



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

Utah Department of Corrections

Executive Office

ROLLIN COOK
Executive Director

MARIA PETERSON
Public Information Officer

For Immediate Release | May 5, 2017

Department of Corrections Issues Statement on Criminal Charges Filed Against Daggett County Jail Employees

Utah Department of Corrections Executive Director Rollin Cook issued a statement Friday in response to the felony and misdemeanor charges filed by the Office of the Utah Attorney General against Daggett County employees.

The charges stem from a Department investigation into misconduct and criminal allegations at the county jail, including assaults on state inmates, mismanagement, inappropriate behavior between staff and inmates, and unsafe correctional practices.

“As the numerous felony and misdemeanor charges against the Daggett County employees show, the investigation into the jail operations uncovered allegations of abuse of inmates at the hands of the jail’s employees and mismanagement by its leadership.

“Once the investigation began, many jail staff members, community members, and inmates previously incarcerated at the jail came forward with additional information that corroborated the allegations of inappropriate and unsafe behavior by county staff.

“The results of the investigation uncovered not only the suspected activity that results in criminal charges, but a culture of pervasive, unacceptable correctional practices, such as sleeping on duty, providing inmates with video games, and holding barbeques for select inmates.

“Utah Department of Corrections places the safety of our facilities as the top priority. Under its previous management, the Daggett County Jail was not safe for the inmates or the public. Those responsible for these inmates and the management of this jail failed to properly manage staff disciplinary actions and significantly downplayed the severity of these acts.

“We would like to note there were many good correctional officers and staff employed by the jail, whose reputations should not be tarnished by the actions of a handful of staff and the leadership.

“We are currently working with county officials. We will not return any state inmates back to this jail unless and until we have confidence the new leadership at the jail holds safety and security as its main concerns.”

Utah Department of Corrections contracts with 20 jails to house about 1,500 state inmates. The Inmate Placement Program was created in 1987 to address overcrowding at the state's correctional facilities. Counties are paid per inmate at a rate of \$52 per day.

-30-

Contact: Maria Peterson, UDC Public Information Officer, 801-545-5536