



# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MDOC Clarifies Using Emergency Contracts

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JACKSON – The Mississippi Department of Corrections entered into emergency contracts for food and medical services only after being unable to finalize terms or issue new Requests for Proposals by the date on which the services were to begin.

Thus, with the previous contracts set to expire June 30, 2015, and no approval from the previous Personal Services Contract Review Board, MDOC had no choice but to enter into emergency contracts because of the nature of the services, Commissioner Marshall Fisher said.

“Inmates have a constitutional right to food and medical care,” Fisher said. “We would have been derelict in our legal obligation to provide for inmates and ultimately would have placed the state at risk for lawsuits had we not done so.”

Fisher said he wants to clarify published information regarding MDOC’s contracts discussed at Tuesday’s meeting of the revamped Personal Services Contract Review Board.

“MDOC is actively rebidding all contracts,” Fisher said. “Business as usual is no longer the way MDOC operates.”

RFPs were issued for food and medical services this past spring. Valley Food Services was the only vendor to respond to the food service RFP. MDOC received several responses for the medical services before awarding the contract to Centurion.

The department intends to rebid the medical and food contracts during the term of the emergency contracts. Other major contracts being rebid include canteen services, transitional housing, drug testing and private prisons.

As directed by Gov. Phil Bryant, MDOC has been reviewing all contracts.

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