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NEW FEDERAL MONITOR REPORT FINDS DOC IN 98% SUBSTANTIAL OR PARTIAL COMPLIANCE WITH KEY NUNEZ PROVISIONS

Department Announces Immediate Action Plan to Eliminate Inappropriate Use of Force

East Elmhurst, NY – Today, the Federal Monitor – appointed in 2015 to oversee reforms designed to increase safety in New York City jails – released his latest report, which marks two years of DOC’s efforts to implement the Nunez Consent Judgment. New York City Department of Correction Commissioner Cynthia Brann also announced a new, comprehensive action plan to promptly address key areas of concern raised by the Monitor.

In his report, while the Monitor notes that DOC “has not yet made significant progress toward the primary goal of reducing the use of unnecessary and excessive force,” he also credits the Department with having “worked diligently to develop and implement new policies, procedures, and training,” – bringing DOC into 98% substantial or partial compliance with key Nunez provisions.

The Monitor acknowledges that the Department has made tremendous progress and delivered real results under this Administration, often going beyond the requirements of the Consent Judgment.

“We recognize that more work needs to be done - particularly around ensuring force is used consistently and appropriately,” **said Commissioner Brann.** “Creating safer jails is a goal we share with the Monitor and his staff, and we are taking immediate steps towards making that happen.”

These new department-wide steps announced today focus on operations to lower the number of avoidable uses of force and improve the quality of uses of force to create a safer and more humane environment on Rikers Island and throughout all DOC facilities.

DOC’s action plan includes:

- Deploying special use of force de-escalation teams
- Boosting gang intel to stop violence before it triggers a use of force
- Increasing real-time video monitoring and analysis
- Revamping DOC’s Rapid Review process to more quickly identify and correct unnecessary uses of force
- Assigning Mentoring Captains to provide staff with re-training

Even though the Department has work to do in some areas, the Monitor makes clear that: “... given that the conditions giving rise to the Consent Judgment were the result of a long period of mismanagement, limited resources, and antiquated and bureaucratic processes at the Department, fully resolving the complex issues surrounding the improper use of force and inmate violence could not reasonably be achieved in two years.”

Commissioner Brann pointed to the following notable achievements made during the Monitor’s fifth reporting period:

- **New Use of Force Directive:** Went into effect on September 27, 2017. The Monitor notes the directive is “clearly written, organized, and capable of being readily understood by Staff. It is consistent with the requirements of the Consent Judgment and is also aligned with best practice.”
- **Video Monitoring Unit:** Based in the newly constructed [Compliance and Safety Center \(CASC\)](#) on Rikers Island, this unit has 38 video monitors capable of accessing approximately 10,000 cameras spread throughout DOC facilities for:
 - remote compliance auditing
 - identification of unsafe situations in real time
 - identification of high risk inmates as likely instigators of inmate tension
 - identification of contraband and guidance for targeted searches
- **Completion of [Special Tactics and Responsible Techniques \(S.T.A.R.T.\)](#) training for all Staff:** During this reporting period, all active-duty uniformed personnel completed a training program which features three days of brand new, highly interactive Defensive Tactics. The training is bundled with one day of training on the new use of force policy, including de-escalating and defusing conflicts to avoid force as well as responding appropriately when force is unavoidable.
- **100% Video Surveillance Cameras:** All inmate housing areas now have 100% camera coverage. The Department achieved “Complete Camera Coverage” in February 2018. This camera coverage has given the Department an unprecedented ability to review incidents and ensure accurate reporting. In addition to surveillance cameras, the Department has continued to utilize handheld cameras for certain incidents like cell extractions, probe team responses, and anticipated use of force incidents. And handheld videos of incidents are now regularly available for post-incident review and investigation.
- **Case Management System (CMS):** Launched in December 2017, CMS is a computerized system with specially designed software to improve efficiencies in our use of force investigations. This replaced a paper based system. The Monitor notes CMS is a “significant milestone,” and “is impressed by the Department’s diligent planning, training and organization surrounding its rollout.”

About the New York City Department of Correction

[The New York City Department of Correction \(DOC\)](#) provides for the care, custody, and control of persons accused of crimes or convicted and sentenced to one year or less of jail time. The Department manages 12 inmate facilities, nine of which are located on Rikers Island. In addition, the Department operates two hospital Prison Wards (Bellevue and Elmhurst hospitals) and court holding facilities in each borough. During Fiscal Year 2017, the Department handled over 58,000 admissions and managed an average daily inmate population of approximately 9,500 individuals. Our dedicated workforce of both uniformed and non-uniformed staff members represent the city’s BOLDEST.

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