



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Inmate Briefly Hospitalized After Assault at WCI

TOWSON, MD (October 21, 2009)--- A 57-year old inmate serving a life term for murder was briefly hospitalized this morning after he was assaulted by another inmate at Western Correctional Institution in Cresaptown. The victim was struck several times in the head with a makeshift weapon (not a knife) as inmates were returning from morning recreation. He was taken to a local hospital for a head laceration and broken fingers, and returned to the WCI infirmary by early afternoon.

WCI staff have questioned a suspect, another inmate in his 50s serving life for homicide. A weapon has been recovered and the crime scene secured.

The Internal Investigative Unit (IIU) of the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services will be the lead investigative agency in this case. By statute, DPSCS IIU detectives are in charge of such investigations unless a State prison inmate dies, in which case Maryland State Police take over the lead. IIU always works closely with the local State's Attorney to prosecute those responsible for violent incidents inside State prisons.

At this time, WCI's executive leadership believes this morning's assault involved a dispute between two inmates and is not connected with any group or gang issues.

DPSCS has undertaken violence reduction initiatives, contraband interdiction efforts, and enhanced training and technology efforts, and the result has been overall violence inside DPSCS correctional facilities dramatically reduced: serious assaults on offenders are down 50% between FY '07 and FY '09; and serious assaults on staff were down 33% during the same period.

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