

# Seoul courts close after prison officer catches coronavirus

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A 28-year-old resident of Anyang, south of Seoul, who works at Seoul Detention Center, was found to have been infected through chain transmissions traced to a nightclub in the central Seoul neighborhood of Itaewon.

The prison officer attended a wedding with a friend, who had visited a karaoke facility in the northern Seoul ward of Dobong. Infections have been reported at the karaoke facility where an acquaintance of an Itaewon clubber had visited.

Officials at the detention center immediately disinfected the venue and quarantined 23 other employees and 254 inmates, the justice ministry said in a press release.

To minimize potential infection risks, meetings with outside visitors, as well as lawyers, have been suspended, the ministry said, adding that six other officers who were in close contact with the infected officer have all tested negative.

The ministry plans to conduct virus screenings of 271 others, including Cho Ju-bin, who is suspected of leading a sexual abuse ring that exploited dozens of victims in mobile chat rooms.

Meanwhile, trials that were scheduled for Friday at the Seoul Central District Court and Seoul High Court, both in southern Seoul, have also been postponed.

The infected prison officer does not regularly visit the courts, but officials closed the venues to prevent chain transmissions. (Yonhap)