



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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National Correctional Officer Week

This week is National Correctional Officer Week and the Dodge County Sheriff's Office would like to recognize the men and women who work so hard every day working in our county jails and state prisons. It is a difficult job that comes with very little thanks. We would like to thank Correctional Officer Hanna Mueller who has taken the time to provide her perspective on the operations of the Dodge County Jail during her 20 year career employed at the sheriff's office.

"The Dodge County Jail has seen many changes over the years. While working for the sheriff's office for the past 20 years I have experienced many of these transformations. Beginning my career in 1999, myself, and roughly 20 other officers on various shifts, walked the halls of the old linear style jail. Within these walls, we housed only county inmates, averaging 60 inmates, both male and female. Some of the female inmates had Huber privileges in which special provisions had to be made for them to practice their Huber. Dodge County Jail also used part of the Clearview North building, also known as Henry Dodge, to house about 40 male Huber inmates.

In February, 2001, the Dodge County Detention Facility opened with a 358 bed capacity. The old facilities closed. Because of our move, our need for correctional officers climbed from having an average of 4 to 5 officers on first shift in the old facility to now average target of 13. Three officers were on 2nd shift in the old facility to a now target of 13 officers in the new facility and 2-3 on 3rd shift to a now target of 8 in the new facility. This does not include Programs Officers and Sergeants.

With the transformation from the old facilities to the new one, we have created a safer work environment. Once a part of the Search Team for many years, I can say there are unlimited areas an inmate could hide contraband, weapons or drugs, that could be made or smuggled into the old facility. These options, though not impossible, are much more limited now, making it a safer work environment for our officers, civilian staff and inmates themselves.

Technology over the years has also gotten better. When this facility first opened, we did have cameras and monitors on each of the pods, however, just recently, we have installed many new cameras and monitors making it safer for everyone. Officers are able to better monitor inmates, helping to prevent disruptions, fights, assaults, abuse or medical emergencies, just to name a few.

As a county corrections officer, our duties are diversified. We may be booking officer one day, a pod officer running a unit another day, a rover taking inmates to court, dealing with deliveries, escorts meal service, laundry exchange or assisting wherever needed. I have been a training officer for many years and we train our new officers to be knowledgeable in all

areas. This includes inmates that may have behavioral, medical or mental health issues. It also includes detainees and their cultural differences. Our days are often long but can in turn be rewarding.

As a correctional officer at Dodge County, I have seen us go from the state contracted, county contracted and now federal contracted inmates and detainees. I have experienced the change of three different sheriffs but something will never change. We as officers have worked together with the many challenges and changes brought upon us. We take pride in who we are and being one of the top facilities in the state and the country for housing ICE detainees.”

Again thank you to Correctional Officer Mueller for providing her perspective. If you have an opportunity to interact with a correctional officer, please take a moment to recognize their hard work. If you know a correctional officer, give them a call and ask them how their day was. If you are a correctional officer, thank you from all of us here at the Dodge County Sheriff's Office.

Questions may be directed to Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt.

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