



# NEW MEXICO CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT

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## Press Release

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### Partnership Brings Pups to the Penitentiary

SANTA FE, NM – The New Mexico Corrections Department and Española Humane are proud to announce their new partnership through the Paws in the Pen program with the introduction of Cody and Lily to the Penitentiary of New Mexico (PNM). The Paws in the Pen program began in December 2021 as a mentorship-based dog training program providing opportunities for untrained shelter dogs who may be hard to place. The training allows the dogs to learn new positive skills and behaviors while giving inmate trainers the responsibility of taking care of the dogs. Paws in the Pen is equipped to house dogs at the facility in a highly protective and secure setting with a trainer providing 24/7 attention. The program promotes positivity for the inmates, staff, and dogs, with the goal of inmates learning a vocation and finding a forever family for the newly well-trained dogs.

“We often witness something we like to call ‘mutual rescue’ in the journey of a homeless pet’s life, where people say the pet rescued them as much as the person rescued the pet,” said Mattie Allen of Española Humane. “This program offers reciprocal benefits, both to help our dogs receive the training and care to become highly adoptable, while giving inmates the opportunity and ability to do important and meaningful work.”

“I just love this program! The dogs bring a little bit of home to the facility, everyone’s faces just light up when the dogs are around,” explained PNM Warden Hagerman. “It’s really a great opportunity for the inmates to exercise responsibility and patience in caring for the dogs, and it is an example of another successful peer education program NMCD has implemented in the facility.”

The Paws in the Pen peer-certified trainer will mentor other interested trainers in how to work with the dogs, a skill he learned at the Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility (SNMCF) in the PAWS program there. The SNMCF PAWS program began in 2014 when they welcomed professional dog trainers into the facility to certify handlers and train dogs. Today, the PAWS program has grown to housing up to 14 dogs at any one time. A similar vision is in the works for the Paws in the Pen program thanks to our new partnership with Española Humane.

Cody and Lily’s six-month training began when they were introduced to their temporary home and new trainers at the Penitentiary of New Mexico in early November of 2022. When their training is complete, the dogs will be ready to be adopted from Española Humane trained and ready for a new family.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LO83WQ6rCF4>

<https://www.facebook.com/EspanolaHumane>

<https://www.facebook.com/NewMexicoCorrectionsDepartment/>