



BROOME COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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BROOME COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PRESS RELEASE **Broome County Sheriff's Office and Broome County Health Department Provide** **Update on Salmonella Cases at the Broome County Correctional Facility**

(TOWN OF DICKINSON, NY) On Friday, the Broome County Sheriff's Office and the Broome County Health Department provided the public with an update on the coordinated response to the outbreak of Salmonella that hit the Broome County Correctional Facility earlier this week.

Over the past several days, multiple state and local agencies, healthcare providers and medical staff coordinated a joint response to help protect the health and safety of over 300 incarcerated individuals reporting gastrointestinal illness in the facility.

Dozens of medical and healthcare workers from facility healthcare provider PrimeCare Medical, Inc., the Broome County Health Department and the Office of Emergency Services all helped provide treatment, monitoring and supportive care for the sick, while state-mandated contact tracing surveys were conducted with every individual currently incarcerated in the Facility.

In addition to nearly 4,000 bottles of water and hydration drink distributed for oral rehydration, intravenous rehydration and antibiotics were provided to individuals experiencing the most severe symptoms, as well as to those who were immunocompromised or at a higher health-risk.

All food currently being prepared and served at the facility has been separately sourced while officials are investigating the source of the Salmonella bacteria, and an ongoing deep cleaning is being performed throughout the facility.

“This week’s outbreak presented an unprecedented challenge for our collective team, the hundreds of people who live and work in the Broome County Correctional Facility, and frankly, our entire community,” said Sheriff Fred Akshar. “But I can confidently say the response, cooperation and dedication on display by our colleagues across multiple agencies, our medical staff and our community partners have all been world class. Our corrections and medical staff have worked around the clock to help treat those individuals who need it, and they’ve had boots-

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on-the-ground support from our community’s healthcare agencies, providers and medical workers to help support their efforts. Together we are making every effort and taking every precaution to ensure the health and safety of our incarcerated population and our Broome County community.”

Initial Infection and Response

On the afternoon of Monday, May 25, 2026, several incarcerated individuals began reporting symptoms of gastroenteritis, an intestinal illness caused primarily by viruses or bacteria. Initial symptoms led health officials to suspect norovirus, the leading cause of gastroenteritis, but multiple cultures were sent to UHS for laboratory testing to determine the exact cause. While awaiting test results, medical staff began actively treating those reporting illness by focusing on fluid replacement and dehydration prevention.

As standard policy, a sample of all meals served at the Correctional Facility is wrapped, refrigerated and stored for multiple days in case of possible contamination. Meals from the days prior and during the reports of illness were preserved, secured and sent to New York State Department of Health’s Wadsworth Center public health laboratory in Albany. Results from these tests are expected in the coming days.

“People were getting sick, and we immediately worked to identify the cause on multiple fronts, but we weren’t going to wait around for test results to take action,” said Sheriff Akshar. “Under the direction of our medical experts at the Broome County Health Department, our team began providing treatment and support to help the sick stay hydrated and identify any immunocompromised individuals who might be at a higher risk.”

On Tuesday, May 26, 2026, a full correctional facility kitchen inspection was conducted by the Broome County Department of Health in response to illnesses and complaints. The inspection found no major violations within the facilities, equipment or food preparation areas.

Visitation was also closed Tuesday afternoon as medical and correction staff responded to the rise in illnesses.

Test Results Show Salmonella

On Wednesday, test results came back from the lab confirming Salmonella, a foodborne bacterial infection with symptoms that present similar to norovirus and similar general treatments.

Salmonella are bacteria that cause an estimated 1.35 million infections in the United States each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A standard Salmonella infection typically lasts 4 to 7 days. The foodborne illness usually stems from contaminated foods, often including beef, poultry, seafood, milk or eggs, but unwashed fruits and vegetables

can also become contaminated.

While Salmonella infection typically requires ingestion of contaminated food or water, it can still be transmitted between individuals through physical contact or contaminated surfaces, according the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Treatment, Response and Additional Precautions

Shortly after the patient test results returned, additional medical staff deployed from PrimeCare Medical, Inc., the Broome County Health Department and the Office of Emergency Services to support on-site medical staff in actively treating, examining and assisting those experiencing symptoms within the Correctional Facility.

Over 4,000 bottles of water and hydration drink were distributed to help prevent dehydration via steady fluid and water intake. High-risk patients, including immunocompromised or older individuals, as well as those experiencing the most severe symptoms received intravenous rehydration and antibiotics as needed under the direction of the Department of Health and the facility medical provider. Hundreds of additional intravenous hydration packets were provided by United Health Services.

Since Monday, ten individuals have been transported to a local hospital for additional hydration treatment. Seven of those patients have returned to the Correctional Facility following their visit, with three individuals still receiving treatment in the hospital.

On Thursday, the Broome County Health Department oversaw state-mandated contract tracing interviews with every individual within the correctional facility. Over the past several days, medical staff went housing unit-to-housing unit conducting multiple medical assessments and monitoring every individual in the Correctional Facility.

“The effort here has been truly world class,” said Broome County Health Department Medical Director Dr. Lazarus Gehring. “It is a model for the way rapid public health response should be - multiple partners with a lot of empathy, a lot of knowledge and a lot of care.”

During this process, incarcerated individuals had access to their tablets and access to phone calls, but in-person visitation was paused until contact tracing, deep cleaning, sanitization could be performed.

Thursday evening, Servpro completed a deep cleaning of all kitchen, programming areas, hallways and common areas within the Correctional Facility. All laundry and linens for every housing unit and individual in the facility have been thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.

Friday morning, regular movement within the facility began to resume, and normal Programming and Visitation hours are set to fully reopen on Monday morning.

“As always, our entire team has made every effort to remain transparent with the people of this community throughout the process, and keep them informed simply with the facts,” said Sheriff Akshar. “Out of an abundance of caution for the health and safety of our incarcerated individuals and our healthcare workers treating them, we will continue taking a measured approach and every precaution as we combat this illness and work our way back to normal.”

“Food testing at New York State Department of Health Wadsworth Center is underway to assist us in determining a potential cause of the outbreak,” said Broome County Director of Public Health Olivia Catalano. “At this time, chicken salad served at the facility has tested positive for Salmonella, but further testing is needed to determine if it is the same type of Salmonella that is making people sick. Wadsworth will be comparing the type of Salmonella identified in the chicken salad to the type of Salmonella found in specimens collected from ill individuals. This is not a lab process that can be done quickly and it will take some time, especially as patient samples are currently being sent to Wadsworth. As additional information becomes available to more concretely determine the cause of the outbreak we will keep you updated. In the meantime, we are working closely with jail leadership and NYSDOH to help analyze the root cause of the outbreak, review guidance on food handling and cleaning, and support those who have become ill.”

“In the military, we talk about how soldiers win battles, but logistics wins wars,” said Dr. Theodore Demetriou, physician at Primecare Medical. “The cooperation between the Health Department the Correctional Facility, my company and all of the other county support systems has been incredible. The logistical, administrative and staff support communication has been phenomenal. The ability to get in front of this, to see everybody multiple times, to have the support with IV fluids and antibiotics that they were able to acquire at the large numbers we would need to treat these patients is essentially what made this much better than it could have been. The clinical outcomes are markedly better, frankly, than other outbreaks that have occurred, and all of that is due to the staff and the support that we’ve had. We’re starting to see everybody improve, we’re continuing to see everyone and shift things toward routine operations again.”

“Nearly 4,000 breakfasts, lunches and dinners have been served in the past 3 ½ years, well over 1 million individual meals,” Sheriff Akshar added. “This is the first case of this nature we’ve seen, but together, we’re responding quickly and thoroughly to address it. Our current trajectory is due entirely to the incredible teamwork, coordination and cooperation our team of community partners put forth this week. They rose to an enormous challenge and collectively met the moment with unwavering focus, compassion and dedication.”

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