



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Enhanced Training Provided to Community Services Employees in North Mississippi**

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Jackson—They are known across the state as probation and parole officers; but are more formally titled field officers. They are men and women who supervise adults convicted of felonies and sentenced to serve their time in the community instead of in a prison cell. In north Mississippi there are 222 field officers and community services personnel assigned to supervise more than 19,000 offenders statewide.

Throughout the next two months these Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) Community Services Division employees will be going back to school to enhance their skills in supervising offenders under community supervision. The enhanced training provides field officers hands-on skills in how to manage offenders who are emotionally disturbed and/or aggressive, techniques in conflict resolution and stress management, and the social and cultural lifestyles of the community supervised offender.

“All MDOC employees are required to have annual training that is focused on improving their work skills,” said MDOC Training Officer Billy Sisk. “This year Commissioner Johnson has required that more interpersonal and personal safety training be offered to MDOC employees designed to enhance our day to day involvement with offenders, the public and victims of crime.”

One component of the weeklong training includes an overview of what services are available to the public and employees alike who may become a victim of crime. An additional component of the enhanced training involves universal precautions, Blood Borne Pathogens and HIV/AIDS Awareness courses.

“All MDOC employees are being provided universal precaution training,” said Commissioner Johnson. “This training is the first phase of implementing the HIV Task Force recommendations which includes integrating HIV/AIDS inmates into educational, treatment and job skills (vocational) training classes. The HIV/AIDS population is not exclusive to our custody population. We do supervise offenders in the community who have tested positive for HIV/AIDS.”

(more)

There are 561 employees in the MDOC Community Services Division. Of these, 41 employees will receive training this week in Grenada. These employees supervise community offenders in the following counties: Alcorn, Attala, Benton, Bolivar, Calhoun, Carroll, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Clay, Coahoma, DeSoto, Grenada, Holmes, Humphreys, Itawamba, LaFayette, Lee, LeFlore, Lowndes, Marshall, Monroe, Montgomery, Noxubee, Okitibbeha, Panola, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Quitman, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tippah, Tishomingo, Tunica, Union, Washington, Webster, Winston, Yalobusha and Yazoo.

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**MEDIA NOTE: If you would like to interview MDOC Training Officer Billy Sisk or any of the field officers at the training workshop, please contact Claire Papizan at 601.359.5689.**