

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT

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December 28, 2009

NEWS RELEASE

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Corrections Department K-9s to Undergo Evaluation and Receive Training

Santa Fe – The New Mexico Corrections Department today is transporting prison K-9s Ace and Echo from the Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility in Las Cruces to Santa Fe for a thorough evaluation. Ace and Echo are drug interdiction and fugitive apprehension dogs that have been trained to keep drugs out of the prison facilities, to patrol prison grounds and to apprehend fugitives. Recently, the two German Shepherds were placed in kennel housing on prison grounds and have experienced some separation and anxiety issues. The dogs will spend the next three months at the Penitentiary of New Mexico in Santa Fe, where they will be evaluated and receive additional training.

Corrections Department master K-9 trainer and manager, Anthony Ramon, will oversee the care and training of Ace and Echo, while they are housed at the prison kennels during their evaluation and training period. Ramon is a certified K-9 handler with nearly ten years of experience and has trained and certified approximately 1,000 dogs. Ramon trains every Corrections Department dog and also trains K-9s for various law enforcement agencies across the state.

Ace and Echo will follow a three-month regimen that will include training on obedience, controlled socialization, narcotic detection, patrol and apprehension. They will also be conditioned to live in kennel housing on prison grounds, so that they may return to the Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility and be housed on prison grounds. Ace and Echo will begin their evaluation process this week, beginning with a veterinary exam. The dogs will also work with a dog behavior specialist, provided by Heather Ferguson of Animal Protection of New Mexico. The behavior specialist will assess the dogs' behavior and mental condition. Master trainer Ramon is optimistic about the dogs' ability to continue working as K-9 officers.

All information garnered from the veterinarian's report, the behavior expert's evaluation and the training will assist Ramon and the department in determining if Ace and Echo are healthy enough to return to work as drug interdiction and fugitive apprehension K9s.

There are eighteen K-9s at 10 New Mexico Corrections Department prisons statewide. K-9s are essential tools in maintaining safe and secure prisons.