



A MESSAGE FROM THE
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Avery D. Niles, 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

July 19, 2013

CONTACT:
Jim Shuler, Director
DJJ Communications
(404) 508-7238
JimShuler@djj.state.ga.us

**Commissioner Orders Sweeping Changes for Investigations Unit
DJJ Division Realignment Details Released**

(ATLANTA - GA) Commissioner Avery D. Niles has announced the conclusion of DJJ's internal investigation to determine why many DJJ sex abuse investigations weren't completed under deadline. Along with personnel actions planned to address Investigations Unit deficiencies, Commissioner Niles and newly named Director of Investigations Ricky H. Rich have outlined an official "Agency Action Plan" to realign division resources to ensure all reports of sexual abuse and harassment are thoroughly and expeditiously investigated according to DJJ Policy and state and federal law.

OFFICIAL ACTION PLAN OUTLINE

Outlined here is the "**Official Action Plan**" for policy and procedural updates and revisions to address those serious division deficiencies within the DJJ Office of Investigations.

PREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE FINDINGS

The **elements of improvement** compiled in this Action Plan are based on constructive observations, interviews and recommendations compiled during Commissioner Niles' internal investigation into a report by his PREA Advisory Committee which initially found that the DJJ Investigations Division was out of compliance with department policies that require open investigations to be completed within a 45 day deadline.

TARGETTING INVESTIGATION DIVISION REFORMS

The institutional reforms and advancements mandated here by the Commissioner are designed to **implement significant adjustments and modifications in the Office of Investigations operational areas** of staff call-out and tracking; personnel training and remedial instruction; critical unit staffing; statewide investigator deployment; new case definitions, priorities and

protocols; regional caseload evaluations; revised case file formats; and comprehensive case file audits and regularly scheduled reviews.

STRATEGY FOR RESTORING ACCOUNTABILITY

Commissioner Avery Niles has ordered this outline for the “Way Ahead” to help reorganize and restore accountability in the DJJ Investigations Division and to make good on his public commitment to make the Department of Juvenile Justice one of the best corrections agencies in the nation. The Action Plan is laid out to implement twelve specific areas for upgrades and improvements in two major operational strategies for **“Investigative Personnel” and “Investigative Systems”**.

DJJ INVESTIGATIVE PERSONNEL ACTION PLAN

1. PERSONNEL: TRAINING FOR SUSPENDED INVESTIGATORS

Prior to beginning any new investigative work for the agency, ***all suspended DJJ investigators will attend a comprehensive training schedule*** to include:

- Fundamentals on investigations ***taught by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation***
- Updated DJJ procedures for processing cases once investigations are complete
- Instruction on the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)
- Demonstration and use of DJJ’s new Juvenile Investigations and Intelligence Management System (JIIMS)

2. PERSONNEL: NEW INVESTIGATOR TRAINING COORDINATOR

- DJJ will ***implement a Training Coordinator position*** and an extensive training program within the Office of Investigations using an existing personnel slot and existing agency resources
- All DJJ ***investigators will be required to have Peace Officer certifications*** from Georgia POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training)
- All DJJ ***investigators will receive advanced investigator training***
- The DJJ Investigations Management Team will attend Law Enforcement Command College or Professional Management Program (PMP)

3. PERSONNEL: NEW CHIEF AND “PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS”

- ***Hire two new Regional Field Supervisors*** with extensive investigative and law enforcement management experience
- Re-designate the ***“Principal Investigators”*** as Field Supervisor positions in the new Office of Investigations Org Chart
- ***Hire one new Chief of Investigations***
- These three new hires will fill vacancies created as a result of pending actions resulting from the current DJJ internal investigation

4. PERSONNEL: NEW INTERNAL AFFAIRS INVESTIGATION UNIT

- Implement a ***new Internal Affairs Investigation Unit*** within the DJJ Office of Investigations using existing agency resources
- The new Internal Affairs Investigation Unit will effectively investigate all allegations of staff misconduct, ***including PREA cases*** and financial investigations

(MORE MORE MORE)

5. PERSONNEL: JOINT DOC-DJJ STAFF TRACKING SYSTEM

- DJJ will renew efforts to complete a coordinated DOC - DJJ project to utilize the Department of Corrections Communications Center to ***track DJJ personnel who are on call-out status throughout the state***
- This joint initiative is designed to track DJJ Investigators, DJJ Transportation personnel, and where appropriate, Community Service Juvenile Pardons and Parole Specialists utilizing this system for personnel accountability
- The tentative blueprint includes plans for DJJ to supplement current DOC staffing to assist in operation of the DOC Communications facility

6. PERSONNEL: COMPLETE CRITICAL HIRES FOR UNIT

- Complete the critical hire of a Secretary III to fill the vacant Investigations Unit position Request approval for creation of a new Secretary II position to conduct final processing of administrative cases at Central Office
- DJJ's internal investigation shows this area represents a ***critical link in processing completed investigations in a timely manner***
- This hire will also provide additional assistance to ***confirm the status and assigned location of open cases***

DJJ INVESTIGATIVE SYSTEMS ACTION PLAN

7. SYSTEMS: WEEKLY, MONTHLY & QUARTERLY CASE REVIEWS

Establish a comprehensive system of accountability, including at a minimum:

- Schedule ***weekly*** case reviews by all Regional Field Supervisors and Investigators
- Schedule ***monthly*** "Com Stat" style case review with Director of Investigations and Office of Investigations management team
- Prepare ***monthly case review updates*** from the Director of Investigations to the Assistant Commissioner
- Conduct ***quarterly audit*** of all DJJ cases

8. SYSTEMS: MONTHLY CASE REVIEWS WITH FACILITIES

Secure Facility and Community Regional Administrators will conduct ***monthly reviews*** with the Office of Investigations to confirm the status of open cases which fall within their jurisdictions and to prioritize their efforts to close them.

9. SYSTEMS: DEVELOP NEW CASE FILE FORMAT

Develop and implement a ***more efficient and effective format*** for investigative case reports and case files.

10. SYSTEMS: WRITE NEW CASE CODES FOR PREA VIOLATIONS

Develop an updated code system that differentiates between cases that document sexual behavior in violation of DJJ policy and those which report allegations of valid PREA violations. There is currently no ability to code a case that falls into the DJJ category of "institutional behavior" and to separate that case from a valid report of PREA abuses.

11. SYSTEMS: IMPLEMENT “JIIMS” CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Complete the implementation of the JIIMS Juvenile Investigations and Intelligence Management System. This will facilitate electronic submission of investigations, enable tracking of intelligence and investigations status, and ***produce accurate case management queries and reports***. This system is already in the early stages of implementation and will be a training focus as we move forward.

12. SYSTEMS: UPDATE POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

Review, revise and ***rewrite existing policies for investigation protocols***, call-outs and case management. Implement new policies and procedures as needed to support anticipated institutional reforms and advancements in DJJ Investigations Division as approved and ordered by the Commissioner.

Commissioner Niles has ordered these sweeping policy and procedural changes for the DJJ Investigations Division based on research gathered during the internal investigation.

“Initiating these new corrective actions and system innovations will help ensure reports and complaints of sexual harassment and abuse are expedited through DJJ’s investigative process as the demands of Georgia’s Juvenile Justice Reform Law become part of DJJ’s future legal landscape”, Commissioner Niles said.

(END RELEASE)