



**For Immediate Release:**

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Contact: Nick Kimball, Communications Director

651-600-0920

[Nicholas.Kimball@state.mn.us](mailto:Nicholas.Kimball@state.mn.us)

**Second Death of COVID-19 Positive Man Incarcerated at MCF-Faribault Reported by Minnesota Department of Corrections**

*Leroy Wallace Bergstrom, 71, had been hospitalized in critical condition since June 16 after testing positive for COVID-19 on June 10*

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** – Early this morning, a 71-year-old man incarcerated at the Minnesota Correctional Facility in Faribault, Minn., died at a local hospital. The man, identified as Leroy Wallace Bergstrom, age 71, had been hospitalized in critical condition since June 16. He tested positive for COVID-19 on June 10. An autopsy by the Ramsey County Medical Examiner to determine the cause of death is pending.

Mr. Bergstrom’s death is the second of a COVID-19 positive person incarcerated in Minnesota. The first occurred June 23. Both men were incarcerated at MCF-Faribault. One incarcerated person in Minnesota remains hospitalized.

“On behalf of the Department of Corrections and the State of Minnesota, I extend our deepest sympathy to Mr. Bergstrom’s family, loved ones, and friends,” Minnesota Department of Corrections Commissioner Paul Schnell said. “While the department’s longstanding focus has been on public safety and rehabilitation, the COVID-19 pandemic has added a focus on public health as well. Mr. Bergstrom’s death reminds us of the lethality of this virus, and the need for all of us to make sure we’re taking appropriate precautions to prevent spread and mitigate the impact of COVID-19.”

The first case of COVID-19 in the Faribault correctional facility was reported on June 3, 2020. The Department of Corrections has since been conducting ongoing comprehensive testing of all incarcerated men and staff at the facility. As of June 26, 4,892 tests of incarcerated individuals had been conducted at the Faribault facility, with 206 tests positive. Most who tested positive are experiencing no symptoms. On June 27, 1,718 men were incarcerated at Faribault.

The DOC has taken a number of steps across the system to manage the risk of COVID-19 entering correctional facilities and spreading, including: implementing “Stay with Unit” plans, enacting mandatory barrier mask policies, and installing handwashing stations in each facility. Each facility has also taken a number of steps specific to the unique environment of each facility. Those plans can be viewed here: <https://mn.gov/doc/about/covid-19-updates/facility-specific-covid-19-responses/>.

In addition, the DOC has implemented efforts to reduce facility population to aid virus containment strategies. As of June 25, the DOC had a population of 7,962 in the state’s prisons down from about 8,900 on March 1, 2020.

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