

Governor Carney, COAD Announce Agreement to Raise Correctional Officer Pay

Agreement also establishes Labor-Management Committee to study additional changes

DOVER, Del. – Governor John Carney and the Correctional Officers Association of Delaware (COAD) on Tuesday announced an agreement to increase salaries for Delaware’s correctional officers and study additional changes to help recruit and retain officers, and decrease the use of mandatory overtime across Delaware’s correctional system.

The agreement was approved Monday by COAD’s membership.

“This agreement represents a significant step forward in addressing our staffing challenges at the Department of Correction,” said **Governor Carney**. “We will fairly raise starting salaries for Delaware’s correctional officers, and work closely with COAD to improve our ability to recruit officers. To be clear, making real improvements to our prison system won’t happen overnight. But we are committed to working, over the long-term, to improving conditions for officers and inmates inside Delaware’s correctional facilities.”

“This is a great first step in the right direction,” said **Geoff Klopp, President of the Correctional Officers Association of Delaware**. “We look forward to continuing to work with Governor Carney on the issues facing our prison system.”

“We’re committed to taking the necessary action to address the issues facing our prison system,” said **Perry Phelps, Commissioner of the Delaware Department of Correction**. “This

agreement to increase salaries will help us recruit and retain officers. And we will continue to work hand-in-hand with COAD to consider additional changes that will improve the working environment inside our facilities.”

Governor Carney pledged to increase correctional officer pay – and take steps to decrease the use of mandatory overtime – in [his response](#) to the [initial report](#) of the Independent Review into the causes of the February 1 incident at James T. Vaughn Correctional Center.

The two-year agreement announced Tuesday will increase starting salaries for correctional officers to \$40,000 in Fiscal Year 2018, and to \$43,000 in Fiscal Year 2019 – a 22 percent increase over current salary levels. The agreement also increases salaries up the experience chain.

Salary negotiations were based, in part, on a study and comparison of correctional officer salaries in surrounding states.

The agreement also creates a new Labor-Management committee to study ways to help recruit and retain officers, and decrease the use of mandatory overtime in Delaware’s prisons.

Areas of study will include:

- The establishment of a 12-hour shift;
- The establishment of physical fitness testing;
- The establishment of a career ladder; and
- The establishment of a freeze policy.

For additional details on Governor Carney’s plan to invest in the Department of Correction, click [here](#).

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[Governor Carney Releases Initial Report of Department of Correction Independent Review](#)