



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

# ***"Keeping New York Safe"***

### ***Multiple Officers Injured at Groveland Correctional Facility***

#### ***Nine Officers Transported to Local Hospitals in Attacks***

***June 29, 2021***

**Sonyea, NY – Fourteen** officers were injured over the span of three separate inmate attacks, nine officers needing outside hospital treatment, at the medium security prison. These latest attacks continue the rising trend of assaults on staff in correctional facilities across the state.

On Thursday, June 3, two officers and a sergeant were escorting an inmate from his cell. Suddenly, the inmate turned and struck the sergeant in the face and head with a closed fist. The two officers immediately pulled the inmate from the sergeant and placed him in a body hold. While in the body hold, the inmate was able to bite one of the officers in the stomach, breaking the skin. OC Spray was administered but had no effect.

Still combative, the two officers and sergeant were able to get him under control and into handcuffs. Once in handcuffs, the inmate became compliant.

The inmate, 44, was removed from the building. He faces disciplinary charges in the attack.

The sergeant sustained swelling to the left side of the face, bruise to his lower back and an injured thumb. He was transported to Noyes Hospital for treatment.

One officer sustained a bite to the stomach that broke the skin and lower back, shoulder and knee pain. He was transported to Noyes Hospital for treatment.

The second officer sustained an abrasion under the left eye. He was treated by medical staff at the facility and remained on duty.

On Tuesday, June 15, nine officers were injured in an attack that took over a dozen officers to contain the violent and combative inmate after he was placed into a Special Housing Unit holding pen.

Initially, the inmate was given orders by an officer to clean up graffiti on a wall in the facility. The inmate refused and became argumentative and combative with the officer. The officer attempted to escort the inmate to the sergeant's office for counseling, but before getting to the office, the inmate suddenly spun and struck the officer in the face. The officer grabbed the inmate in a body hold. The officer and inmate fell into a bench as the officer attempted to gain control. A second officer responded and administered OC Spray which had no effect. After a brief struggle, the two officers were able to apply handcuffs. Initially, once in handcuffs the inmate became compliant.

The inmate was escorted to a Special Housing Unit and was going to be placed in a holding pen. As the inmate entered the holding pen, he attacked a sergeant and officer and struck them with his handcuffs. They attempted to get him to the ground in a body hold but he broke free and ran out of the holding pen. A response team responded to the unit and as they entered the building the inmate was able to breach the door and get out onto the front porch. An officer attempted to stop him and fell headfirst into a set of pillars, knocking him unconscious. On the front porch, the inmate attempted to strike, bite and spit at staff. After a violent struggle, staff was able to force him back into the building and into a frisk holding pen. Once in the holding pen, the inmate became compliant.

The inmate, 23, is serving a seven year sentence after being convicted in Queens County in 2017 for Robbery 2<sup>nd</sup>. He was transferred to Attica Correctional Facility after the attack.

Six officers were transported to three local hospitals for an assortment of injuries sustained in the attack. The officer who was knocked unconscious reported numbness down both arms to medical staff. They were all treated and released and did not return to duty.

A sergeant and three officers were treated by facility medical staff and remained on duty.

The third attack occurred on Wednesday, June 16. An officer was conducting routine rounds in the dorm when he noticed an inmate still in his bed acting lethargic and was glassy eyed. The inmate was ordered into the recreation room of the dorm so the officer could frisk him for contraband. The inmate was ordered to place his hands on the wall, which he complied with. Just prior to the frisk, the inmate came off the wall and elbowed the officer in the face. The officer and a sergeant grabbed the inmate in a body hold and attempted to force him to the ground. After a brief struggle, they were able to get him to the ground and into handcuffs.

The inmate was escorted to the infirmary for evaluation. In the infirmary, staff frisked him for contraband and found two orange strips in his pants pocket. The strips were identified as Suboxone.

The sergeant and officer were evaluated by facility medical staff. The sergeant sustained knee pain and remained on duty. The officer sustained a small puncture wound to his wrist that medical staff determined was caused by a syringe needle. He also sustained hand swelling and pain. He was transported to Noyes Hospital for additional treatment.

In addition to the staff assaults at the facility, on Wednesday, June 2, staff conducted a routine frisk of one of the facility dorms. Officers found three metal make-shift weapons and a sharpened toothbrush hidden in the cube of one inmate. Officers also found two metal shanks hidden inside the radiator in the cube of another inmate.

Both inmates face disciplinary charges and were placed in a Special Housing Unit.

"I can't state strongly enough the level of frustration I have with our elected officials and the administration of DOCCS for continually failing to recognize the level of violence that exists inside state prisons. These inmates who routinely attack staff know there are no real ramifications to their actions. These are individuals who could not obey the law while they were free and still cannot abide by the rules as they pay their debt to society. Across the country we are seeing violent crime rates rise as a result of progressive policies and the lack of accountability for one's actions. This environment has existed inside correctional facilities for the last five years as legislators have led the charge to reduce discipline. All they have done is put a bullseye on the back of every man and woman who put on that uniform." - Stated Mark Deburgomaster, NYSCOPBA Western Region Vice President.