



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT
OF **JUVENILE JUSTICE**

AVERY D. NILES, COMMISSIONER

A MESSAGE FROM THE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Avery D. Niles, Commissioner

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New DJJ Youth Facility Construction Soon Underway **Community Leaders to Attend Wilkes County Groundbreaking**

(Washington, GA) – Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Commissioner Avery D. Niles is pleased to announce the groundbreaking ceremony for the state juvenile justice system's new Wilkes Regional Youth Detention Center (RYDC) in Washington, Georgia. **News media are invited to attend and tour the construction site.**

- WHAT:** Official groundbreaking for DJJ's new Wilkes Regional Youth Detention Center (RYDC)
- WHERE:** Wilkes County. 1430 Industrial Park Road, Washington, Georgia 30673
- WHEN:** **Tuesday, October 11th, 2016 at 1:00 p.m.**
- WHO:** Commissioner Avery D. Niles will officiate. DJJ Leadership will attend.
- INVITEES:** State Senator Bill Jackson, State Representative Trey Rhodes, State Representative Tom McCall and other community leaders are scheduled to attend.
- PARKING:** On-site parking will be provided for attendees.
- CAMERAS:** News photography/videography **will** be encouraged during this special access opportunity at the future Wilkes secure facility construction site.

The groundbreaking for the Wilkes RYDC marks an employment milestone for this East Central Georgia community, bringing 60 new jobs for teachers, nurses and juvenile corrections officers. The Wilkes RYDC will be a totally redesigned and rebuilt secure facility, repurposed from a former Department of

Corrections (DOC) adult pre-release center. The Wilkes RYDC will become a showcase for new Georgia juvenile justice programming.

The RYDC will require a considerable amount of new construction, but before the renovation work can begin the existing main building will be gutted, while the existing kitchen and laundry facilities will be left intact. Under the redesign plan, construction at the Wilkes RYDC will include 30,000 square feet of housing space to securely accommodate a population of 40 male and 8 female youth in custody. Another 6,000 square feet has been allocated for a new gymnasium. The Wilkes RYDC will showcase DJJ's added emphasis on education and technology, with 1,200 square feet designated for a new vocational education section.

Enhanced security measures will also be incorporated at the facility as part of DJJ's mission to ensure public safety. CCTV surveillance, touch-screen security control and the addition of upgraded perimeter fencing are included in the construction improvements. The secure facility is expected to be open and operational in 2017.

To learn more about available employment opportunities with the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice at the new Wilkes RYDC and throughout Georgia go to www.djjcareers.org. For more information on Juvenile Justice Reform in Georgia, please visit www.djjnewsandviews.org/juvenilejusticereform.

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The Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) is a multi-faceted agency that serves the needs of this state's young offenders up to the age of 21. The Department employs more than 4,000 men and women at 26 secure facilities and 92 community services offices throughout the state to effect justice and redirect the young lives in the agency's care.

Including those who are placed on probation, more than 50,000 youths are diverted each year to evidence-based community programs, sentenced to short-term incarceration or committed to the Department's long-term custody by the Juvenile Courts. It is the duty of DJJ's professional corrections staff to preserve public safety and safeguard the citizens of Georgia, as well as protect the victims of crimes so that they can rebuild their lives.

DJJ holds juvenile offenders accountable for their delinquent conduct so that they can take responsibility for their actions through probation, supervision and secure detention. At the same time, the youth are provided with medical and psychological treatment, as well as specialized education and programs designed to equip them with the social, intellectual and emotional tools needed to achieve their successful reentry and reintegration into community, workplace and neighborhood settings as more productive and law-abiding citizens.