

MDOC HEADLINE

The Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) has strengthened public safety by hiring additional Correctional Officers, obtaining funds to strengthen security at maximum security units, and removing inmate access to potentially dangerous personal items. MDOC has broadened the Intensive Supervision program into all circuit court districts and created a voice for victims of crime.

MDOC remains in compliance with inmate overcrowding in county jails. This accomplishment has not gone unnoticed.

In June 2000, U.S. District Judge Jerry Davis fined the state \$1.8 million dollars for non-compliance. Since August 2000, MDOC has ensured that county jails were not overcrowded and \$500,000 was returned to the state as of January 2001.

On March 29, 2001 Judge Davis ordered the remaining \$1.3 million dollars be returned due to continued compliance on the part of MDOC and actions taken by MDOC, the Mississippi Legislature, Attorney General, and Governor to address prison overcrowding.

DEQ Headline

On March 5, 2001, Governor Musgrove designated the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) as the lead state agency for managing a new federal program, the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP). CIAP, administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, will provide millions of dollars to Mississippi local governments and other organizations to implement projects to protect and improve the health of the Mississippi Coastal ecology.

On March 28, 2001, Governor

Musgrove signed Executive Order No. 844, establishing the Governor's Water and Sewer Task Force, and designating Charles Chisolm, MDEQ Executive Director, as Chairman. The task force, charged with submitting recommendations to the Governor by October 15, 2001, will focus its efforts on water supply and wastewater treatment system infrastructure needs that must be addressed to promote economic development and improve the quality of life, especially in the state's rural areas.

MBN HEADLINE

The Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics has been approved to receive \$1 million to combat methamphetamine production and distribution. Funding will come through the U.S. Justice Department's Community-Oriented Policing Services program, created by the president in 1994 to provide crime-fighting resources to state and local law enforcement.

MBN will use the grant funds for equipment purchases and in-service training, resulting in better service to local police.

Makeshift labs producing methamphetamine in Mississippi,

first seen in the Delta, are now found statewide. Last fiscal year, the MBN seized 13 pounds of methamphetamine, up from seven pounds the previous fiscal year. The drug has an estimated street value of \$15,000 per pound.

Methamphetamine is a highly potent form of amphetamine, which is used for medical treatment. Unlike other illegal drugs, which are often imported, methamphetamine can be made anywhere, giving the drug the potential to be deadlier and more widespread than crack cocaine.

MEDICAID HEADLINE

At the end of this year's legislative session members of the Senate unanimously confirmed Rica Lewis-Payton as Medicaid's Executive Director.

Medicaid Upper Payment Limits Bill dramatically increases the amount of money reimbursed to participating hospitals.

Enhanced dental benefits for Mississippi Health Benefits (CHIP) beneficiaries are now available. The CHIP Repealer is now removed. Under "Presumptive Eligibility" children applying for CHIP may now receive benefits during the 30-day processing period.

Created a new category of service for the reimbursement of

treatment for uninsured women under age 65 who test positive for Breast and Cervical Cancer. Services provided by physician assistants are now reimbursable.

Medicaid designated as the lead agency among multiple State agencies to develop a plan for the provision of services to persons with disabilities in the most integrated setting that is deemed appropriate.

Interagency Coordinating Council for Children and Youth - establishes and empowers the ICCCY to implement a planning process for agencies serving children with severe emotional disturbances (SED).

MEMA HEADLINE

Deadly tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, and flash floods have swept through Mississippi in February, March, and April resulting in eight deaths and causing widespread damage. The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency was called in for support and guidance to assist the local emergency management directors and the citizens in the affected counties. The destruction exceeded state and local resources and prompted Governor Ronnie Musgrove to seek federal assistance. The disaster declaration enables FEMA and MEMA to team up to help the affected citizens begin the long

and costly journey to recovery.

Senate Bill 2290 was signed into law by the Governor on March 12, 2001. This bill authorizes use of the Disaster Assistance Trust Fund for providing individual and public assistance under a State of Emergency declared by the Governor. This would assist eligible individuals, local and state governments when damages are not sufficient to warrant federal assistance. Although this legislation authorizes creation of these new state disaster assistance programs, there were no appropriation measures enacted to fund them during the session.

DFA HEADLINE

With the recent release of "Achieving More in Mississippi: Providing Efficient Government in a Changing Environment," the Department of Finance & Administration (DFA) reaffirms its commitment to more efficient government. This report is a blueprint for a government that responds to the needs of citizens, enhances agency performance, and insures the accountability of state government.

DFA assisted the Mississippi Legislature with the Capitol Improvement Bond Appropriation bill. It provides \$193 million of bond authority for state agen-

cies and community colleges

Through recent legislation, DFA is developing new guidelines for governing motor vehicle purchases with regard to the appropriateness of the vehicle's use.

DFA completed and submitted the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report to the Government Finance Officers Association. Mississippi has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence for this report since 1987. In addition to these notable accomplishments, DFA continues to manage the state's cash flow responsibly.