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## **FAYETTE COUNTY JAIL COMPLETES HISTORIC MOVE**

**Uniontown, PA** – The new Fayette County Jail is officially operational, following a safe and successful transfer of all inmates Wednesday.

A tremendous undertaking, the move was completed through coordination of the Fayette County Jail administration, Fayette County Sheriff's Office, state Department of Corrections, Pennsylvania State Police and the Uniontown Police Department. Temporary road closures, armored vehicles, helicopter surveillance and countless other security measures were put in place to protect both inmates and corrections employees during the transfer.

Fayette County Warden John Lenkey commended the transfer team for their efforts and praised the modern facility's unlimited potential.

"Individuals are placed in jail for punishment, not to be punished," Lenkey said. "This new jail has the capacity to provide services and tools that will afford the inmates an opportunity to leave here a better person from which they arrived."

The facility's first official population includes 157 inmates. Located along McClellandtown Road in Uniontown, across from WVU Medicine Uniontown Hospital, the state-of-the-art facility is approximately one mile from the former county jail.

The Fayette County Commissioners began planning the project in 2016 and acquired the former United States Army Reserve Center property from the federal General Services Administration in 2018. Demolition of the former facility and construction of the current jail began in 2021.

TranSystems, formerly L.R. Kimball, designed the new facility, and SiteLogIQ served as construction managers for the project, while a wealth of local contractors played significant roles in the project's completion.

Fayette County Deputy Warden of Treatment Angela Patricelli Kern said the successful movement "marks a new page in county history," as the former jail was used as a corrections facility "since its first structure in 1784."

"The building they moved from was the fourth jail, constructed 132 years ago in 1892," Kern said. "The long-awaited facility has a capacity for holding 330 inmates and includes ample treatment and programming space for offender rehabilitation."

Lenkey, along with Sheriff James Custer, recently announced the jail's programming will include the national I.G.N.I.T.E. Program, which stands for "Inmate Growth Naturally and Intentionally Through Education."

"A fresh commitment to making the jail and community safer by providing education and opportunity to incarcerated individuals, I.G.N.I.T.E. prepares its students for reintegration," Custer's website states. "Support from the community is crucial for the success of I.G.N.I.T.E."

Fayette County Commissioner Chairman Scott Dunn thanked the many organizations "that worked together today to make this a successful operation."

"The jail has been the culmination of a lot of work by many at the county. I'm proud of our jail management staff for completing this," Dunn said. "Fayette County will now be able to provide needed programming to help reduce recidivism; have a secure place for the inmates; and a safe place for our employees to work. This is a good day."

Commissioner Dave Lohr said today's move "went like clockwork" and was "accomplished through the cooperative efforts" of those entities previously listed, by "working together like the cogs and wheels of a well-oiled machine."

"The entire process was completed without a hitch in less than 4.5 hours. My sincere thanks to everyone who was involved to effect this very successful operation," Lohr said. "Building a new jail has long been one of my goals. It was important to me that this facility was designed not just to 'warehouse' offenders, but to provide training and educational opportunities for those inmates in our care. We did our due diligence, and I'm proud of what we accomplished – building a facility designed to meet the needs of inmates, staff and the community at large for many years to come."

Commissioner Vince Vicites said the transfer was a "very fine-tuned and coordinated effort."

"The state Department of Corrections and law enforcement were a big help in accomplishing this effort. Any time you are moving nearly 160 inmates, that's a tremendous task," Vicites said. "It means a lot that we have completed a very difficult project by building a new prison under budget. It will definitely improve our criminal justice system. It's in a very good location within the county court system, which will help us cut inmate transportation costs. We now have a facility that will last for many, many decades to come."

Fayette County TV, in partnership with the Fayette County Public Relations Initiative and Warden John Lenkey, produced a virtual tour of the new jail, which can be viewed on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVxpqlo1u5w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVxpqlo1u5w). To view more original content from Fayette County TV, visit <http://fayettetv.org/>.

To learn more about the new Fayette County Jail, visit [www.fayettecountypa.org/797/Fayette-County-Prison-Project](http://www.fayettecountypa.org/797/Fayette-County-Prison-Project).

To learn more about Fayette County, visit [www.fayettecountypa.org](http://www.fayettecountypa.org).

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