



## ***Inmate Bites Tip of Officer's Finger Off at Collins Correctional Facility***

*Inmate Attack is One of Three That Injured Nine Officers Last Week*

**For Immediate Release**

***June 18, 2024***

**Collins, NY** – An officer had part of his left ring finger bitten off by an inmate who violently fought with staff, injuring seven officers in the process at the medium security correctional facility last week.

That assault was one of three that occurred at the facility on Wednesday, June 12, injuring a total of nine officers.

The first attack occurred when officers were conducting a cell search for contraband. The inmate was ordered out of his cell so staff could conduct the search. Once the search was completed, the inmate was ordered back into his cell but refused. When staff approached him, he pulled away initially. Three officers grabbed him in a body hold and forced him to the floor. On the ground and extremely combative, the inmate punched one officer in the face and bit a second officer at the tip of his left ring finger, severing his finger. During the struggle, the inmate kicked another officer in the groin. Additional staff arrived at the attack and struggled to get the inmate under control. During the struggle, an officer noticed the inmate had a metal object in his hand and forced it out of his hand. Officers were able to force the inmate's arms behind his back and apply handcuffs. Once in handcuffs were applied, he was brought to his feet and escorted to a holding cell for evaluation.

All injured officers were initially treated by medical staff at the facility. The officer with the finger bite was transported to Erie County Medical Center for further treatment. The officer who was kicked in the groin was transported to a local urgent care. Both did not return to duty.

The remaining five injured officers were treated for shoulder, elbow, wrist and knee injuries. They remained on duty.

The inmate, 28, is serving a three year sentence after being convicted in Queens County for Assault 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2023.

The metal object were nail clippers.

A female officer sustained back, chest and arm injuries in the second assault in the facility. Initially, the officer could not locate an inmate in one of the dorms. When the inmate returned to the dorm, the officer ordered the inmate to submit to a pat frisk. During the frisk, the officer noticed the inmate had a pair of gym shorts underneath his pants and had an object in one of the pockets. When the officer pulled the item out, the inmate pushed off the wall and elbowed the officer in the chest. He pushed the officer away, ripping her uniform shirt and picked up the object, which was the tip of a latex glove with pills inside, from the floor and ran towards the T.V. room. The officer caught up to the inmate who pushed her and slammed a metal door on her right arm before fleeing toward the kitchen. The officer caught the inmate again near the kitchen door and he proceeded to slam the kitchen door into her chest before running back into the dorm near the officer's station. Additional staff arrived in the dorm and subdued the inmate without further incident. He was placed in handcuffs and removed from the dorm.

The officer was treated in the infirmary for back, chest and arm injuries and remained on duty.

The inmate, who was placed in a Special Housing Unit following the assault, is serving his third stint in prison. Currently, he is serving a seven year sentence after being convicted in Erie County in 2023 for Criminal Possession of a Weapon 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The third assault occurred as an officer was escorting an inmate from a transport van into the facility. During the escort up a stairwell, the inmate pushed backward and head butted the officer. The officer immediately grabbed the inmate in a body hold a both fell to the stairwell floor. The inmate continued to remain combative, kicking at the officer. The officer administered OC spray, which had the desired effect. Once compliant, the inmate was placed in handcuffs and escorted out of the stairwell.

The injured officer sustained hand and forearm injuries and was treated at the facility. He remained on duty.

The inmate, 27, is serving a nine year sentence after being convicted in Chemung County for Burglary 1<sup>st</sup> in 2022.

“As we reach the halfway point of the year, assaults continue to skyrocket. In the first six months of the 2024, we have surpassed 1000 assaults on staff and are pace to have another thirty percent increase from last year. It is unacceptable and completely unsustainable at this point and all of this is a result of our State Legislature's ridiculous policies that support inmates rather than the hard men and women who work in our prisons. While the legislators began their cushy summer vacations, our membership are forced into mandatory overtime with inadequate staffing levels and no relief in sight. It is no wonder why an officer has part of his finger bitten off by a vicious inmate at Collins, there are no ramifications to his actions or any other inmate who attacks staff and that is reprehensible. We keep asking what will it take to get certain legislators attention? This incident caused permanent disfigurement, next time one of our members could lose their life! Sadly, anyone wearing blue pants know someone dying won't change the horrendous policies enacted by a convict coddling legislature!” stated Kenny Gold, Western Region Vice President.

**(Photo Attached of Officer's Finger – Warning Graphic)**

