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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS ANNOUNCES
PLANNED ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO SUICIDES IN COUNTY JAILS**

In response to statistics indicating that suicide rates in New Jersey's county jails continue to rise, the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) has announced a series of initiatives intended to confront the issue and ultimately saves lives.

"One suicide is too many," said NJDOC Acting Commissioner Marcus O. Hicks, Esq. "These initiatives are designed to lead to improved outcomes. While the NJDOC does not have a role in the daily operations of county jails, the Department will remain vigilant in establishing suicide prevention standards that must be met by each county jail. We look forward to working with the New Jersey County Jail Warden's Association to implement these reforms."

The NJDOC's action plan will include the following initiatives:

- The NJDOC will conduct unannounced annual inspections of county facilities.
- Each county will be required to attend an annual training session presented by the NJDOC, to include correctional best practices related to suicide prevention.
- The NJDOC will provide technical assistance in policy development to address suicide prevention in county jails.
- A recommendation will be put forth that county jails receive biennial training on suicide prevention from the National Institute on Corrections.
- The New Jersey Administrative Code – specifically 10A:31 – will be amended to include a requirement for county jails to conduct a multi-discipline morbidity review within a specified timeframe of a suicide. A summary of that review must be provided to the NJDOC within a specified timeframe.

- The NJDOC will conduct a review of the general facts of the suicide in the conduct of the requirements set forth by the New Jersey Administrative Code. A follow-up inspection of any relevant standards will be conducted and recommendations for remedial actions will be made, if needed.

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