STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
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WILLIAM RYAN HART, JR.
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October 21, 2026

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly Ayotte
and the Honorable Executive Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

In accordance with RSA 94:6, the New Hampshire Department of Corrections respectfully requests to place Peter J. Ash at the sixth step for the position of Warden of the New Hampshire State Prison for Men (9U116), unclassified salary grade KK, earning $147,407.00 annually, effective upon the first day of the first pay period following Governor and Executive Council approval. Funding is 100% General Funds.

EXPLANATION

Pursuant to RSA 94:6, the Governor and Executive Council may set Captain Ash's salary within the statutory range based on his qualifications. This position is unclassified, letter grade KK. Captain Ash will supervise a classified employee holding the position of Major, who is currently compensated at SOC 33C, Band 7, Step 11, with an annual base salary of $140,212.80, plus an additional $1,560 in annual hazard pay, for total annual compensation of $141,772.80.

RSA 94:1-a, III states: *"...any official whose salary upon placement in the new salary range is less than that of a subordinate classified employee shall be placed at the next higher step in range above said classified employee..."*

Accordingly, we are respectfully requesting approval to place Captain Ash at $147,407.00 annually, in accordance with the statutory provision requiring placement at the next higher step in the range above a subordinate classified employee.

Captain Ash began his career with the New Hampshire Department of Corrections in November 1999 as a Correctional Officer at NHSP-M. Throughout his career, he has steadily advanced through the ranks of Corporal, Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Captain, gaining experience at nearly every level of institutional operations. His career has been spent almost entirely at NHSP-M, providing him with an exceptional understanding of the facility, its workforce, security operations, and the unique challenges associated with managing a large correctional institution.

Since February 2024, Captain Ash has served as Acting Chief of Security (Major) at NHSP-M, one of the prison's most critical leadership positions. In this role, he has been responsible for overseeing institutional security operations, ensuring compliance with Department policies and applicable regulations, managing personnel and resources, responding to complex incidents, and evaluating operational practices to strengthen institutional safety and effectiveness. His responsibilities require sound judgment, decisive leadership, and the ability to manage difficult situations in an environment where decisions can have immediate consequences for the safety of employees, inmates, and the public.

Prior to serving as Acting Chief of Security, Captain Ash held numerous supervisory and command positions, including Corrections Captain and Shift Commander, Corrections Lieutenant, and Conflict Investigation Sergeant. These assignments provided him with extensive experience supervising correctional personnel, managing institutional operations, overseeing specialized housing units, conducting investigations, responding to emergencies, and coordinating resources across multiple operational areas. His progression through the Department has given him a comprehensive understanding of both the frontline responsibilities of correctional staff and the broader management and administrative responsibilities necessary to lead an institution.

Captain Ash has also demonstrated a longstanding commitment to professional development and the Department's mission. He has completed supervisory and leadership training, advanced gang training, and specialized training concerning radicalization within correctional institutions. He has served on the Department's Security Threat Group Validation Committee and Recruitment and Retention Team, contributing his operational knowledge and experience to broader Department initiatives. His dedication and service have been recognized through a Medal of Honor in 2015 and Team Commendation Awards in 2016 and 2024.

The position of Warden at NHSP-M carries extraordinary responsibility and is among the most important leadership positions within the Department. The Warden is responsible for the overall administration and operation of the State's largest correctional facility, including the care, custody, safety, and treatment of inmates, the supervision and management of sworn and civilian employees, and the maintenance of a safe, secure, and orderly institutional environment. The position requires a leader capable of making critical decisions under difficult circumstances, managing substantial operational and personnel responsibilities, and ensuring that the institution fulfills its public safety mission.

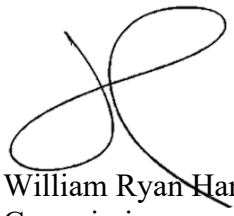
The importance of experienced leadership at NHSP-M cannot be overstated. The Department continues to face significant challenges related to staffing shortages, aging infrastructure, and the increasing demands of correctional operations. These challenges require a Warden who understands the institution, can effectively lead its workforce, and has the operational experience and judgment necessary to maintain security while supporting the Department's broader mission of rehabilitation and reducing recidivism.

Captain Ash's more than 26 years of service, combined with his extensive command experience and current responsibilities as Acting Chief of Security, have prepared him to assume this critical leadership role. His familiarity with NHSP-M's operations, employees, security needs, and institutional challenges will provide continuity and stability in leadership at a time when both are essential.

The Department has utmost confidence in Captain Ash's ability to lead NHSP-M with professionalism, sound judgment, and a strong commitment to the safety of staff, inmates, and the public. His career reflects a sustained commitment to the Department and the correctional profession, and his experience and leadership make him well qualified to serve as Warden of the New Hampshire State Prison for Men.

For these reasons, the Department respectfully requests approval to place Peter J. Ash at Step 6 of unclassified salary grade KK, earning $147,407.00 annually, in accordance with RSA 94:6 and RSA 94:1-a, III.

Respectfully submitted,



William Ryan Hart, Jr.
Commissioner
New Hampshire Department of Corrections