

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONS

Secretary Gary Westcott

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## **Dixon Correctional Institute Celebrates 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

*Correctional facility celebrates five decades of rehabilitation and public safety*

Baton Rouge, LA - The Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections is proud to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of Dixon Correctional Institute (DCI). To honor the milestone, a reception will be held April 1 at 2 p.m. at the DCI Training Center, located at 5568 Highway 68 in Jackson. This invitation-only event will recognize the facility's history and reaffirm its commitment to fostering safer communities across Louisiana. The reception will not be open to the public.

Since opening in 1976 as Louisiana's first medium-security correctional facility, DCI has advanced corrections through a focus on public safety, accountability and rehabilitation. Currently, 1,802 individuals are housed at the correctional facility, which is supported by 501 dedicated employees who are responsible for the daily custody, care, programming, and operations.

"Dixon Correctional Institute has been a cornerstone of our state's correctional system for five decades," said Gary Westcott, secretary, Department of Public Safety and Corrections. "The transformational work occurring at DCI is a direct reflection of the men and women who have dedicated their careers to corrections at this facility."

The leadership and staff of DCI along with the individuals who are incarcerated there have contributed significantly to community service and volunteer efforts and have actively assisted with emergency situations during times of disaster.

"This anniversary is a testament to the commitment of staff who serve with professionalism and integrity each day, as well as the progress made in preparing individuals for successful reentry into society," said Dusty Bickham, warden, Dixon Correctional Institute.

DCI offers educational and vocational programming, including adult basic education, High School Equivalency preparation, literacy programs and training in welding, automotive technology, collision repair and small engine repair. Additional opportunities are available through Special School District No. 1 and correspondence-based college courses, with vocational programs offered in partnership with the Louisiana Community and Technical College System and Baton Rouge Community College.

The facility also provides a variety of programs and services focused on rehabilitation and reentry. Substance abuse programming includes classroom instruction, group activities and self-help meetings for individuals with a history of substance use. Pre-release programming requires 100 hours of training prior to release, along with coordinated discharge planning that begins at intake and continues throughout incarceration.

Reentry programming focuses on long-term success through skill development, behavioral interventions and transition planning, with intensified preparation in the 18 to 24 months prior to release. The reentry team assists individuals in obtaining identification and coordinates with employers and community partners to support job placement and housing arrangements upon release.

Faith-based programming is a central component of rehabilitation at DCI. The facility partners with 16 outside church groups and more than 100 volunteers to provide programs, classes, and services. Individuals who are incarcerated lead more than 60 services, including Bible studies, worship services, mentorships and video teachings. In addition, DCI hosts live Sunday services from outside church groups and provides broadcasted services. The facility also operates a Faith and Character-Based Dormitory Program, which emphasizes personal responsibility, meaningful work, education, substance abuse treatment and peer support. Special visits from organizations such as God Behind Bars and The Dominican Republic Band further enhance these efforts.

Through all of these educational initiatives and reentry-focused programs, DCI continues to emphasize personal accountability and skill development as key components in reducing recidivism, and will continue to do so for the next 50 years.

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