

Florida Correctional Officers Anxiously Await an Answer From Governor DeSantis on 2022 and 2023 Recognition Payments

Will Governor DeSantis pay Correctional Officers and Sheriff's Detention Deputies Recognition Payments in 2023 as Essential Emergency First Responders or LEOs?

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Correctional Officers and Sheriff's Detention Deputies leave their families daily to voluntarily lock themselves up in a Florida jail or prison for as many as 5-7 days a week for periods of as much as 18 hours a day. This is the reality of being a Correctional Officer or a Sheriff's Detention Deputy in the State of Florida and being locked in with individuals suspected of having committed crimes and individuals actually convicted of committing a crime(s) (convicts). Correctional Officers and Sheriff's Detention Deputies are locked in the jail or prison that they work in for their 12 hour shift with all different types of inmates, and a great majority of inmates are either criminally and/or mentally insane, and officers often work in an open air unit or dorm where officers essentially work/live with as many as 72 of these potentially dangerous and unstable inmates during the course of their shift, every shift. Correctional Officers and Sheriff's Detention Deputies have a sworn duty to the State of Florida to serve and protect these special Florida communities by providing care, custody and control for and of the citizens of these special Florida communities called Florida's jails and prisons.



How Can Governor DeSantis Not Recognize Correctional Officers and Detention Deputies as Emergency First Responders and as Law Enforcement When He Has Done So in The Past and There Are Several Legal Precedents Stating They Are?

As a Correctional Officer or as a Sheriff's Detention Deputy, officers make sure that the inmates are fed while making sure to cater to their individual dietary needs, officers make sure inmates get their medication, officers make sure inmates get to and from their programs and recreation, and officers make sure inmates have clean clothes and are kept safe. Keep in mind, officers are dealing with inmates that are either suspected of or actually have been convicted of the most

heinous of crimes including but not limited to; murder, rape, pedophilia, child trafficking, human trafficking, drug manufacturing and drug trafficking, assault and battery, grand theft and on and on and I'm sure you get the picture by now. Oh I forgot the disturbing part, almost all the inmates hate the officers (especially the officers that are good at their job) and officers are locked in with these individuals for 12-18 hours and the only weapons officers are given is 1 canister of pepper spray, 1 pair of handcuffs, that 1 week long defensive tactics training class they took years ago in the academy and a radio to call for backup in case any inmates have a medical emergency or decide to harm themselves, one another, a member of

the staff, a fellow officer or God forbid the officer. Oh, and for the cherry on top, most of the inmates are from the communities where the officers and their families live in and officers will see many of the inmates when they eventually do get out of jail or prison everywhere officers go and inmates will know everything about officers and their family. Sorry to make it sound so bleak but, Welcome to Corrections!

“

No One Fights Alone! Live By Faith, Not By Sight. I know We Have Done Everything We Can. Just Relax, Because Nothing Happens Overnight and Just Keep on Trucking!”

*Florida Correctional Officers Association (FLCOS) President
C. Rodriguez*

CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND SHERIFF'S DETENTION DEPUTIES ARE ESSENTIAL EMERGENCY FIRST RESPONDERS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT.

There are no police, EMT's, or firefighters in the special Florida communities full of Florida voters known as jails and prisons. In fact, usually the only thing correctional officers and detention deputies hear regarding the police

during shift are calls for assistance from officers that are in need of their help in handling the uncooperative and possibly violent suspect(s) they arrested.

Thank God Correctional Officers and Detention Deputies are made to attend the almost identical academy that police are and are certified and re-certified annually in; CPR and First Aid for Criminal Justice Officers, Criminal Justice Firearms, Criminal Justice Defensive Tactics, Responding to Incidents and Emergencies, Officer Safety, and Supervising Special Populations in a



Correctional Facility amongst others.

Thank God that Governor DeSantis and the Florida Department of Health clearly stated that Correctional Officers are in fact [Emergency Responders according to the HERO program](#) to stem the plague of opioid overdoses in our state.

Thank God that Correctional Officers and Detention Deputies are required by [Florida State Law to respond as law enforcement officers](#) if any convict, held under the provisions of law, may have escaped.

Inmates commit brutal attacks that have resulted in death or paralysis to correctional officers and detention deputies, members of the jail or prison staff, and one another and they harm themselves on a regular basis. Inmates have medical emergencies on a regular basis including but not limited to; seizures, heart attacks, asphyxiation due to choking or hanging themselves when they attempt or God forbid are in fact successful at committing suicide by hanging themselves. Inmates have slit their own wrists or necks or cut other body parts, swallowed razor blades, swallowed hair clipper guards, swallowed plastic food utensils, and even stabbed themselves in the neck with pens. Inmates regularly have communicable diseases such as HIV /AIDS, STDs, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Viral Hepatitis, Influenza and recently Covid-19 and its many variants. Not to mention a high majority of inmates suffer from severe mental illness and suffer severe and highly dangerous psychotic episodes while incarcerated in Florida's jails and prisons.

According to ODMP, beginning in 2020, thousands of law enforcement officers and other first responders throughout the country began to contract COVID-19 during the worldwide pandemic. Jails and prisons, in particular, suffered tremendous losses due to the constant close proximity between the correctional officers and large inmate populations. Since March 2020, ODMP has verified that over 900 law enforcement officers have died as the result of a confirmed or presumed exposure while on duty and continues to work with hundreds of other agencies that have suffered a COVID-related death.

In 2021, Correctional Officers and Sheriff's Detention Deputies received the \$1000 recognition payments from Governor DeSantis.

In 2022, Sheriff's Detention Deputies were told they were not eligible as either first responders



The CERT and RRT Teams are units of specially trained Correctional Officers and Sheriff's Detention Deputies that are utilized to handle high risk and potentially violent situations in Florida's Jails and Prisons.

or law enforcement officers for the recognition payments.

In 2023, Governor DeSantis has proposed 95 million more than last year for the recognition payments for essential first responders.

Florida County Correctional Officers are asking if you will [sign their petition](#).

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