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PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Tara Booth

Phone: (601) 359-5701
Fax: (601) 359-5738

Alcorn and Noxubee County Community Work Centers Receive American Correctional Association (ACA) Reaccreditation Recommendation

Jackson - Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) Commissioner Christopher Epps today expressed his appreciation to the staff of the Alcorn County Community Work Center in Corinth and the Noxubee County Community Work Center in Macon for their dedication in successfully demonstrating their ability to continue to meet nationally accepted correctional standards. Following an audit at both community work centers (CWC) by American Correctional Association (ACA) auditors, the facilities each received a recommended score of 100% on the mandatory standards and a recommended score of 100% on the non-mandatory standards.

MDOC Commissioner Chris Epps said, "ACA standards are the measure of a facility's operations, security, and staff. Having these two facilities receive a perfect score during this most recent audit signifies that the facilities are not only safe and secure but also operationally effective." Epps added, "I applaud MDOC Deputy Commissioner of Community Corrections Lora Cole, Region One Director Lee McTeer, Region Three Director Jerry Williams, Branch Director Sonny Edwards, Community Corrections ACA Accreditation Manager Bobby Welch, Alcorn CWC Commander Satchel Long, Noxubee CWC Commander Frank Stockett and staff for their dedication to security, collaboration and professionalism."

The ACA auditing team consisted of two veteran correctional professionals: Patrick Malloy, ACA Chairperson, Correctional Consultant from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Lisa DiSabato-Moore, ACA Member, Probation Supervisor from Akron, Ohio. The auditors spent four days reviewing all MDOC policies and procedures, touring the work centers, and interviewed staff and inmates housed at the work centers. To be awarded reaccreditation, the community work centers must comply with 100% of the 34 mandatory standards identified by ACA and comply with at least 90% of the 217 non-mandatory standards identified by ACA.

"The re-accreditation of the Alcorn County Community Work Center and the Noxubee County Community Work Center through the ACA is a formal recognition for the day-to-day commitment of correctional employees at these facilities. Congratulations to everyone. The audit team could not say enough about the MDOC staff," said MDOC Deputy Commissioner of Community Corrections Lora Cole.

Individual accreditation awards last for 3 years; however, the process is designed to be continuous. Accreditation is a system to verify that correctional programs comply with national standards developed by the ACA. The ACA Standards Committee continually revises the standards based on changing practices, case law and correctional agency experiences. The standards reflect the view of correctional practitioners, architects, medical and legal experts. Advantages and benefits of accreditation are numerous and include: assessment of a facility's strengths and weaknesses; implementation of enhanced policies and procedures; establishment of specific guidelines for daily operations; an aid in the defense of frivolous lawsuits; an increase in community support; and a higher level of staff professionalism and morale.

