



## **Kentucky Department of Corrections**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Katherine Williams**  
**502-758-5816**  
**Katherine.Williams@ky.gov**

### **Gov. Beshear Announces Opening of Southeast State Correctional Complex in Wheelwright**

*New prison creates over 270 new jobs*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 4, 2020)** – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear and the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet announced that the Department of Corrections (DOC) has officially opened Southeast State Correctional Complex.

Southeast State Correctional Complex is a 621-bed prison located in Wheelwright housing medium-custody male inmates. DOC is leasing the building from CoreCivic and operating the facility as a state prison. Kentucky’s legislature passed a one-year state budget in April that specifically allocated funds for the state to open and operate Southeast State Correctional Complex in this fiscal year.

“With the opening of Southeast State Correctional Complex, we have created over 270 new jobs in Floyd County,” said Gov. Beshear. “These new jobs are vital right now to a community that has faced many hardships during the national pandemic. I give you my pledge when I say that we are committed to safely and effectively running this state prison, and following all CDC recommendations for correctional facilities in order to keep our inmates and staff as safe as possible.”

As with all state prisons, precautions have been implemented at Southeast State Correctional Complex in consultation with the Department for Public Health to help prevent the virus from entering and spreading throughout the prison. In addition, the prison remains committed to following the guidance from the CDC for Correctional and Detention Facilities. All staff and inmates are being educated on how to recognize the symptoms of COVID-19, and how to prevent the spread of the virus through good personal hygiene and social distancing. The facility has enhanced sanitization by using germicide and a bleach solution multiple times daily, and staff are medically screened upon entry. Masks are mandatory for all staff and inmates. In addition to masks, the medical staff are wearing gloves, protective gowns and face shields.

DOC Commissioner Cookie Crews states that the prison will offer programming and educational opportunities to the inmate population as a way to help with successful reentry initiatives. “We will provide a substance abuse program, other evidence-based programs, and vocational programs such as carpentry,” said Crews.

“On behalf of myself, the Floyd County Fiscal Court and the residents of Floyd County, I would like to thank Governor Beshear for the recent reopening of Southeast State Correctional Complex,” said Floyd County Judge Executive Robbie Williams. “The newly created jobs will be a great addition to Floyd County and as always we appreciate Governor Beshear's support.”

DOC is poised to seek accreditation for Southeast State Correctional Complex with the American Correctional Association (ACA) during the first year of operation. Kentucky was one of the first two states in the nation to receive the Golden Eagle Award from ACA in 2013. This honor was achieved through having all entities within Kentucky corrections accredited by ACA, which DOC continues to maintain.

The prison was built in 1993 and last held inmates in 2012. Since then, a facility and maintenance crew has maintained the 111 acres of property and 141,000 square-foot building. The facility includes a combination of cells and multiple-occupancy housing units along with a medical unit, administrative offices, and space for recreation, education and training programs.

**Editor’s note: photos attached**

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