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**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS TO ESTABLISH HOUSING
UNITS FOR VETERANS IN PRISONS**

Project Complements Department's Veteran Reentry Program

TRENTON, N.J. – Nov. 12, 2019 – The New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) today announced an award of \$500,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice's FY 2019 *Innovative Reentry Initiatives: Building System Capacity and Testing Strategies to Reduce Recidivism* grant to establish the state's first all-veterans housing unit in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NJDMAVA). The all-veterans housing unit will be located at East Jersey State Prison.

The new housing unit will provide a comprehensive approach to distribute services and resources unique to the veteran population, giving veterans tools to focus on rehabilitation and reentry in one centralized location.

The *Remembering Their Service: A Reinvestment in the Incarcerated Veteran* grant program focuses on determining veteran status, counseling, and developing comprehensive, evidence-based services that address the specialized needs of incarcerated veterans. Additionally, NJDMAVA Veteran Service Officers will conduct regular visits to the veteran's wing at East Jersey State Prison, where the program is being piloted, to evaluate veterans nearing release for admission into the Veterans Haven transitional housing program.

The grant also includes a staff training component on post-traumatic stress disorder and other issues impacting this community.

"We are committed to providing opportunities for holistic rehabilitation," said NJDOC Acting Commissioner Marcus O. Hicks, Esq. "This program will allow the Department to provide the

critical resources needed to assist the approximately 370 veterans in NJDOC facilities in their successful rehabilitation and reentry. The major difference here is that we can play a role in connecting veterans to those resources now, when they need it most, as opposed to after being released.”

“We look forward to providing the same level of support to incarcerated vets as we do for the more than 325,000 veterans across New Jersey,” said Brigadier General Jemal J. Beale, Commissioner of NJDMAVA and The Adjutant General of New Jersey. “Every veteran and their family should know the benefits and entitlements that are available to them.”

The grant complements the Incarcerated Veterans Initiative, an existing partnership between the NJDOC and Education and Health Centers of America (EHCA). EHCA provides caseworker support and resources to which incarcerated veterans are entitled, including VA benefits, medical, mental health services, and reintegration assistance.

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