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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NEW JERSEY INCARCERATED CAN NOW EARN TIME OFF THEIR SENTENCES
THROUGH NEW EDUCATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

Trenton, N.J. – January 22, 2020 – Eligible incarcerated individuals now have the opportunity to earn time off their sentence as part of the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) Education Incentive Initiative.

Select credit-bearing courses provide remission from time of sentence for achievements in education and workforce training. The initiative is the NJDOC's latest effort to support reentry and dovetails with the Department's prerelease employment navigation efforts to build partnerships with employers as incarcerated individuals prepare to return to the workforce.

At the core of the Department's mission is the commitment to holistic rehabilitation of individuals through education, vocational training, substance-use disorder support, and behavioral counseling.

"Education is a powerful tool to reduce recidivism and support successful reentry," said Commissioner Marcus O. Hicks, Esq. "By incentivizing education, we are able to foster personal development and job-readiness. We are confident that this new initiative will encourage more individuals to enroll in educational and workforce programming that can give them the skills needed for success after release."

Eligible courses include high school equivalency and post-secondary degrees, plumbing, drywall, DOT hazardous materials, small engine repair, heating and ventilation, electrical, carpentry, welding, culinary arts, weatherization, alternative energy and green technology, to

name a few. All courses are intended to develop a pool of job-ready candidates available to transition into a modern employment market.

Each educational and vocational course ranges from 0.2 to 20 credits depending on the duration of the course. For example, completing a course in green technology and small engine repair would earn one credit, while earning a Bachelor of Arts degree would earn 20 credits.

One credit amounts to one day of remission time, and there are no limits to how many credits an individual can earn.

In accordance with state law, remission credits apply to the Maximum Release Date only and not the Parole Eligibility date.

Anyone who completes a course by or participates in the initiative after the effective date of Jan. 21, 2020 is eligible, provided they are not within 210 days of their Maximum Release Date.

In 2019, more than 3,800 individuals earned a vocational certificate or post-secondary degree while incarcerated. During that time, more than 7,000 certificates of completion were awarded for Career Technical Education programs, 484 individuals received a high school equivalency diploma, and 600 individuals enrolled in post-secondary courses.

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