



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

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***“Keeping New York Safe”***

***Two Officers Hospitalized After Possible Biological Exposure at  
Groveland Correctional Facility***

***Livingston County HAZMAT Team Responds to Prison***

**For Immediate Release**  
***May 28, 2021***

**Sonyea, NY** – Two officers were hospitalized overnight on Monday after they developed numbness, palpitations and difficulty breathing at the medium security prison.

The officers had just delivered mail in one of the inmate dorms Monday evening and both began to drink a cup of coffee in a common room area of the dorm. While drinking their coffee, both officers began to develop similar symptoms. The officers were brought immediately to the facility infirmary. A nurse at the infirmary determined that the officers' symptoms might be a result of a biological exposure.

Both officers were immediately transported to Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester for overnight observation. After their symptoms subsided, they were released from the hospital on Tuesday morning.

New York State Police and the Livingston County Emergency Services Team responded to the prison. The dorm was evacuated and ventilated.

No other staff or inmate developed any symptoms.

The incident is still under investigation by the state police and Livingston County Hazmat Team. It has not been determined what the officers were exposed to at this time.

The same day, but unrelated to the exposure incident, a sergeant and two officers sustained injuries when an inmate, who was believed to be under the influence of an intoxicant, attacked them inside a transport van that was bringing him to the infirmary for evaluation.

Initially, an officer noticed the inmate staggering around the dorm. The officer attempted to question him and he observed the inmate had slurred speech. The officer called for additional

staff and the inmate was handcuffed to be transported to the infirmary. In handcuffs, the inmate attempted to kick at staff. The officers grabbed him in a body hold and got him inside the transport van. Once in the van, the inmate became combative again. He kicked one officer in the leg and kicked and broke the rear window of the van. A sergeant restrained the inmate's legs so he couldn't continue to kick until they were able to get him to the infirmary.

Once inside the infirmary, the inmate began to spit at staff. The sergeant and two officers grabbed the inmate in a body hold and forced him to the ground. The inmate remained combative on the ground for several minutes but eventually became compliant.

Medical staff determined that the inmate was under the influence of an unknown intoxicant.

The inmate faces disciplinary charges in the incident.

The two officers were transported to local hospitals for injuries sustained in the incident. One officer had an abrasion to his calf, swollen elbow, and limited range of motion in his shoulder. The second officer sustained abrasions to his hands and knees and limited range of motion to his wrist and hand. Both officers were treated and released.

The sergeant sustained abrasions to his hand and both knees. He was treated by medical staff at the facility and remained on duty.

"I am extremely alarmed to what occurred to the two officers on Monday evening. While it is unclear at this time what they were exposed to, we certainly have to consider that they were targeted by someone inside the dorm and possibly their coffee was tampered with. Both had similar symptoms immediately after drinking their coffee and no one else in the dorm developed any symptoms. If the investigation determines they were intentionally targeted, I sincerely hope that the Livingston County District Attorney's Office prosecutes whoever is responsible." – said Mark Deburgomaster, Western Region Vice President.