

# DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FIRST TO RECEIVE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ETHICS INTEGRITY CERTIFICATION**

(JUNEAU) – The Alaska Department of Corrections has become the first corrections department in the nation to receive the National Institute of Ethics (NIE) Integrity Certification. The department was given the certification by institute founder Dr. Neal Trautman today at the department’s training academy in Anchorage.

To hold the certification, the department has committed to a wide-ranging and ambitious three-year program with direct impact on recruitment and hiring practices, management style, and on-the-job training.

“This touches all aspects of department operations,” said Commissioner Marc Antrim. “Certification is just a starting point. It’s about good government and committing to provide the best public protection possible.”

The integrity initiative begins by establishing an ethics committee – the first of seven goals. Other goals include strengthening the hiring process, implementing integrity training and an Oath of Honor, and increasing the level of trust within the management team . Additional key goals include improving on-the-job training along with the inclusion of ethics awareness, and establishing an awards and intervention program.

The department’s ethics committee has been meeting for about a year, and a strengthened hiring process has been in place since the beginning of 2005. Efforts to achieve the remaining goals are ongoing, Commissioner Antrim explained.

“The NIE ethics certification process is designed to be a grass-roots effort – not top-down,” Antrim said. “That’s why it’s a long-term process. The overall goal is to create a culture of ‘this is how we do it here.’ Basically, we want to hire good people, train all our staff well and treat

them right. We want mutual trust and respect, a better command structure, and a fertile ground for developing leaders.”

With the certification in place, the department is continuing its efforts to complete its Integrity Plan. Important tasks underway include the delivery of an eight-hour block of integrity training to all staff, enhancing the Field Training Officer program, and developing an Employee Recognition Board.

The National Institute for Ethics (NIE) was formed to improve the public's confidence in public safety agencies. The NIE is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to furthering ethics and integrity. The NIE provides integrity related certification programs, video training tapes, manuals, books, and seminars.