

March 26, 2020

ARS § 38-352 WHISTLEBLOWING DISCLOSURE

VIOLATIONS AT ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Governor Doug Ducey  
1700 West Washington Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dr. Cara Christ  
Arizona Department of Health Services  
150 N 18<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Governor Ducey and Dr. Christ:

This letter is a whistleblowing disclosure pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-532 reporting what I believe to be matters of public concern that evidence mismanagement and/or abuse of authority. ADCRR and Director Shinn are mishandling the corona virus response and putting the health and lives of corrections officers, inmates and the public in unnecessary danger.

I am a Lieutenant with the Arizona Department of Corrections Rehabilitation and Reentry ("ADCRR") assigned to ASPC Lewis. I am deeply concerned with ADCRR's response to the corona virus issue. Understand that while the rest of the country is engaged in social distancing, ADCRR employees, as part of their job, must come into close personal contact with hundreds of inmates on a daily basis. On a daily basis several thousand correctional officers come into close personal contact with approximately 40,000 inmates and then return to their homes. Because of the nature of prisons (no social distancing whatsoever!), once the corona virus enters the prison system, it will spread quickly, infecting inmates and staff throughout the State. Any staff infected at work in the prison will bring the virus back to their families and communities.

Staff are absolutely aware of these facts and have been requesting ADCRR to issue personal protective equipment ("PPE"). ADCRR has N95 masks in storage but has declined to issue those masks to staff. And given ADCRR's track record of ignoring officer safety (you will remember the years long denial of broken cell door locks), staff have no confidence that ADCRR takes their health and safety seriously.

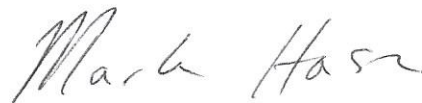
Accordingly, many staff have decided to take their personal safety into their own hands. They have purchased their own masks, are bringing them to work and have attempted to wear them. Supervisors were told that corrections officers are not allowed to wear their own PPE and will not be issued any by ADCRR. This direction seemed so shortsighted and dangerous that I could not believe that it came from Director Shinn. But it did.

A few days ago Director Shinn held a town hall meeting at Lewis Prison to discuss corona virus issues. After Director Shinn finished his presentation, I was the first to ask whether officers are permitted to wear their own PPE in the prison. I was shocked at the response. Director Shinn confirmed that he had given the order forbidding staff from bringing in wearing their own PPE. Director Shinn had given the order because he believed that masked officers would scare the inmates. This reasoning is ridiculous and Director Shinn's decision is putting the health of the staff, inmates and the general public at increased risk.

I am also addressing this letter to Dr. Christ, who, as the State official leading the corona virus response efforts, is in the best position to explain to the public and ADCRR why PPE for corrections officers is public health and safety issue.

Best regards,

**Lt. Mark Hasz**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark Hasz". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Lt. Mark Hasz".