



PRESS RELEASE

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Epps Becomes Longest Serving MDOC Commissioner

(Jackson) – More than 27 years since he began his career as a correctional officer with the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC), Commissioner Christopher B. Epps has become the longest-serving Commissioner in the agency's history.

Appointed Commissioner by former Governor Ronnie Musgrove, August 30, 2002, and reappointed to the post on January 13, 2004 by Governor Haley R. Barbour, Commissioner Epps has surpassed the tenure of former Commissioner Morris Thigpen, who served September 1980 through February 1987.

During his rise to the top MDOC job, Commissioner Epps served in various leadership capacities, including Director of Treatment Services, Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Security, Director of Offender Services/Treatment, Director of Records, Chief of Staff, Deputy Commissioner of Community Corrections, and Deputy Commissioner of Institutions.

As MDOC Commissioner, Christopher Epps has successfully implemented numerous programs enhancing the agency's objectives. Thus far, his impression on the correctional profession has made a major positive impact on policies implemented and unparalleled success for MDOC:

On August 11, 2008, the American Correctional Association (ACA) presented its highest honor for commitment to excellence – the EAGLE AWARD – to the Mississippi Department of Corrections. MDOC was only the 14th state correctional system in the nation to claim this accomplishment.

In January 2008, MDOC Field Services Division of Community Corrections became the 15th Field Services Division in the world to be ACA accredited.

In 2005 all three (3) state prisons successfully achieved accreditation by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care for meeting correctional healthcare standards and for providing quality healthcare services to offenders.

During FY 2005, MDOC achieved a \$27 million cost savings for the state of Mississippi as a result of the agency's effort to streamline day-to-day operations in reference to HB 1279. As the only state agency to be removed from State Personnel Board overview for one year, MDOC established cost avoidance measures that included a reduction of 600 staff persons, elimination of positions, and agency reorganization. The agency was streamlined down to bare necessities.

Commissioner Epps announced the appointment of the first woman Deputy Commissioner of Corrections in the history of the agency in October of 2002, and in December of 2004, the state's first woman superintendent for a state prison institution in Mississippi was appointed.

"It is a privilege to work with MDOC's talented and dedicated staff," Commissioner Epps said. "I love my job and am grateful every day for the opportunity to serve my state in a career that continues to inspire and challenge me."

Only four corrections officials currently serving as commissioners throughout the USA have served longer than Epps.

History of Mississippi Department of Corrections Commissioners

2002 August 31

2000 April 1
1997 July 1
1995 March 7
1994 September
1992 April 1
1989 January 4
1988 July 1
1987 July 7
1987 March 1
1980 September 1
1977 August 1
1977 January 1
1976 July 1

Christopher Epps

Robert Johnson
James Anderson
Steve Puckett
Stewart Murphy
Eddie Lucas
Leroy Black
Charles Jackson
Gene Scroggy
Don Cabana
Morris Thigpen
John Watkins
Allen Ault
Ellis McDougle

Currently Serving

2002 August 30
2000 March 31
1997 August 31
1995 March 6
1994 September 20
1992 June 30
1989 January 3
1988 June 30
1987 July 6
1987 February 28
1980 August 31
1977 July 31
1976 December 31

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