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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS IMPLEMENTS ADDITIONAL
SAFETY REFORMS WITH STAFF DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT

May 4, 2021– Trenton, New Jersey – The New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) has launched a new Early Warning System (EWS) detecting patterns and trends in staff conduct early on to deter the potential for harmful behaviors.

The centralized Early Warning System, in the early stages of implementation, provides critical oversight, tracking behavioral patterns that can potentially compromise the safety of people who are incarcerated and prison staff. It also includes a career development component with additional staff training and mentorship.

The system has three components, including an alert system, an alert system review, and employee discussion and mediation. The system creates an alert when three of the predetermined performance indicators occur over twelve months. Performance indicators include, but are not limited to, internal affairs complaints, civil actions filed against an employee, criminal investigations or complaints, use of force complaints, sexual abuse or harassment claims against staff by an inmate or employee, insubordination, and unexcused absences. Following an alert, Supervisors will engage staff in developing meaningful action plans that may include participation in wellness services, training, mentorship, and other career development resources.

"The multi-faceted Early Warning System will identify and remediate problematic conduct that poses a risk to the incarcerated people in our care, employees, volunteers, and the greater public, while reducing future incidents or complaints," said Commissioner Marcus O. Hicks, Esq. "The career development aspect of this program intends to build a healthier, stronger workforce with the potential for employees to flourish in their career with the NJDOC."

"We are hopeful this initiative will be a valuable career development tool and want to thank those involved with creating the system that incorporates a mental health component," said William Sullivan, President PBA 105. "In my 15 years of service, this administration is the first to consider the mental health needs of staff."

The Early Warning System is the latest safety adaptation under the Hicks administration, following the first-ever state correctional body-worn camera pilot program.

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