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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ATHENS, Ohio** – December kicked off a new initiative for SEPTA Correctional Facility, created through an exciting partnership with the Athens County Prosecutor’s Office and Hopewell Health Centers. SEPTA, Athens County’s Community Based Correctional Facility (CBCF), is now offering Vivitrol (Naltrexone) to its residents.

The conversation to bring Vivitrol to SEPTA was sparked following the inaugural graduation of thirty-three (33) individuals from Prosecutor Blackburn’s Vivitrol Program in June 2017. The ceremony was an opportunity for community agencies, like SEPTA and Hopewell, to see the positive effect the completion of the program has on a participant. Seeing the success and acceptance of a non-traditional approach ultimately lead to the implementation of Vivitrol to residents at SEPTA and ongoing Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) with Hopewell.

The Athens County Prosecutor’s Community Justice team worked with Hopewell and SEPTA to set-up the program. SEPTA is offering Vivitrol not only to residents that are court ordered, but also those that would like to voluntarily receive treatment, much like Prosecutor Blackburn’s Vivitrol Program.

SEPTA starts participants on Vivitrol, individual counseling, and large group meetings which are facilitated by the Athens County Prosecutor’s Office. Follow-up care will be scheduled upon the offenders release in their home county.

Prosecutor Keller Blackburn spoke of his excitement about the new direction at SEPTA, “I am proud that we can expand treatment opportunities for those addicted to opiates. We have gone to great lengths to treat addicts and stop those who spread addiction. We are enthusiastic to share our experiences in running Ohio’s first prosecutorial based Vivitrol program.”