

GOV. BESHEAR DEDICATES NEW KENTUCKY STATE POLICE ACADEMY CAMPUS IN FRANKFORT

Repurposing academy from former minimum security prison allows cost savings, efficiency

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Governor Steve Beshear formally dedicated the new Kentucky State Police Academy today, unveiling a facility designed to provide current and future troopers with enhanced knowledge and skills to serve and protect the citizens of the Commonwealth.

“From day one, it was evident that the Kentucky State Police was in dire need of a facility that measured up to the level of professionalism exemplified by our troopers,” Gov. Beshear said. “This is the premier law enforcement agency in the state, and it certainly deserves a first-class physical training facility.”

The new facility, located at 380 Coffee Tree Road between the Franklin County Regional Jail and the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial, covers a 220-acre site that includes a 15,201-square-foot building with a 7,800-square-foot multi-purpose room that will allow cadet training during inclement weather. The state closed the minimum-security prison in 2011 after the prison population dropped. Remaining prisoners were reassigned to other facilities.

“With this transformation, we have taken advantage of an innovative – and almost ironic – opportunity,” said Justice and Public Safety Secretary J. Michael Brown. “Repurposing a facility that had been designed and built to accommodate those who had run afoul of the law, into a facility now designed to train those who uphold and protect the law and citizens of Kentucky.”

“Gov. Beshear has provided our agency with a unique opportunity for growth and development,” said KSP Commissioner Rodney Brewer. “We now have a modern academy where cadets and troopers can train indoors year-round.”

For the past 32 years, the KSP training academy has been located on the top floor of the agency’s headquarters at 919 Versailles Road, a converted hotel building. It was in a high-traffic area, provided no room for growth and required cadets to travel off site for some training activities. The new facility will allow for a more centralized approach with less travel time and expense. It also provides space for other non-training activities such as awards ceremonies and special events.

“We have been training 21st-century troopers in a 20th-century facility,” said Commissioner Brewer. “Thanks to Gov. Beshear’s support, this new complex will boost our effectiveness and efficiency by providing a more focused environment with fewer distractions.”

Brewer said that Phase I of the training academy project has been completed. Future phases include an indoor firing range and an additional classroom complex.

“By offering an enhanced training experience, we will be able to better attract the quantity and quality of applicants needed to maintain our ranks and better serve and protect the citizens of Kentucky,” he said.

Commissioner Brewer said the design of the new academy is unique and deeply rooted in KSP heritage and symbolism.

“The gray line that runs in the sidewalk throughout the academy is a reminder of ‘The Thin Gray Line,’ Brewer said, “It’s a term coined to describe the agency by former KSP Director James E. ‘Ted’ Bassett, III who stated, ‘The only thing in Kentucky that separates law from lawlessness is the thin gray line’ before a legislative committee in Frankfort.”

Other symbols include the limestone rock wall foundation of the administrative building, emblematic of the “bedrock” of Kentucky with individual “rough” stones representing cadets when they enter the academy topped by a smooth, polished section representing troopers who are currently serving.

“This design feature represents the cadets who are rough when they enter the academy and polished when they leave,” said Brewer.

The first cadet class to live and train at the new academy is scheduled to report for 23 weeks of training on May 24.