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**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS LAUNCHES ALL VETERANS HOUSING UNIT**  
*Comprehensive Approach to Housing Offers Critical Services and Resources Unique to Veteran Population*

**TRENTON, N.J. –Feb. 15, 2022** - The New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) officially launched an all-veterans housing unit at East Jersey State Prison. The housing unit, a grant partnership with the New Jersey Division of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) announced in [2019](#), provides a comprehensive approach to distribute services and resources unique to the veteran population, giving veterans tools to focus on rehabilitation and reentry in one centralized location. The unit currently houses about 41 individuals with the capability to house up to 50, with eligibility open to all veterans regardless of discharge status. Incentive-based housing models such as the Veterans Unit fosters an aspirational and supportive environment around a shared area of interest.

The *Remembering Their Service: A Reinvestment in the Incarcerated Veteran* grant program focuses on determining veteran status, counseling, and developing comprehensive, evidence-based services that address the specialized needs of incarcerated veterans administered in concert with the NJDOC, DMAVA and Rutgers University Correctional Healthcare. Program participants will receive assistance with obtaining necessary discharge from active duty paperwork, linkages to federally-funded post-release veteran benefits and services, housing and employment services. Participants have access to pre-release individual and group counseling services with licensed professionals, in the areas of substance use disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, family reunification, cognitive behavior change, and various reentry-based topics. Additionally, participants will have the opportunity to take part in lectures led by successful formerly incarcerated veterans.

The grant also funds a master's level social worker providing case management services, who also oversees the coordination of events, programs, and unit needs. Funding further supports staff training on post-traumatic stress disorder, and other issues impacting this community.

"We are excited to have finally launched the Veterans Housing Unit," said NJDOC Acting Commissioner Victoria L. Kuhn, Esq. "Incentive-based housing is the way of the future for the Department. Not only are these housing structures designed to meet the specific needs of program participants, but it inspires camaraderie, responsibility, and accountability around a shared area of interest, organically creating critical support systems motivating others to want to participate in incentive-based housing programs."

"We will provide tools to get Veterans back on their feet," said Brig. Gen. Lisa J. Hou, D.O., Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. "This program, as well as other state resources available to justice involved Veterans, will help ensure that they have a path to rehabilitation and reentry."

"Education and Health Centers of America, Inc. (EHCA) is proud of its ongoing work with the DOC's Incarcerated Veterans Initiative and pleased to be teaming up with the NJDOC, DMAVA and Rutgers to provide services in the new Veterans Housing Unit at East Jersey," said Larry DeMarzo, CEO of EHCA.

"Rutgers University Correctional Health Care is proud to provide this important service to veterans at a crucial time in their lives," said Rutgers University Correctional Healthcare Chief Psychologist Mitch Abrams, Psy.D.

The grant complements the Incarcerated Veterans Initiative, an existing partnership between the NJDOC and Education and Health Centers of America (EHCA). EHCA will provide the continuum of care through pre- and post-release case management support and resources to which incarcerated veterans are entitled, including VA benefits, medical, mental health services, and reintegration assistance.

The housing unit is supported by Award No. 2019-CZ-BX-0031 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs. All individuals with veteran status can apply for the program through the JPay inmate communication kiosk or contact the Social Services Department.

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