



NEW MEXICO CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR

Alisha Tafoya Lucero, Cabinet Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Eric Harrison
Public Information Officer, Corrections Department
Eric.harrison@state.nm.us
505-382-3541

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NMCD in preliminary planning phases to close aging prison facility

SPRINGER— The New Mexico Corrections Department has been evaluating preliminary plans to initiate the potential closure of the Springer Correctional Center, a process that would include the safe transfer of inmates and reassignment of workers.

Corrections Secretary Alisha Tafoya Lucero has initiated the early steps that would be required to close the aging facility, working to develop safe transition plans for the inmate population and assuring that employees will be provided with alternate employment opportunities. “I want to be very clear to the community of Springer: We are in only the preliminary planning phase, and no formal timeline has been set,” said Secretary Tafoya Lucero. “Part of good operational management is exploring every option for effective oversight – and my responsibility is the state’s entire correctional system, and the people and workers within it, not one single facility or another. I want to also be clear that making sure that every employee would have varied options for alternate placement in equitable positions is my main focus in this preliminary phase.” Springer Correctional Center was formerly the New Mexico Boys’ School, opening in 1909 with much of the current facility added in 1960.

The New Mexico Corrections Department received funding to take over operations from the Children, Youth and Families Department in 2006 and it officially began operations as a correctional facility in January, 2007.

The facility was transitioned to a women’s facility in October, 2016. Due to the age of the facility, the department has consistently required substantial funding from the Legislature for upkeep and maintenance each year.

Closure of the facility will allow for more fiscally responsible operation of the remaining state facilities, while maintaining safe housing for the inmate population, the secretary said.

In their most recent prison population forecasts, the New Mexico Sentencing Commission estimates a continued downward trend in inmate populations. Consistent with that forecast, the population of the Springer Correctional Facility has steadily declined, dropping below 50 percent of capacity at times in recent years.

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