



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

“Keeping New York Safe”

Assaults, Drugs, Weapons at Gouverneur Correctional Facility

HAZMAT Team Called into Facility When Officer is Overcome by Unknown Substance

For Immediate Release

May 23, 2024

Gouverneur, NY – An officer needed to be treated at a local hospital after experiencing severe nausea, dizziness and disorientation after he came into contact with unknown drugs hidden in an inmates living cube inside of one of the facility dorms. That incident was one of three in which drugs were recovered at the facility, weapons recovered, an inmate assault on staff and an inmate burned with hot oil by another inmate in recent months.

- On Tuesday, March 19, officers conducting a search of inmates inside of a facility dorm recovered a bundle of marijuana from an inmate. A K9 initially indicated on the inmate and the inmate turned over the marijuana he had hidden in his mouth. The inmate was placed in a Special Housing Unit after the incident.
- On Saturday, April 27, a visitor was arrested after she turned over a balloon she had hidden in her shirt after a K9 alerted to her in the administration building. The balloon contained 20 grams of marijuana. The visitor, from Newburgh, was transported to the New York State Police Barracks and charged with Promoting Prison Contraband 2nd.
- On Tuesday, April 30, an officer recovered an ice pick type weapon from an inmate when the officer frisked the inmate for contraband inside the bathroom. The inmate was placed in a Special Housing Unit pending disciplinary charges.
- On Sunday, May 5, an officer was assaulted by an inmate inside of one of the dorms. Initially, the officer observed the inmate intoxicated and screaming. The officer approached the inmate, who grabbed the officer by the shirt and punched him in the face. The officer backed away from the inmate, who continued to advance. He administered OC spray, which had no effect. The officer grabbed the inmate in a body hold and forced the inmate to the floor. Additional officers arrived at the dorm and

assisted in applying handcuffs to the inmate. Once in handcuffs, all forced ceased. The officer was treated by medical staff at the facility for back, shoulder and facial pain and remained on duty.

- On Monday, May 6, a K9 conducting searches for contraband inside one of the dorms alerted to one inmate's cube. Staff searched the cube and located a sharpened ceramic tile hidden inside a jar of moisturizer. The inmate was placed in a Special Housing Unit pending disciplinary charges.
- On Monday, May 6, an officer entered the bathroom inside a dorm and observed an inmate laying on the bathroom floor not responding. The inmate had a severe burn on the back of his neck. He was taken to the infirmary where it was determined that another inmate threw hot oil on the back of the inmate's neck.
- On Wednesday, May 8, staff conducting cube frisks in a facility dorm recovered a sharpened toothbrush hidden in an inmate's locker. The inmate was placed in a Special Housing Unit pending disciplinary charges.
- On Friday, May 10, an officer had to be transported by ambulance to Gouverneur Hospital after he became nauseous, dizzy and disorientated after he came into contact with a piece of paper that had been saturated by an unknown liquid drug. The paper and bundle of marijuana, was recovered by the officer during a frisk of the inmate's cube. The officer initially experienced symptoms when he returned to the officer's station. The dorm was evacuated by staff and a State Police HAZMAT Team was called in to evaluate and ventilate the dorm.
- On Sunday, May 12, staff recovered a piece of sharpened metal from a frisk of an inmate's cube. The inmate was placed in a Special Housing Unit pending disciplinary charges.

"It is quite clear that contraband, including drugs and weapons, are still an issue in our prisons. Despite the best efforts of staff and new technology, drugs are still getting into the hands of inmates and handmade weapons will always find their way into their hands. Thankfully in the one instance, the officer who sustained the exposure to the unknown drug, was treated and recovered at the hospital. These are the daily dangers our members face in every prison. Even though the inmates who had drugs and weapons in their possession were placed in Special Housing Units, the disciplinary system is so watered down now as a result of HALT there will be little impact on them not to do it again. This has been our reality since April of 2022 when HALT went into effect. " – stated Bryan Hluska , Central Region Vice President.