



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS



PRESS RELEASE

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MDOC INVESTIGATING HINDS COUNTY INMATE'S ALLEGATIONS

JACKSON - The Mississippi Department of Corrections has removed an additional inmate from the custody of the Hinds County Sheriff's Department after receiving allegations that the convicted murderer was allowed to take a county vehicle home for overnight stays, was paid to work on personal vehicles, and ran personal errands.

Jerry Mack, 49, who also is serving time for aggravated assault and cocaine possession, was changing out of free world clothing into his MDOC green and white issued-uniform when corrections officials arrived Wednesday afternoon to transport him to Central Mississippi Correctional Facility (CMCF) in Rankin County. He had \$435 in his pocket, a cell phone and a valid driver's license. A knife and a box cutter were in plain view.

"This inmate obviously was not being supervised to MDOC standard based solely on the contraband found in his possession and where he was found," Corrections Commissioner Marshall Fisher said. "This inmate should not have been outside of a secured perimeter. Instead, we found him in a barn which is located outside a fence."

Mack, Inmate #57808, brings to 42 the number of inmates removed from Hinds County. The other 41, all part of the Joint State County Work Programs (JSCWP), were returned to MDOC custody Tuesday as a result of a U.S. Department of Justice report about its investigation of the conditions at the Hinds County Detention Center. The Justice Department found that the county violates the Eighth and 14th Amendments including by failing to keep prisoners safe from violence. The report dated May 21 to county officials states "the term 'prisoners' refers to all individuals housed at the jail."

"While MDOC's original target date was Aug. 1 to remove all inmates in JSCWP statewide, upon learning of the findings of the DOJ investigation, we felt compelled to act immediately in Hinds County," Fisher said Thursday.

MDOC officials returned to the jail at Raymond on Wednesday after receiving a tip about Mack being allowed to come and go in violation of rules for jail support workers.

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“In a weekly timeframe, I normally run by my house twice a week. I try to sleep at my house twice a month,” Mack told investigators. “When I was away from the HSO Farm, the dispatcher at the HSO Farm would call my cell phone and tell me where to go. To my knowledge everyone at the HSO Farm was aware that I had a cell phone.”

Mack also alleged he stored his horse at the farm and was paid cash to work on cars, bail hay, clean houses, split wood, gather eggs at locations off prison grounds and do other errands in a county vehicle.

Fisher said an investigation into Mack’s allegations is ongoing. A formal notification of MDOC’s current findings will be provided to county officials in a letter.

Mack was convicted in 1996 in Hinds County of fatally shooting one man and seriously wounding another on Nov. 19, 1994. He received a life sentence for murder, 20 years for aggravated assault and three years for the drug conviction.

“Our mission is public safety, while providing prisoners with a safe environment,” Fisher said. “MDOC intends to continue its mission as effectively and efficiently as possible.”

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See attached photos of seized contraband. Inmate Mack’s photo is available at <http://www.mdoc.state.ms.us/InmateDetails.asp?PassedId=57808>