



New Jersey Department of Corrections

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FEDERAL COURT TERMINATES CONSENT DECREE FOR EDNA MAHAN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY, CITING PERMANENT CULTURAL REFORM AND SYSTEM COMPLIANCE

Department of Corrections Achieves Sustained and Durable Compliance Within Five Years

Trenton, N.J. – On July 15, 2026, the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey officially granted a joint motion to terminate the federal consent decree overseeing the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility. The order, signed by the Honorable Zahid N. Quraishi, brings a formal end to five years of federal oversight following sustained, department-wide reforms.

The court's decision follows a joint motion submitted by the U.S. Department of Justice, the State of New Jersey, and the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC). Crucially, Federal Monitor Jane Parnell formally endorsed the termination, concluding that the reforms are now deeply institutionalized, sustainable, and built to continue without court oversight.

"The decision by the United States District Court to terminate the federal consent decree is a monumental milestone, but more importantly, it is validation of a deep cultural shift that has occurred over the last five years. These reforms were never just checklist items for us; they are now fundamental and integrated into every aspect of how we operate," said NJDOC Commissioner Victoria L. Kuhn, Esq. "This achievement belongs to our leadership and staff at Edna Mahan who have been wholly invested in this progress, to the Board of Trustees and stakeholders for their continual support and to the women in our care whose voices and input have been absolutely instrumental in moving us forward. We entered this process committed to creating meaningful reform rooted in the operation of safe and secure facilities. While federal oversight formally ends, our unwavering commitment to maintaining a culture of dignity, safety, and rehabilitation remains the permanent foundation of the New Jersey Department of Corrections."

Under the consent decree, the NJDOC successfully implemented several key initiatives to establish a permanent culture of safety and accountability:

- **Expanded Camera Coverage & Technology:** Fully deployed body-worn cameras for all custody staff and upgraded stationary cameras to systematically eliminate facility blind spots.
- **Strengthened Supervision and Accountability:** Enhanced daily oversight, operational protocols, and leadership expectations at all facility levels.
- **Improved Investigations:** Revamped internal procedures to ensure thorough, timely, objective, and effective investigative reviews.
- **Retaliation Safeguards:** Enacted strict, well-established protections to support both staff and incarcerated individuals who report misconduct.
- **Improved Language Access:** Implemented comprehensive services to ensure clear communication and accessibility for all incarcerated persons.
- **Established a Sustainable Quality Improvement Program:** Built ongoing internal monitoring mechanisms to continuously evaluate and sustain high standards.

In her final evaluation to the court, Federal Monitor Jane Parnell verified that the NJDOC has achieved lasting compliance across all remaining requirements and has successfully integrated safety reforms into routine, daily operations. The Monitor noted that the Department did not treat the termination of the decree as a mere administrative step, concluding that the end of federal oversight will not mean the end of these essential reforms.

To ensure these advancements remain a permanent fixture of New Jersey's correctional system, the core tenets of the reforms have also been enshrined into state law under the Incarcerated Women's Protection Act, signed in January 2026. With the legal and cultural foundations firmly established, the NJDOC continues progress to replace the aging and crumbling Edna Mahan Correctional Facility with a new, state-of-the-art campus designed to be trauma-informed and modern correctional standards.

Watch: [How Cultural Change Happened in Women's Corrections: NJDOC's Reform Story](#)

About New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC)

To enhance public safety through rehabilitation, accountability, and seamless reentry, fostering a safer New Jersey for all. For more information, visit: [NJDOC.gov](https://www.njdoc.gov).