



NEW MEXICO CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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NMCD finalizes shift to state-run prison system

Department to relocate inmates following GEO Group's contract decision

HOBBS, N.M.—The New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD) announced today that it will conclude its use of the Lea County Correctional Facility (LCCF) by June 30, 2025, following The GEO Group, Inc.'s unilateral decision not to renew its operating contract.

This transition marks the successful completion of NMCD's strategic initiative to bring prison operations under state control, a years-long effort that previously returned facilities in Clayton, Santa Rosa, and Grants to state management.

In January 2025, The GEO Group formally notified NMCD that it would not seek to extend operations beyond November 2025, effectively ending a partnership that dates back to 1998. In response to this unexpected development, NMCD has proactively developed a comprehensive transition plan that prioritizes public safety and operational efficiency, and responsible fiscal management.

"The GEO Group's decision to exit its contract left NMCD with no viable long-term path for continued use of the facility," said Corrections Cabinet **Sec. Alisha Tafoya Lucero**. "However, we've transformed this challenge into an opportunity to complete our strategic transition to state-operated facilities. Our department is fully prepared to manage this process while maintaining our commitment to public safety and rehabilitation."

When announcing their notification of non-renewal, The GEO Group approached the state with offers to sell the facility, initially proposing a price of \$240 million and later

reducing the offer to \$175 million. After careful fiscal analysis, the state determined these purchase options did not represent the best use of taxpayer resources.

Currently, approximately 1,000 NMCD inmates are housed at LCCF, well below the available capacity across NMCD's eight state-operated facilities in Clayton, Springer, Santa Fe, Grants, Santa Rosa, Los Lunas, Roswell, and Las Cruces. The department will begin transferring these inmates to state facilities, completing the process by the end of the current fiscal year. For security reasons, specific details regarding the transfer schedule will not be released.

This strategic realignment allows NMCD to optimize its resources while maintaining its high standards for inmate supervision and rehabilitation. While NMCD continues to house a group of inmates under contract at the Otero County Prison Facility to receive specialized treatment, the department no longer relies on private operators for core prison operations, strengthening direct oversight and accountability.

Demonstrating its commitment to the local workforce, NMCD is planning to host Rapid Hire Events this summer in Lea County, offering opportunities for current GEO staff to apply for positions within the department, which has openings statewide. Specific details on the Rapid Hire Events will be forthcoming.

NMCD values its long-standing partnership with Lea County and The GEO Group, Inc. and is committed to working collaboratively to ensure a smooth and safe transition. Any inquiries regarding the future of the LCCF facility should be directed at The GEO Group.

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The New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD) is one of the largest state departments in New Mexico. The department staff and volunteers are fully committed to integrating programs in its facilities for rehabilitation. It is through programs and services the department aims to improve outcomes for offenders and enhance public safety in communities. For more information, visit cd.nm.gov or follow NMCD on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [X](#) at @NMCDPIO.