

Avery D. Niles, Commissioner

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Office of Communications



DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

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Department of Juvenile Justice Prepares for Hurricane Matthew - Savannah RYDC Evacuated to Eastman RYDC -

(STATEWIDE - GA) A team of state juvenile corrections professionals is busy making preparations at Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) secure facilities throughout Georgia following Governor Nathan Deal's declaration of a state of emergency due to the potential impact of Hurricane Matthew. DJJ Commissioner Avery D. Niles issued orders for his agency to evacuate the Savannah Regional Youth Detention Center (RYDC) in Chatham County and move the incarcerated youth and staff to the Eastman RYDC. He also ordered all DJJ facilities to prepare for the potential interruption of essential services in the event that the storm causes weather-related problems.

Governor Deal ordered a mandatory evacuation east of Interstate 95 for six coastal counties (Bryan, Camden, Chatham, Glynn, Liberty and McIntosh counties). In addition, a voluntary evacuation order is in effect for coastal county residents west of I-95. DJJ is making emergency weather preparations at other short-term RYDCs that may lie in the storm's path, including Waycross RYDC in Ware County and Claxton RYDC in Evans County.

Commissioner Niles said, "Following the lead of Governor Deal, DJJ has taken numerous precautionary measures. In general, we are working to ensure the safety of our youth and staff in these secure juvenile facilities. Specifically, we evacuated the youth and staff at the Savannah RYDC and moved them safely and securely to the Eastman RYDC." Parents and/or guardians of the evacuated youth can find further information at <http://www.djj.state.ga.us/>. In addition, the Office of Victim Services is available for any victim-related questions or concerns at (404) 683-8819.

DJJ operates an Office of Planning and Preparedness, created to maintain readiness for inclement weather events. The Office maintains constant contact with both the Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency and the National Weather Service to monitor ongoing emergency conditions. DJJ's Planning and Preparedness Director has confirmed that secure agency facilities in affected areas are prepared to implement their contingency plans to ensure the safety of youth and staff. Back-up power generators have been tested and fuel tanks were filled in anticipation of possible power outages.

As a general safety precaution due to weather-related hazards encountered by its teaching staff, DJJ cancelled its daily education classes in coordination with public school systems in the affected counties.

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