



## Department of Corrections and Community Supervision

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **RECOVER, RECRUIT, REBUILD: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION ADVANCES RECRUITMENT AND RECOVERY EFFORTS**

**DOCCS Addresses Staffing Shortages, Accelerates Workforce Recovery With  
Bold Initiatives, Recruitment Campaigns, and Pay Increases**

**Training Academy Class Appointments up 63%, Correction Officer Trainee  
Graduates up 81%, and Completed Training and Experience Exams Up 137%**

Albany, NY – The New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) highlighted initial results to advance its Recover, Recruit, and Rebuild initiative. Launched earlier this year in response to ongoing staffing shortages following the illegal job action by thousands of Correction Officers and Sergeants, DOCCS is taking bold and measurable steps to rebuild its workforce, restore programs, and resume operations at facilities statewide.

These strategic enhancements are already yielding positive results. As of June 2025, the DOCCS Recruitment and Community Relations Unit has participated in 866 events statewide - including job fairs, career expos, and community outreach programs. This sustained and aggressive outreach is resulting in a sharp rise in candidate interest and application volume. From the first half of 2024 to the first half of 2025, Albany Training Academy Class appointments increased by 63% and correction officer trainee graduates increased by 81%. Additionally, DOCCS saw an increase of 137% in completed T&E (Training & Experience) exams.

“Here in New York, our aggressive recruitment campaign revolves around the vital work that the men and women of DOCCS perform daily to keep both our communities and our facilities safe. Although we are still managing the aftermath of the strike, which severely impacted our staffing and operations, my team and I are laser-focused on our recovery strategy,” **said Commissioner Daniel F. Martuscello III.** “There is no one-size-fits-all solution, and we know this effort requires time, patience, and relentless determination. Our goal is to build back stronger than we were before — and we are already seeing real progress.”

Amid staffing shortages and as a direct result of the illegal work stoppage, programming and visitation services across many facilities remain limited. However, the Department has launched an expansive recruitment and retention campaign designed to reverse the trend and reimagine how DOCCS engages with potential candidates, especially in underrepresented regions and specialized communities.

### **Key components of DOCCS' recovery and recruitment strategy include:**

#### Statewide Pay Increases and Incentives

- As of May 2025, correctional titles were upwardly reallocated to higher salary grades.
- New Correction Officer Trainees enter the academy at a starting pay of \$66,365, with an additional \$10k in monies associated with their contract. Top pay for a Correction officer is now over \$101k annually.
- Correction Officer Trainee candidates with prior experience are now eligible for advanced placement, which will compensate them commensurate with experience, and may be eligible for modified (expedited) training through DOCCS' Albany Training Academy.
- Sergeants were also upgraded and a request for Lieutenants is pending.
- A new \$5,000 Geographic Pay Differential was approved for all locations statewide for COs, Sergeants, and Lieutenants.

#### Comprehensive Recruitment Campaign

- Launched in February 2025 in partnership with OGS Media Services, this multi-channel outreach strategy targets community colleges and military bases with digital, streaming, and social content.
- A new contract with a recruitment vendor specializing in corrections is ongoing and helping to expand the Department's efforts.
- The Department launched regional recruitment in nine counties and opened new recruitment centers at high-traffic locations including Syracuse's Destiny USA and Plattsburgh's Champlain Centre malls.
- To build on the success of Regional Recruitment, the Department has expanded this initiative statewide and established six regions to allow for direct placement of candidates interested in joining the Department.

#### Modernized Hiring Processes and Expanded Access

- On-the-spot exams at events and free online testing now make it easier to apply.
- The Department's website also facilitates civilian resume collection and distribution.
- Legislation passed in the FY 2026 Enacted Budget lowers the age of eligible candidates for correction officer to allow the hiring of 18-year-olds (with restrictions), and eliminates the state residency requirement for correction officer.

#### New Recruitment and Retention Agreements with Labor Partners

- Newly appointed Correction Officer Trainees will receive a one-time lump sum \$3,000 Sign-on bonus payment, paid in two installments. \$1,500 will be paid upon successful completion of their On-the-Job Training (OJT), and \$1,500 paid at the

- successful completion of their 52-week probationary period.
- Recruitment and Retention Bonus of \$1,000–\$5,000 for officers reaching career milestones.
  - Education Pay Differentials of \$250–\$750 for officers holding Associate, Bachelor's or Master's degrees.
  - A \$1/hour Correctional Institutional Differential for eligible civilian staff working inside facilities.
  - Referral bonus program – Any staff that refers a non-DOCCS employee to become a Correction Officer or Correction Officer Trainee will receive a \$1,500 Referral Bonus upon their graduation of the academy and completion of on-the-job training and a second \$1,500 Referral Bonus (totaling \$3,000) upon their completion of the 52-week probationary period.

DOCCS remains committed to restoring its workforce and programs to full capacity, ensuring safety and rehabilitation goals central to its mission. With targeted investments, expanded recruitment tools, and strong partnerships, the Department is paving the way for long-term workforce stability and operational excellence.

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