



State of New Jersey

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NJ Fugitives Get Chance for Safe Surrender in Camden

CAMDEN – Fugitives hiding from the law will have a chance to surrender peacefully in a neutral setting next month, under an initiative launched by the US Marshals Service, and supported by the New Jersey State Parole Board and partner law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State and local levels.

State Parole Board Chairman Peter J. Barnes Jr. today joined US Marshal James Plousis; US Attorney Christopher J. Christie; New Jersey Director of Gangs, Guns and Violent Crime Jose Cordero, representing the Office of the Attorney General; representatives of the New Jersey State Police; and county and local law enforcement leaders to announce the launch of Fugitive Safe Surrender in Camden.

Fugitive Safe Surrender has proven highly successful in other states, but has never been held in New Jersey.

The Fugitive Safe Surrender initiative in Camden will operate from **Wednesday, November 19** through **Saturday, November 22**, at **Antioch Baptist Church**, 690-700 Ferry Avenue. Individuals will be able to turn themselves in at the church from **9 am to 4 pm** throughout the four days. Their cases will be adjudicated at a nearby community center.

US citizens who are wanted for non-violent felonies from any New Jersey county, and who have no prior history of violence, will be able to meet with county and municipal court officials to reenter the court system. Surrendering under these conditions will be viewed favorably by judges reviewing the cases. Most are expected to be able to return home the same day, with a court date at a later time.

Persons wanted for violent offenses are also encouraged to turn themselves in at Fugitive Safe Surrender. Their surrender will be viewed favorably by judges. Individuals hiding from the law are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. After November 19-22, no Fugitive Safe Surrender events are planned in New Jersey for the foreseeable future.

“The mission of parole, especially under the Governor’s Crime Plan, is to hold ex-offenders accountable, and help them become law-abiding citizens,” Barnes said. “Our parole officers worked effectively with the US Marshals Service to bring Fugitive Safe Surrender to Camden. We believe this initiative will help make New Jersey’s communities safer, by giving fugitives the chance to turn themselves in, face the court, and begin building productive lives.”

(more)

US Marshal Plousis said, "Fugitive Safe Surrender has shown great success nationwide. It has the potential to enhance safety not just for law enforcement officers, but for communities. We are proud to bring this initiative to New Jersey, with the help of law enforcement and community partners at the Federal, State and local levels."

In addition to prosecutors and judges, social service workers and counselors will be present during Fugitive Safe Surrender to connect fugitives with employment assistance and counseling services. The State Parole Board is working with businesses, to seek and develop employment opportunities for parolees and for fugitives who turn themselves in.

The US Marshals Service's Fugitive Safe Surrender program was launched in Cleveland in 2005. Since then, 14,892 fugitive cases have been resolved at Fugitive Safe Surrender initiatives in 11 cities. The most recent, held September 2008 in Philadelphia, successfully resolved 1,246 fugitive cases.

Fugitive Safe Surrender is an initiative of the US Marshals Service in collaboration with the New Jersey State Parole Board, US Attorney's Office, New Jersey Attorney General's Office, New Jersey State Police, Superior Court of Camden County, the Camden County, Gloucester County and Salem County prosecutors offices; the Camden County, Gloucester County and Salem County sheriffs departments; the office of the Mayor of Camden; the Camden Police Department; and neighboring municipal police departments. Partner agencies include Antioch Baptist Church; the Catholic Diocese of Camden; the Camden County Board of Social Services; and the region's faith-based and community-based organizations.

More information about Fugitive Safe Surrender can be found at:
<http://www.usmarshals.gov/safesurrender/index.html>.

The New Jersey State Parole Board (SPB) is New Jersey's lead reentry agency, and works to ensure ex-prisoners return to society as law-abiding citizens. As required by law, appointed Parole Board Members and staff conduct more than 20,000 hearings per year, solicit input from victims and decide parole matters. SPB sworn parole officers supervise more than 15,000 offenders statewide. In addition, SPB is New Jersey's primary law enforcement agency responsible for sex offender supervision. SPB officers are also active partners with multiple Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies and task forces. Finally, SPB's Community Programs Unit partners with government, non-profit and private agencies to connect ex-prisoners with vocational, mental health and related services, targeted to break the cycle and risk of crime.

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