their facilities at the time of our survey. The total number of individuals who were reported detained in OFO facilities was 23.*

17. Total number of detained individuals who **have been tested** for COVID-19:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one detainee has been tested	1	0.3%
No detainee has been tested	306	99.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 1 detained individuals who had been tested for COVID-19 at their facilities at the time of our survey.*



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18. Total number of detained individuals who **have tested positive** for COVID-19:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
No detainee has tested positive	307	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they did not have any detained individuals who tested positive at their facilities at the time of our survey.*

19. Total number of detained individuals who **are in isolation** for suspected COVID-19 symptoms or exposure:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
No detainee is in isolation	307	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they did not have any detained individuals in isolation at their facilities at the time of our survey.*

20. Total number of detained individuals who **are being monitored** for suspected COVID-19 symptoms or exposure:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
No detainee is being monitored	307	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they did not have any detained individuals being monitored at their facilities at the time of our survey.*

21. Total number of **Title 42 expulsions**:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one detainee has been expelled	22	7.2%
No detainee has been expelled	285	92.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had expelled anywhere from 0 to 583 detained individuals. The total number of Title 42 expulsions was 1,474.*

22. Do you believe the facility has enough of the following resources to maintain proper hygiene and protection among detained individuals?

22a. Masks for detained individuals who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms or test positive for COVID-19:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	302	98.4%
No	5	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>



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22b. Liquid soap for detained individuals to use:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	293	95.4%
No	14	4.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

22c. Hand sanitizer for detained individuals to use:

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	289	94.1%
No	18	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

23. Is the port of entry able to maintain social distancing among detained individuals (except among family members), from point of apprehension to release?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	291	94.8%
No	16	5.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

### QUESTIONS ABOUT FACILITY'S MEDICAL PRACTICES

24. Does the facility conduct risk assessments on detained individuals to determine potential COVID-19 exposure?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	277	90.2%
No	29	9.4%
No response	1	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

25. What is the protocol, if any, to determine whether a detained individual should be tested for COVID-19?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses we did not include in this report.*

25a. If the facility has testing protocols in place, how many detained individuals have met the testing protocols but have **not** been tested?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
At least one detainee met protocols	3	1%
None of the detainees met protocols	279	8.1%
No response	25	90.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Facilities responded they had anywhere from 0 to 1 detained individuals who met testing requirements but were not tested. The total number of detained individuals who met testing requirements but were not tested was 3.*



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26. Does the facility have the capacity to test detained individuals for COVID-19 on site?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	5	1.6%
No	298	97.1%
No response	4	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

26a. If yes, how many on-site COVID-19 testing kits does the facility have?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
The facility did have testing kits	209	68.1%
The facility did not have testing kits	98	31.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

*There were 5 facilities that reported having the capacity to test detained individuals for COVID-19 (Question 26), and reported having 0 available testing kits.*

### OVERALL QUESTIONS

27. Do you believe the facility is prepared to handle the COVID-19 pandemic?

	Number of Facilities	Percentage of Facilities
Yes	290	94.5%
No	15	4.9%
No response	2	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>

28. What are the major challenges, if any, facing the facility regarding the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses and a limited number were included in this report.*

29. What other measures other than the ones described above has the facility taken to prepare for, prevent, control, and mitigate an outbreak of COVID-19 in the facility?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses and a limited number were included in this report.*

30. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the facility's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Facilities provided a range of open-ended responses and a limited number were included in this report.*



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**Appendix D**  
**Special Reviews and Evaluations Major Contributors to This Report**

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