



New Jersey Department of Corrections

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NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS WELCOMES LARGEST CLASS OF ACADEMY GRADUATES SINCE 2019

TRENTON, NJ – On Tuesday, February 6, the [New Jersey Department of Corrections](https://www.njdoc.gov/) (NJDOC) welcomed Class 255 – 86 graduates of the Department’s Correctional Staff Training Academy, the largest graduating class since 2019 – into the ranks of correctional police officers after 19 weeks of rigorous training. The graduation ceremonies for Class 255 were held at Patriots Theater at the War Memorial in Trenton.

“We are excited to welcome 86 new correctional police officers,” **said Governor Murphy**. “Each Class 255 graduate has proven that they possess the work ethic, determination, and dedication required to join the ranks of our honored correctional officers. Congratulations and I wish you luck as you go forth and serve your state in the crucial work of protecting public safety and the safety and dignity of incarcerated people here in New Jersey.”

The new officers join the state’s largest law enforcement agency, where more than 4,390 custody staff members supervise the care of over 13,600 incarcerated persons in nine facilities.

“We welcome the dedicated men and women of Class 255 to the New Jersey Department of Corrections and the larger corrections community. We are proud of your accomplishments during your Academy training and are eager to see you follow the many career paths and opportunities NJDOC can offer you,” **said Commissioner Victoria L. Kuhn, Esq.**

Class 255 completed 17 weeks of intensive study before two weeks of immersive, on-the-job training at NJDOC facilities. Coursework included instruction in firearms training, defensive tactics, conflict resolution and de-escalation, criminal law, gender- and trauma-informed policing, emergency medical care, and more than 50 physical training sessions.

Correctional police officers serve in various roles and can pursue a variety of unique career paths within the Department, including positions inside the nine NJDOC facilities, the Special Operations Group, Custody Recruitment, Training Academy, Special Investigations Division, Administration and more.

“Your career in public safety will be challenging, but it will also bring with it the unique rewards of working in corrections and the knowledge that your work is contributing to safer communities and meaningful rehabilitation,” **Commissioner Kuhn** said.

Further recognizing exemplary efforts, several graduates of Class 255 and an instructor were named award recipients at this year’s graduation ceremony:

Harry Ellifritz Leadership Award

- Senior Correctional Police Officer Zachary Yaede

Stone/Ratajczak Professionalism Award

- Timothy McCarthy III

Police Training Commissioner Merit Award

- Amir Evans
- Patrick Riquelme

Wayne Manstream Physical Fitness Award

- Devon Wilson

Commissioner's Physical Fitness Award for Most Improved

- Anthony Perez

Fred Baker Memorial Academic Award

- Patrick Riquelme

Michael R. Pofahl Memorial Firearms Award

- Michael Del Monte

Class 255 by the Numbers:

- 86 total graduates, including 74 men and 12 women.
- 20 graduates have earned various academic degrees – 12 graduates with associate degrees, 7 with bachelor's degrees and one with a doctoral degree.
- Graduates hail from 17 New Jersey counties, as well as counties in Pennsylvania and New York:

New Jersey

- Atlantic (3)
- Bergen (5)
- Burlington (11)
- Camden (4)
- Cumberland (5)
- Essex (13)
- Gloucester (4)
- Hudson (6)
- Mercer (6)
- Middlesex (7)
- Monmouth (2)
- Morris (1)
- Ocean (3)
- Passaic (4)
- Somerset (1)
- Union (7)
- Warren (1)

Pennsylvania

- Luzerne (1)
- Philadelphia (1)

New York

- Queens (1)

- 8 graduates have military service backgrounds.
 - United States Army (4)
 - United States Marine Corps (4)
- 37 graduates come from families with a tradition of law enforcement service.

This past November, a new four-year agreement for correctional police officers was finalized providing an across-the-board salary increase of 3.5 percent each year, with the possibility of additional annual salary adjustments. In addition to annual salary increases, the new agreement also implemented a revised salary schedule that will allow for increased take-home pay. Salaries for starting correctional police officers now begin at \$49,680 annually, and senior correctional police officers' salaries under the new contract will range from \$68,000 to up to \$123,000 annually.

Are you or someone you know looking to join New Jersey's largest law enforcement agency? NJDOC is actively recruiting correctional officers – searching for dedicated, highly-motivated, purpose-driven individuals to add to its growing team. Class 256 begins training in March 2024, and recruitment for Class 257 is ongoing. For those interested in learning more about a career at NJDOC, visit www.NJDOC.gov today for detailed information and to start the application process online.

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About New Jersey Department of Corrections

The mission of the New Jersey Department of Corrections is to advance public safety and promote successful reintegration in a dignified, safe, secure, rehabilitative, and gender-informed environment, supported by a professional, trained, and diverse workforce, enhanced by community engagement.