



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT
OF **JUVENILE JUSTICE**

L. GALE BUCKNER, COMMISSIONER

A MESSAGE FROM THE

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

L. Gale Buckner, Commissioner

Jim Shuler, Director
Office of Communications



DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

3408 Covington Highway ▪ Decatur, Georgia ▪ 30032-1513
Telephone: (404) 508-7147 ▪ Fax: (404) 508-7341

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 2, 2012

CONTACT:

**Jim Shuler, Director
DJJ Communications
(404) 508-7238**

JimShuler@djj.state.ga.us

Georgia's Juvenile Justice Commissioner Announces State Retirement L. Gale Buckner to be Named Murray County Chief Magistrate

(DJJ Central Office – ATLANTA -GA) The Commissioner of the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) announced her retirement from state office today to begin a new phase in her lifetime of public service to the citizens of the State of Georgia.

Commissioner L. Gale Buckner announced that effective November 1st, 2012 she will retire from DJJ to assume the post of Chief Magistrate Judge in Murray County, in the part of the state where she began her law enforcement career at the Chatsworth Police Department in 1978.

“As you remember, I was already scheduled to retire November 2011 when Governor Deal asked me to join DJJ,” Commissioner Buckner said in a personal letter to DJJ employees today. The Commissioner says her entire mission when appointed by the Governor last November was to work with the DJJ leadership team at a time when the agency was in crisis mode due to safety and security deficiencies.

“I have stayed with DJJ until that crisis was corrected and I am satisfied the agency is operating on a stable path,” said Commissioner Buckner. “Now I am Guided to retire from State service after 31+ years and to begin a career in local government. After much prayer, I knew God wanted me to serve in this new role and I have heeded that call.”

In her personal letter to DJJ employees, Commissioner Buckner told more than four-thousand correctional staff members across the state that she has been appointed to fill the unexpired term of the former Chief Magistrate Judge in Murray County.

Now, with the same hands-on leadership style that has come to earn Buckner the title of a professional troubleshooter, she told her statewide staff, “It is exciting to fill this new Murray County position which is currently under investigation due to allegations of impropriety in that local office.”

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Buckner says her new round-trip commute will now be just three miles to work rather than her current 200-mile commute from her North Georgia home to DJJ Central Office in Decatur. She told DJJ Staff, "I have mixed emotions about leaving the service of Governor Deal's Administration and leaving each of you who hold such a tremendous place in my heart. Serving as your Commissioner has been my greatest honor in my 34+ year law enforcement career.

During that career, Buckner has served as a GBI Special Agent, the Executive Director of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, and as Chair and Vice Chair of the State Board of Pardons & Paroles.

Buckner will assume the position of Chief Magistrate of the Murray County Magistrate Court as appointed by the Superior Court Judges on November 1, 2012.

(END RELEASE)