



# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Fourth MDOC Community Work Center Closes in a Year

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JACKSON – The Jackson County Community Work Center in Pascagoula has closed until further notice, becoming the fourth center the Mississippi Department of Corrections has shut down in a year.

“This center closed for the same reasons as the others – inadequate staffing,” Corrections Commissioner Marshall Fisher said. “We do not pay enough to attract enough people to work at these centers, and I don’t have enough staff to share from other locations.”

When the center closed Friday, key positions, including commander, supervisor and case manager, were vacant. The seven correctional officers working there have been reassigned to other units that are short staffed, and the remaining 22 offenders were moved to other facilities.

The department had announced in December that Jackson County and centers in Yazoo and Bolivar counties could be closing. Yazoo County closed in March. The department is still trying to address staffing at Bolivar to avoid closure. Centers in Alcorn and Jefferson counties already were closed.

MDOC now operates 11 community work centers, down from 17 a year ago. They are located in Flowood and Noxubee, Quitman, Washington, Madison, Pike, Wilkinson, Forrest, George, and Harrison counties. Locations in Simpson and Leflore counties have been converted to technical violation centers, which were created under the 2014 comprehensive crime reform law to serve as an alternative to incarceration.

“There may be more centers closing, depending on MDOC’s 2017 budget,” Fisher said. “I will shut down centers or programs before I lay off employees.”

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