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(June 14, 2019)

News Release

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Iqaluit, Nunavut (June 14, 2019) – Nunavut's new Corrections Act has received Royal Assent. It ensures that the territory's corrections system incorporates culturally-relevant programming and rehabilitation measures, founded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.

“This made-in Nunavut Corrections Act will make Nunavut’s correctional system a leader in the protection of inmate rights and is a reflection of the importance of Inuit Societal Values, culture and language. This legislation takes into consideration our unique history and incorporates Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit to address modern developments in the field of corrections,” said Acting Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Nunavut David Akeeagok.

Key changes to the new Act include:

- Increased accountability and transparency through the creation of the independent investigations officer and deputy investigations officer positions responsible for review and oversight of corrections decision making.
- Provisions regarding the use of force, search and seizure, and limits on disciplinary segregation.
- Provisions respecting the mental health needs of inmates.
- Implementation of international and Canadian correctional best practices and standards in rehabilitation and reintegration.
- The creation of a formal grievance procedure, allowing for reviews and oversight on the use of segregation, and the tabling of an annual report.
- Support the provision of culturally-appropriate corrections programming through the creation of an Inuit Societal Values Committee

The Corrections Act will be brought into force once the Investigations Officer position is filled and the development of operational rules and procedures facilitating the enforcement of the Act is complete.

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Media Contacts:

Backgrounder on Bill 1 – Corrections Act

Purpose of the legislation:

This legislation replaces the outdated Act and its Regulations in their entirety, substituting what is currently in force with a unique Nunavut corrections legislation. This legislation takes into consideration Nunavut's history and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles, while addressing modern developments in the field of corrections.

Legislative focus:

The key focus areas of Act are as follows;

1. Human rights and the humane custody of incarcerated Nunavummiut;
2. Incorporation of a Nunavut-based approach founded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) and grounded in Inuit Societal Values;
3. Increased accountability with the introduction of independent adjudication in key areas; and
4. Modernization in keeping with International and Canadian correctional best practices and standards in rehabilitation and reintegration.

The proposed Bill is the result of a broad consultative process that took place in late 2016 and early 2017 which included consultation with inmates, justice stakeholders, hamlet councils, Inuit Organizations, Elders and community members.

Major Reforms:

Some of the major reforms in the new Act include the addition of the following:

- Definitions regarding written notices to inmates, including language requirements and accommodations for individuals who have difficult reading and writing.
- Requirements to consider an inmate's mental health issues as health issues rather than as safety concerns and requirements for correctional officers to direct inmates to mental health services.
- The update of the guiding principles and purpose sections of the Act.
- Legislated requirements guiding the use of force.
- The creation of independent oversight positions, the investigations officer and the deputy investigations officer, to act as arms-length accountability and
- transparency mechanism, ensuring decision making is in full compliance with all existing legislation, regulations and policy.
- Additional oversight of the disciplinary board process including Independent appeal and limits on the use of administrative segregation.
- A legislated complaints process and protections against reprisals.
- Requirements to produce annual reports.
- The creation of an Inuit Societal Values Committee to guide the implementation of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Inuit Societal Values in policies, programming and services

offered by Corrections.

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