

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Larned prison adopts new mission preparing young offenders for reentry**  
*Mental health services to move to El Dorado Correctional Facility*

To more efficiently meet the changing needs of the state's offender population, the Kansas Department of Corrections is modifying the mission of the Larned Correctional Mental Health Facility (LCMHF). The facility will transition this summer into a specialized program for offenders ages 18-25, focusing on education and vocational training in efforts to better prepare them for a successful reentry into society.

The increasing population of offenders requiring the level of mental health services provided at LCMHF has outgrown the available space. Those services are currently being provided at both LCMHF and the El Dorado Correctional Facility (EDCF). The services will now be consolidated at the El Dorado facility.

Consolidating the two service units at El Dorado provides for a more efficient delivery of the essential behavioral health services to this population while maintaining the safe operations of the facilities. The consolidated program at EDCF will provide an additional 50 to 60 beds for the behavioral health program that serves offenders with severe and persistent mental illness. In addition to the increased bed space, the proximity of EDCF to Wichita also provides an opportunity to more easily meet the staffing needs of the program.

EDCF is also home to the intake unit for male offenders entering the KDOC. By placing the behavioral health unit at the same facility as the male intake unit will reduce the need to transport these offenders between facilities to receive services.

New to the mission of LCMHF will be a 300-bed unit for young adult male offenders who have identified needs for educational and/or substance abuse services. The program will specifically target the risk to reoffend and prepare the offenders to release from prison with the tools to be productive members of their communities. The 18-25 year-old-males

demographic is the state's highest recidivism group, for a variety of factors. Fewer than half have high school diplomas or GED and they have few marketable job skills. Most offenders release back to the community, and reducing their risk to reoffend prevents new victims and creates good neighbors who contribute positively to their community.

An important partner in this new program at LCMHF is Barton Community College. Many of the educational programs envisioned for this program will be provided by BCC, which is located near Great Bend. The College has a long-standing relationship with the KDOC at its facilities in western Kansas.

"For years, Barton College has enjoyed helping to meet the needs of students at the mental health facility," said William Rains, Coordinator of Correctional Education Services at the college. "Now, with the facility changing its mission to serve young men ages 18-25, we are thrilled to help them develop their skills to become outstanding members of our communities."

The state's contracted provider for medical and mental health services, Corizon Health, currently has 35 staff assigned to LCMHF. The change of mission at LCMHF will shift some of those positions to EDCF. KDOC and Corizon are working together to ensure that Corizon employees have an opportunity to transfer to EDCF. The number of state jobs at LCFMHF will not be reduced by this mission change.

The 28-bed west unit at LCMHF will not be affected by this change and will continue to house minimum custody male inmates who are participating in programming and job assignments.

Also unaffected will be the beds reserved at the Larned State Hospital for KDOC inmates that need the level of care provided at the state hospital.



*Larned Correctional Mental Health Facility*

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