



PRESS Announcement

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Central Mississippi Correctional Facility Completes American Correctional Association (ACA) Audit

Jackson—Commissioner Christopher Epps today expressed his appreciation to the staff of the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility (CMCF) for their hard work and dedication in successfully demonstrating their ability to meet nationally accepted correctional standards. Following a three-day audit at CMCF by American Correctional Association (ACA) auditors, the state institution located in Pearl, Miss., received a recommended score of 100 on the mandatory standards and a recommended score of 98.16 on the non-mandatory standards.

“I commend Superintendent Lawrence Kelly and the staff at CMCF for embracing this challenge and receiving a recommendation for ACA Accreditation,” said Commissioner Epps. “This is indeed a monumental day for the state of Mississippi and the Mississippi Department of Corrections.”

The ACA auditing team arrived at CMCF on Monday, September 9. They spent three days reviewing all MDOC policies and procedures, the CMCF facility, and interviewed CMCF staff and inmates housed at the institution. To be awarded accreditation, CMCF must comply with 100% of the mandatory standards identified by ACA and comply with at least 90% of the non-mandatory standards identified by ACA.

The ACA Auditing team was comprised of three veteran correctional professionals. The ACA Auditor Chairperson, William O’Sullivan, is currently a correctional consultant from Mount Sterling, Illinois. He has 30½-years experience in corrections and has been an ACA auditor since 1999. Chairperson O’Sullivan retired from the Illinois Department of Corrections after more than 30 years of service, the last 12 years serving as the Warden of a 2,000-bed medium security facility in Mount Sterling. Previous to that assignment, he worked in facilities representing all custody levels — maximum, medium and minimum-security — work release, community corrections and parole.

Joining him were Alvin Braddy, a health care planning administrator at the Corrections Reception Center in Orient, Ohio and Michael Cody, a correctional consultant in Edmond, Oklahoma. Braddy has been a correction’s professional for 22 years, serving as an ACA auditor since 1998. Braddy served as the Director of Nursing over the outpatient department at the Orient Correctional Institution, which contained a 15-station hemo-dialysis unit, as well as serving as Director of Clinical Services at the Corrections Medical Center in Columbus, Ohio. Cody has over 30 years experience in corrections and has served as an ACA auditor since 1995. He has audited more than 60 public and private correctional facilities throughout the country.

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CMCF is currently in candidate status. The ACA auditing team will now report its findings to the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections (CAC), which will hold an accreditation panel hearing. At the CAC panel hearing it will be decided if CMCF is awarded accreditation.

“This recognition today proves that the employees of CMCF are dedicated professionals that daily provide public safety based on national standards established by criminal justice professionals,” said CMCF Superintendent Lawrence Kelly. “This is truly the epitome of teamwork and I’m proud that CMCF has demonstrated its professionalism by having the entire institution receive recommendation for full accreditation.”

Individual accreditation awards last for 3 years; however, the process is designed to be continuous. Accreditation is a system to verify that correctional programs comply with national standards developed by the American Correctional Association. The ACA Standards Committee continually revises the standards based on changing practices, current case law, and correctional agency experiences. Approved standards reflect the view of correctional practitioners, architects, medical and legal experts.

The advantages and benefits of accreditation are numerous and include:

- The assessment of a facility’s strengths and weaknesses;
- The identification of obtainable goals;
- The implementation of state of the art policies and procedures;
- The establishment of specific guidelines for daily operations;
- An aid in the defense of frivolous lawsuits;
- An increase in community support; and
- A higher level of staff professionalism and morale.

The South Mississippi Correctional Institution (SMCI) received their Certificate of Accreditation Award from the American Correctional Association (ACA) in July. SMCI was the first state institution in its entirety to receive the prestigious designation.

The Mississippi State Penitentiary in Parchman, Miss., is in candidate status. The institution is preparing for its official site visit and review from an ACA audit team later this year.

“I am confident that MSP will receive recommendation for accreditation,” said Commissioner Epps. “This process is raising the professional standards of corrections in Mississippi and demonstrating that MDOC employees are themselves professionals in corrections.”

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