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## **Corrected: Inmate Found Guilty of Assault in a Detention Facility**

An inmate at the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC) in Smyrna was found guilty of Assault in a Detention Facility on July 20, 2017. He received the minimum mandatory two-year sentence. Additionally, his good time credit was revoked.

On January 5, 2017, Benjamin Panella, serving a 25-year sentence for First Degree Robbery, Possession of a Deadly Weapon During the Commission of a Felony, and Second Degree Murder, assaulted a Correctional Officer by throwing a cup of hot liquid on him. In addition to the hot liquid, responding officers noticed Panella had a two-foot long handmade weapon with two razor blades attached. After displaying his weapon out of the food flap, officers deployed a burst of OC spray and inmate Panella was subsequently handcuffed and removed from his cell without incident.

“Correctional Officers have a dangerous job often overlooked by the public,” said Commissioner Perry Phelps. “I’m proud of the men and women who report to work every day and execute their duties responsibly and professionally without seeking recognition. Their bravery is what allows us to run safe and secure facilities for staff, visitors, and inmates.”

As a result of this incident, inmate Panella received a multitude of institutional charges.

Please be advised, this is a corrected version of the initial release.

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