

# Governor Carney Announces Selections to Lead Independent Review of Hostage Incident at James T. Vaughn Correctional Center

*Governor signs order naming Justice Ridgely and Judge Chapman to lead review*

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney signed Executive Order Two on Tuesday, appointing retired Delaware Supreme Court Justice Henry duPont Ridgely and retired Family Court Judge William L. Chapman, Jr. to lead the independent review into the February 1 hostage incident at James T. Vaughn Correctional Center.

The review will begin following the completion of the Delaware State Police criminal investigation into the death of correctional officer Lieutenant Steven Floyd.

“As I have been saying since February 1, we will leave no stone unturned in our efforts to find out exactly what happened inside James T. Vaughn Correctional Center, and what we can do to prevent this from happening again,” said **Governor John Carney**. “These are two well-respected judges who are independent thinkers, with legal background and analytical skills necessary to perform a thorough review and make necessary recommendations. I thank Justice Ridgely and Judge Chapman for their willingness to take on this difficult but important task.”

Justice Ridgely and Judge Chapman will review the events surrounding the hostage incident and related security issues at the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center, and make

recommendations to help assure the safety and security of employees and inmates at the facility. Governor Carney, with his executive order, has directed the Department of Correction and the Department of Safety and Homeland Security to cooperate fully with the independent examination.

The reviewers will present a preliminary report by June 1 to Governor Carney that includes findings about what contributed to the hostage incident and initial recommendations to improve security at James T. Vaughn Correctional Center. They will issue a final report to the Governor by August 15.

“This was a tragic incident that deserves a full and thorough independent examination,” said **Justice Henry duPont Ridgely**. “We will focus our efforts, first and foremost, on learning how this happened. And we will act with urgency to produce meaningful recommendations that would make Delaware’s correctional facilities more secure, and hopefully prevent this type of incident from happening again.”

“We will act expeditiously and with purpose to understand what happened at James T. Vaughn Correctional Center,” said **Judge William L. Chapman, Jr.** “We are committed to undertaking this review with independence, and the people of Delaware should feel confident that we will identify and recommend changes we believe are necessary to improve safety and security at the facility.”

Justice Ridgely is Senior Counsel at the global law firm DLA Piper and a retired Justice of the Supreme Court of Delaware. Justice Ridgely served more than 30 years as a jurist in the Delaware Judiciary. He served as a Justice on the Delaware Supreme Court from 2004 until 2015 before joining DLA Piper. He served as a Judge on the Superior Court of Delaware from 1984 until 2004, including 14 years as the President Judge of the Court.

Judge Chapman is Chief Talent and Diversity Officer and Senior

Counsel at Potter Anderson & Corroon. Prior to joining the firm, Judge Chapman served as a Family Court judge for the state of Delaware. He also served as Deputy Attorney General for the Delaware Department of Justice.