

BI-WEEKLY BRIEFING TO PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE and COUNCIL

Members of Council, starting today, **January 28, 2022**, I am going to begin providing updates on status, changes and improvements we are making at Corrections in several key areas every two weeks. Much of what we have been able to do is because of **your help and good work**. It is essential that you are aware of these efforts during this most critical time at Corrections.

1. STAFFING WAGES and INCENTIVES.

Your recent budget appropriations for wages and recruitment incentives will be a **game changer**. Last Friday, the FOP Corrections Union approved an agreement to increase wages **across-the-board by 8%**, with starting salaries also increasing under the contract.

Prior to this Agreement, officers were starting at **\$17.41** per hour (**\$36,212** per year). Now, new Officers start at **\$21.32** per hour, (**\$44,346** per year), effective January 1, 2022. By July 1, 2022, Officers will start at **\$21.75** per hour, (or approximately **\$45,200** per year).

- **Your efforts have helped LMDC have, I believe, the highest paid starting salary for state or local corrections officers in this Commonwealth.**
- Over the past year, Corrections Officers have also been receiving up to **\$2,000** in retention incentives and **\$5,000** premium pay.
- We were immediately able to promote this message on Social Media, and to appear at Job Fairs where this message was positively received.



- I also want to **thank you** for your funding to further incentivize new hires at **\$8,000—at both our Civilian and Sworn positions**. I will have my staff send you a link and would ask that you put this up on your Council pages, as many of you have done in the past.
- As part of this effort, we are asking our FOP Corrections Union to work with us to bring back retirees or part-time employees.

2. INMATE HEALTH CARE

There is no question we need to improve Inmate Medical Care, and make sure our Medical Provider, **Wellpath, is held to the high standards** we expect. Since the recent deaths in our custody, some of which appear to be medically-related, we have:

- **Ensured** that Wellpath has a **full-time doctor** on site that works for our facility.
- Negotiated and **enhanced our Wellpath Contract** to increase medical care for our inmates.
- Negotiated and **enhanced** our contract with Cesario Medical Consulting, which provides **medical compliance review**; this enhancement will require additional monthly **reviews, auditing of inmate/patient medical records, and medical reviews of inmate deaths** and other **critical incidents**.
- **If these contracts are required to go before Council, I respectfully urge your support.**
- We are **triaging, daily, inmates with serious and chronic conditions** on our medical ward.
- We are taking that information to the judges to **ask for compassionate releases** for those inmates who are sick or dying while awaiting their trials.
- Our LMDC Sworn Officers have done an amazing job helping us manage COVID; our inmates have **full access to vaccines and regular testing** while in custody.
- We have also been working with a group of courageous volunteers, Team Titan, who have helped us in any number of ways, including helping bring back inmate religious services and exercise, which has been forced to have “stops and starts” during COVID. More on this work at our next briefing.
- By our next briefing, I will have a medical facilities plan to advise you upon to improve the medical ward.

3. OVERCROWDING

Since September, when inmate population reached **1665**, it has been all-hands-on-deck to address inmate population. We have been working in partnership with several justice partners--Commonwealth Attorney Tom Wine’s Office, Jefferson County Attorney Mike O’Connell, and Leo Smith’s Office of the Public Defender—to reduce inmate population to the greatest extent possible, while keeping the community safe. Commissioner Cookie Crews from the state Department of Corrections has helped us reduce inmates in the last few months, down to the **1480s**. We are working with her on additional efforts at Probation and Parole. She has been a great partner.

These justice community partners and judges have also been working with the ACLU to develop a standing group to address low-level bonds and amnesty for low-level bench warrants. **This has been working**: on a recent review, only 18 people were in jail on a bond of \$500 or less, and all 18 were serving on bench warrants for failure to come to Court.

One of the most exciting things happening right now on the transparency and public access front relating to overcrowding is the development of a Jail Dashboard by the **Metro Government Criminal Justice Commission and Metro IT**; many thanks to **Jamie Allen and Mark Richardson**. This dashboard will allow real-time, filterable access to information about inmates and it will be **public-facing**, to the extent permissible by law.



However, this dashboard should also change the public narrative on who is in custody. Right now, according to preliminary data from this Dashboard, over 60% of our jail is made up of five offenses: Assaults, Murders, Robbery, Weapons Charges and Probation and Parole violations. These are serious infractions and confirm that the jail is handling more serious offenses. As LMPD makes inroads in tackling violent crime, this will have an impact on the jail. LMPD is making almost twice as many murder arrests for 2021 over 2020; 94 compared to 55.

Top Charge Groups:	
ASSAULT	319
MURDER	161
ROBBERY	156
WEAPONS	129
PROBATION/PAROLE VIOLATION	128

In addition, this dashboard is important because it will allow real-time access to low-level bond information, out-of-county warrants, and state holds for people who should be in others' custody, not ours. I expect further announcements on this dashboard in the coming weeks as this dashboard goes live, and will continue to brief you on it. It is important.

4. SECURITY

I want to thank Council, especially Amy Holton Stewart, for her drive to get detection dogs into LMDC. We have been using LMPD's detection dogs for many years and the results have always been positive and fruitful. OMB is utilizing LMPD's contract for canines to fast-track the purchase of these dogs. We will be working through the next steps of training the handler and the canine team at a special school dedicated for this purpose. The training process takes 11 weeks, so we can expect to be up and running by Spring. In the interim, I will continue to use LMPD's canine team, and many thanks to Chief Shields for accommodating us. We can also advise:

- Part of next year's budget request for corrections to Council will include ballistic vests and flashlights to help keep our LMDC force safe.
- We are in process of updating our 10-year-old scanners with sophisticated body scanners that can detect if an inmate or outsider is attempting to smuggle contraband into the jail.

- We are improving and updating the camera systems in the jail to allow technology to leverage our staff. The building we occupy was not designed to be a jail; this creates unique challenges to inmate oversight.

5. FOR THE NEXT BRIEFING

My goal for these briefings is that they be informative and regular, and brief. For that reason, I want to “tee up” subjects that will come in the near future:

- Within the next week, the Chief of Public Services will make an announcement of a Public Services Task Force to address key areas, focusing on Corrections:
 - Leadership development and Succession Planning
 - Accountability and Discipline
 - Recruitment and Staffing
 - Policy, Training and Curriculum Development
 - Inmate Medical Care
 - Inmate reduction to the extent permissible

I have been working with the Chief and believe that this Task Force can help accelerate efforts to drive needed change.

- I am meeting with folks at the state Department of Corrections to explore alternate pathways for convicted felons sentenced to prison.
- We are exploring alternatives for inmates with Home Incarceration Program Bonds who are unable to afford a place to live and therefore must serve “bond” time in jail.
- I want to further brief on Team Titan, the ACLU and other groups that have come to help us. **These are stories of success.**

If you have questions about these issues, please send me an email at Dwayne.Clark@louisvilleky.gov. I look forward to providing my next briefing to you in two weeks.

DWAYNE CLARK.