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NEWS RELEASE
LINCOLN FIRE & RESCUE
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LFR RESPONSE TO SECURED FACILITIES

In response to a number of high profile incidents occurring at local correctional facilities, Lincoln Fire & Rescue (LF&R) formed a task force to explore alternative strategies when responding to secure facilities to ensure the highest level of patient care balanced with the safety concern for first responders and correctional staff. Early on in the process, Director Scott Frakes with the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services contacted LF&R and offered a joint meeting with his staff to explore cooperative solutions to the growing challenges of EMS and fire suppression responses to State facilities in Lincoln. A joint meeting between the two agencies occurred on September 14, 2016, and from that meeting a list of strategic operational changes were developed that will be implemented on October 1, 2016. A summary of the operational changes include:

For EMS related incidents, NDCS staff will have procedures in place to now bring patients to a secured staging area near the perimeter of the facility where a faster transfer of patients can occur, as opposed to the delay created when attempting to get the ambulance and crew through the secured areas and to the patient's location. Also, NDCS staff will implement a more efficient process for relaying critical patient condition information between the correctional staff within the facility operating on radios, through the central communications center and on to the 911 operator to ensure the actual response better meets the needs of the incident. For fire related incidents, LF&R and NDCS staff are in the process of developing a more comprehensive pre-plan for each facility that will outline the most efficient entry locations and screening process depending on the area of the complex involved. This strategy, coupled with a reoccurring "walk-thru" of the facilities with NDCS staff to identify faster methods of removing inmates from the impacted area, will improve victim survivability and provide faster and safer access for firefighters for suppression operations.

The strategies developed between LF&R and NDCS will not necessarily result in fewer calls for service to the various State facilities, but should provide a system that decreases the adverse impact to the community when multiple units are committed for long durations, and provide a measurable improvement to patient care when incidents do occur.

LF&R would like to thank Director Frakes and his staff for their level of cooperation and engagement in working together to improve safety and service to the community.

