



NEWS RELEASE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Commissioner Monroe B. Hudson, Jr.

Presented by Jason P. Miller, Chief of Communications and Community Relations

245 McKee Road | Dover, DE 19904 | Office: 302.857.5232 | jason.miller@delaware.gov

Department of Correction marks national accreditation milestone in 2022

Dover, DE – As 2022 draws to a close the Delaware Department of Correction marks the success of its decade-long effort to earn national accreditation across DOC facilities from the American Correctional Association (ACA). This past summer at the ACA Summer Conference in New Orleans the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections voted unanimously to grant ACA accreditation to James T. Vaughn Correctional Center (JTVCC) and grant ACA reaccreditation to Delaware Probation and Parole. With JTVCC’s initial accreditation, **for the first time in its history all Delaware Department of Correction Level 5 prison facilities have secured national accreditation.**

“Ten years ago, the Delaware Department of Correction set an ambitious goal to achieve national accreditation by the American Correctional Association and this year, despite the ongoing headwinds from the COVID pandemic and national employment challenges, we reached a historic milestone,” **Department of Correction Commissioner Monroe B. Hudson Jr. said.** “Earning and maintaining ACA accreditation represents the gold standard of correctional practices and it requires adoption of industry-leading policies and practices, a willingness to subject ourselves to rigorous outside scrutiny, a commitment to maintaining transparency at all levels, and a track record of continuous improvement to meet our dual mission of public safety and offender rehabilitation. I offer my sincere thanks to all of our bureau leaders, wardens, regional managers, our entire DOC staff, healthcare providers, and educational and treatment partners for working together to earn this national recognition. ACA accreditation helps ensure that we are putting proven world class practices to work here in Delaware and it puts us on a solid footing to achieve even more success in the decade to come.”

To secure ACA accreditation, correctional facilities first complete months to years of best practice analysis and internal policy development, review and implementation led by facility leadership and designated accreditation teams. The accreditation process features a two- to three-day on-site audit at each facility by a team of independent auditors from ACA who conduct a comprehensive inspection, review files, and interview staff and inmates or probationers about facility conditions and operations. Each facility’s ACA Audit Committee recommends re-accreditation to the ACA Commission on Accreditation for Corrections which is solely responsible for rendering accreditation

decisions. Representatives from the Delaware Department of Correction and each facility's ACA Audit Committee then appear before the full Commission for the final accreditation vote. Accredited facilities are required to earn re-accreditation every three years to maintain that designation and the reaccreditation process features the same comprehensive on-site audit and vote by the full ACA Commission on Accreditation for Corrections.

During the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center audit in November 2021 the facility was found to be compliant with 100% of ACA's mandatory standards and compliant with 99.5% of applicable non-mandatory standards. **This is the highest score achieved by a Level 5 prison facility in Delaware to date.** During its on-site audit in June 2022 Delaware Probation and Parole was found to be compliant with 100% of ACA's mandatory standards and 100% of applicable non-mandatory standards. **Probation and Parole has been found by the ACA to be 100% compliant with all mandatory standards and applicable non-mandatory standards since its initial accreditation in 2016.** In August 2022 during its hearing and final vote on JTVCC accreditation and Probation and Parole re-accreditation ACA Commission on Accreditation for Corrections members praised JTVCC and Probation and Parole for maintaining high standards during the accreditation period and for all of their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first Delaware Level 5 prison facility secured ACA accreditation in 2016 and by 2019 all Level 5 prison facilities except James T. Vaughn Correctional Center had achieved accreditation. JTVCC, the state's largest correctional facility, succeeded in achieving ACA accreditation just five years after an inmate uprising that resulted in the death of a Correctional Officer and serious injury to other Officers and professional staff and after working diligently to prepare for a rigorous on-site audit during the significant disruptions of the global COVID pandemic.

The awarding of ACA accreditation for JTVCC and reaccreditation to Delaware Probation and Parole followed [the awarding of ACA reaccreditation for seven additional DOC facilities earlier this year, in February 2022.](#)

ACA is a private, non-profit, trade association and accrediting body for the corrections industry. The organization was founded in 1870 and is one of the preeminent correctional organizations in the United States. ACA accredits prisons, jails, community residential centers (halfway houses), probation departments, correctional treatment communities, and various other corrections facilities in the U.S. and internationally, using their independently published standards manuals. The standards created and refined by the American Correctional Association represent fundamental correctional practices that ensure staff and inmate safety and security; enhance staff morale; improve record maintenance and data management capabilities; assist in protecting the agency against litigation; and improve the function of the facility or agency at all levels.

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