



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

“Keeping New York Safe”

Large Inmate Fight at Wende Correctional Facility

Chemical Agents Needed to Stop a Fight Involving Three Dozen Inmates

April 30, 2021

Alden, NY – A two man inmate fight in the recreation yard escalated into a large fight among three dozen inmates when one of the inmates began stabbing another with a make-shift weapon at the maximum security prison.

On Saturday, March 27, an officer assigned to the recreation yard witnessed two inmates fighting. He ordered the inmates to stop but they refused. He witnessed one of the inmates stabbing the other with an unknown weapon. As the stabbing occurred, the remaining inmates in the yard began to fight. Several small fights occurred amongst inmates. A response was called and additional staff arrived in the yard.

On multiple occasions officers administered OC spray to stop the inmates from fighting but it had no effect and the fights continued. An officer in the yard tower deployed one tear gas canister in the direction of the yard. When the tear gas was deployed, all inmates stopped fighting and became compliant.

The inmates were all removed from the yard and brought to the infirmary where they were treated for a variety of small lacerations and abrasions.

Officers recovered a sharpened make-shift weapon they believed was used in the stabbing. They searched the inmate involved in the initial fight and recovered a second

sharpened shank inside his pants. A search of the entire yard yielded three additional plastic shanks.

The inmate who was stabbed sustained a puncture wound to his side torso and laceration to his ear. He was brought along with two other inmates to a local hospital for treatment.

Seven inmates were placed in Special Housing Units pending disciplinary proceedings. The remaining inmates were locked in their cells after being treated in the infirmary.

Four officers sustained minor injuries during the incident. They were treated by medical staff at the facility and remained on duty.

“Inmate on inmate assaults continue to escalate inside of our prisons and they put our members at risk for injuries trying to contain them. Over 1200 inmate on inmate assaults occurred in 2020 and there is no reason to expect that number to go down with disciplinary measures reduced to essentially a slap on the wrist. Since 2012, inmate on inmate assaults have increased by 96 percent, a staggering number considering during that same time frame the inmate population has reduced by over 20,000. Until DOCCS and the state legislature take a hard look at why the violence is occurring this will continue to put officers in harm’s way.” – said Mark Deburgomaster, Western Region Vice President.