



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION
Joseph Ponte, Commissioner

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September 9, 2016

Stanley Brezenoff, Chair
NYC Board of Correction
51 Chambers Street, Room 923
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Brezenoff:

The New York City Department of Correction (“DOC”) is requesting an emergency variance pursuant to §1-15 (b) (3) of the Board’s minimum standards for BKDC. We require this emergency variance to ensure that the safety and security of BKDC is maintained and that all inmates and staff are kept safe.

BKDC’s housing areas will be locked down for most of Saturday, September 8, 2016 and Sunday, September 10, 2016 to allow staff to conduct thorough searches and intelligence investigations, following a series of slashings at the facility. On Monday morning, the situation will be assessed to determine whether additional time is required to continue the investigation. The Department will notify the Board immediately if the variance needs to be extended and when normal services are resumed.

In less than two weeks, there have been five slashings perpetrated by BKDC inmates. This startling escalation indicates that investigative and intelligence-gathering must be increased immediately, to try to prevent additional violence.

- Saturday, August 27: Slashing in General Population unit – SRG issues
- Thursday, September 1: Slashing in General Population unit – SRG issues
- Thursday, September 1: Slashing in General Population unit – SRG issues
- Thursday, September 8: Slashing in Protective Custody unit – SRG issues
- Friday, September 9: Slashing on transportation bus, a perpetrator was BKDC inmate – SRG inmates involved

During this same two-week period period, there have been six additional slashings around the Department. Of these eleven incidents, all but one have involved SRG-affiliated inmates.

The lockdown period is necessary to conduct thorough searches and intelligence investigations. These actions are necessary to discover and neutralize all threats and maintain the safety and security of the facility.

Though the lock down will not exceed 24 consecutive hours, a number of mandated services will be affected during the lock down, so the Department requests an emergency variance from Sections 1-03 Personal Hygiene, 1-06 Recreation, 1-07 Religion, 1-08(f) Access to Courts and Legal Services (regarding access to the law library only), 1-09 Visitation, and 1-10 Phone Calls of the Board’s minimum standards.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact Heidi Grossman at (718) 546-0955.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph Ponte". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Joseph Ponte

cc: Martha King, Executive Director