



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

"Keeping New York Safe"

Large Inmate Fight Occurs at Coxsackie Correctional Facility

Melee Occurs in Recreation Yard, Dozen Officers Injured Responding to the Incident

For Immediate Release

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Coxsackie, NY – A dozen officers sustained injuries attempting to stop a large inmate fight that lasted several minutes in the recreation yard of the maximum security correctional facility.

The fight occurred on Wednesday, March 13 in the afternoon. An officer assigned to the yard observed a dozen inmates walk across the yard and approach two inmates. The inmates immediately began fighting. All orders to stop fighting were ignored. The officer activated a response for additional staff and introduced chemical agents into the area of the yard where the fighting was occurring. The chemical agents had limited effect. Four of the dozen inmates that initially approached the two inmates stopped fighting and went to the ground. The remaining inmates continued fighting as several broke off into two separate fights. As additional staff responded to the fight, several officers administered OC spray to the inmates with varying degrees of effectiveness. As the inmates continued to fight, officers applied body holds to several inmates and forced them to the ground. Once on the ground, the inmates complied.

As the remaining inmates continued to fight, one inmate was forced to the recreation wall by staff. While the officers had the inmate on the wall, one of the initial dozen inmates came up from behind the officers and struck one officer in the back and then attacked the inmate on the wall, making several slashing motions to his head and face. Staff grabbed the inmate in a body hold and forced him to the ground where he continued to be combative and fight with officers. Several other officers responded and assisted in containing the inmates legs and arms until handcuffs were applied. Once in handcuffs, the inmate became compliant.

Once order was restored, all of the inmates were removed from the yard and brought to the infirmary for evaluation. The inmate who was slashed sustained several small lacerations to his face and forehead. The remaining inmates sustained minor injuries.

After treatment, several inmates who were identified as the main combatants and aggressors, were placed in Special Housing Units. The remaining inmates were returned to their cells. They face internal disciplinary charges in the incident.

A dozen officers who responded to the melee sustained a variety of injuries that included abrasions, elbow gash, knee, elbow, shoulder, back, knee, hand wrist and hip pain and swelling. The officers were treated by medical staff at the facility and remained on duty.

A search of the yard recovered a sharpened piece of Plexiglass that had string wrapped around one end as a make-shift handle. No other weapons were recovered.

“This is not the first large fight involving inmates at Coxsackie that resulted in multiple officers getting injured attempting to contain the fight. Back in October, multiple inmates jumped one inmate in the yard resulting in several officers getting injured stopping the fight. Now five months later, we have a dozen officers injured from breaking up a 14 inmate fight that took several minutes to stop. Thankfully, the injuries the officers sustained were not serious and it is a credit to those officers that they remained on duty despite those injuries. The unfortunate reality is, with a completely watered down disciplinary system, there is no deterrent to stop this from happening over and over again. And when it occurs, it puts staff in the line of fire when they attempt to stop it and they are the ones who suffer when they get injured.” - said, Joe Horacek, NYSCOPBA Mid-Hudson Region Vice President.