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Announcement of Personnel Action at the Claxton Court Service Office

(CLAXTON) — Today, DJJ Commissioner L. Gale Buckner announced another staff dismissal in a recent series of sweeping personnel actions designed to enforce safety and security reforms at the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice.

The Commissioner's latest system-wide crackdown on policy violations and officer misconduct focused on the DJJ Community Service Office in Claxton, Georgia with the termination of Juvenile Probation and Parole Specialist (JPPS) Johnny D. Waters.

Specialist Waters was terminated from the Claxton Court Service Office following an investigation into allegations of Employee Misconduct resulting from inappropriate use of state property and violation of several DJJ policies.

Allegations of officer misconduct at DJJ operations have been the target of investigations and surprise inspections ordered by the new Commissioner since she took office in November. The Commissioner's Safety and Security Teams began their probe at the Augusta YDC and then targeted their crackdown among twenty-seven DJJ secure facilities statewide.

"This administrative inquiry began when Specialist Johnny Waters' supervisor at the DJJ Claxton Office reported that Waters' work performance had diminished," said DJJ Commissioner L. Gale Buckner. "A GBI forensic computer analyst was called in to investigate after evidence of extensive prohibited activity was discovered on Specialist Waters' state-owned computer. A detailed GBI examination of the computer hard drive then revealed Specialist Waters had been accessing inappropriate websites on his state computer more than 450 times while on state time," Commissioner Buckner said.

"Our policy crackdown has continued to make a positive impact on most of our Corrections Officers and Staff throughout our system and they have become more diligent about enforcing DJJ policy at our facilities. As we had hoped, that's how this current misconduct came to light," said Commissioner Buckner.

Waters used his state-owned computer to view internet dating websites containing suggestive pictures. Specialist Waters was officially informed his dismissal was based on violations of DJJ policy when he allowed his "internet usage to significantly interfere with (your) job performance"...and... "repeatedly visited inappropriate websites on (your) work computer."

Commissioner Buckner predicted additional policy and misconduct violations may be revealed as DJJ investigators continue to receive cooperation from watchful DJJ Corrections Staff. The Commissioner promised the agency will be fast-tracking terminations like this one and using other corrective measures wherever they're needed.

(END RELEASE)

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