



Ned Lamont
Governor

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



Rollin Cook
Commissioner

TO: All Staff

FROM: Rollin Cook, Commissioner

DATE: June 1, 2020

SUBJECT: Death of George Floyd/Civil Unrest

I wanted to make sure to reach out to you regarding the recent unrest across the country following the heartbreaking death of George Floyd. Like so many others, I was horrified and deeply saddened by the video footage that many of you have no doubt seen.

To borrow from former President Barack Obama's comments on the situation stating that these types of incidents cannot become normal, "If we want our children to grow up in a nation that lives up to its highest ideals, we can and must be better."

As we grieve, we need to strengthen our resolve to be part of the solution. I strongly feel that we do not have the luxury of standing by, waiting silently for things to return to "normal." I challenge all of us – myself included – to work harder than ever to focus on our similarities, rather than our differences, as human beings. During this painful time, I encourage you to listen to all voices and viewpoints (not just the ones you agree with) and show compassion for each other. It should go without saying that each and every life is precious and deserves to be treated with dignity.

As law enforcement professionals we hold a unique position in society, tasked with the responsibility of upholding the law. However, we must not let this responsibility separate or isolate us from the communities that we live and serve. Never forget that we are all part of something greater than ourselves.

Phone: 860.692.7780 ♦ Fax: 860.692.7783
24 Wolcott Hill Road ♦ Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109
Website: www.ct.gov/doc

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

I am sure many of you are frustrated, as I am, that the actions of a few individuals has stained the reputations of all those associated with the law enforcement community. We are part of a profession based on maintaining safety and security, while also caring for those in our custody. As someone who has spent more than 30 years in corrections working to uphold the ideals of human dignity and rehabilitation, this negative association saddens me deeply.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon all of us to be shining examples of the best that our profession represents. I have no doubt that you will continue to carry out your duties, as you always have, in a humane, dignified and professional manner.

I do ask you to please be mindful of those with anger in their hearts who may wish you harm just because of the uniform you wear. Please be extra cautious traveling to and from work as well as while you are performing your duties in service to our community. As always, your safety is of paramount importance to me.

My thoughts and prayers are also with the family and friends of Mr. Floyd. It is my sincere desire that our country can heal from the tragic death without resulting in further divisions between factions of our society, but rather I hope we can work to strengthen relationships, heal past wounds, and build stronger communities where all are treated with equal respect and human dignity. I am not fooling myself thinking that this will be easy, but I have every faith in you.

As always, thank you for your dedication to this agency, and for your gallant service to each and every one of our citizens. Your selfless efforts are a tribute to our honorable profession. Please stay safe.