



New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

“Keeping New York Safe”

Extreme Violence Continues at Elmira Correctional Facility

Four Officers Injured, Multiple Inmate Fights Occur

For Immediate Release

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Elmira, NY – Two weeks after union officials reported seven inmate fights at the end of July, including several involving make-shift weapons, five inmate fights occurred during the first two weeks of August and four officers were injured after an inmate, who faked a suicide attempt in his cell, attacked the officers who entered his cell to help him at the maximum security prison.

- On Saturday, August 5, during evening recreation in the fieldhouse, staff observed two inmates exchanging punches with another inmate. Several orders were given to cease fighting and one inmate complied. Two inmates continued to fight. Staff administered OC spray, which was effective. Once the inmates were under control, they were escorted from the fieldhouse.
- On Monday, August 7, four officers were injured after an inmate faked attempting suicide inside his cell and attacked staff when they entered the cell to help him. Initially, an officer observed the inmate with a bed sheet tied around his neck with the other end tied to the cell door. The officer called for a response and entered the cell. When the officer entered the cell, the inmate slid the bed sheet off his neck and punched the officer twice in the face. The officer grabbed the inmate in a body hold and forced him to the floor. On the floor and still combative, the inmate kicked the officer in the head. He kicked two officers in the leg and punched a third officer in the face when they responded to assist. The officers were able to force the inmate’s arms behind his back and apply handcuffs. Once in handcuffs, the inmate was brought to medical for evaluation. During the medical evaluation, the inmate continued to be uncooperative and spit on staff. The four injured officers were transported to Corning Guthrie Medical Center for treatment of elbow, arm, hand and a laceration under the eye. The officers all returned to duty.

- On Wednesday, August 9, staff recovered two weapons in two separate incidents at the facility. A handmade knife, with a cardboard handle and metal blade was recovered after staff conducted a pat frisk of an inmate as he was entering the mess hall for lunch. The pat frisk was conducted when the inmate was unable to successfully pass through a metal detector. The second weapon was found inside an inmate's mouth after he was involved in an inmate fight and cut another inmate twice in the face with a ceramic blade. Once staff broke up the fight, staff recovered several broken pieces of the blade from the inmate's mouth.
- On Friday, August 11, two separate inmate on inmate fights occurred, resulting in two inmates needing sutures to close wounds from being cut. A two man fight began in the mess hall and officers observed one inmate making stabbing motions. Staff broke the fight up quickly and observed one inmate placing the weapon, a plastic shank on the windowsill. The injured inmate sustained two lacerations to his cheek. The second inmate fight occurred in the fieldhouse. Officers observed eight inmates attacking a single inmate. The eight inmates were punching and kicking the inmate. Several orders were given to stop fighting and all involved eventually stopped. The inmates were pat frisked and a ceramic blade was recovered from one inmate. The inmate who was attacked, received 18 sutures to close a wound to his face.
- The last fight occurred on Sunday, August 13. During the afternoon meal run, three inmates began exchanging punches with another inmate in the laundry corridor. Orders were given by staff to cease fighting and the inmates complied. After the inmates were separated, one inmate had a laceration to his face consistent with a cutting weapon. Staff recovered a ceramic blade from the floor they believe was used in the cutting.

“In all, there were five inmate on inmate fights, four officers injured during an inmate attack, five weapons seized and five inmates cut in the face during inmate fights in a nine day period in August. This follows the chaos and violence that occurred at the end of July. It is beyond comprehension that the State Legislators, who supported HALT, can sit idly by and ignore the violence that is occurring at Elmira and not lift a finger to address it. Our members are under siege daily and it is a testament to their professionalism that they are able to move forward in this dangerous environment. Elmira is literally a war zone, with officers and civilian staff, in the middle. They deserve far better than the support they currently receive from our elected officials. At this point, what will it take for them to take notice, for an officer or civilian employee to get killed at the hands of an inmate? Their silence is an absolute disgrace.” - Stated Kenny Gold, NYSCOPBA Western Region Vice President.