

# IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact:** Office of Communications  
**Phone:** (601) 359-5289, 359-5608  
**E-mail:** [MDOCOfficeofCommunications@mdoc.state.ms.us](mailto:MDOCOfficeofCommunications@mdoc.state.ms.us)

## **Correctional leaders from neighboring states and others to share ideas on re-entry at MDOC forum**

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JACKSON, MISS. – Correctional leaders from neighboring states, other state agency representatives and business people will join the Mississippi Department of Corrections on Thursday to share ideas and best practices in support of re-entry needs for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons.

Up to 400 people of diverse backgrounds, including elected officials, are expected at the event at Broadmoor Baptist Church, 1531 Highland Colony Parkway, in Madison. The symposium, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., is in observance of June as Statewide Re-entry Month.

Gov. Phil Bryant is expected to speak during the afternoon.

“Our inaugural event last year was very successful,” Commissioner Pelicia E. Hall said. “We made connections that led to meaningful partnerships to help us build upon our re-entry initiatives. I am very pleased to see the interest both nationally and locally in giving second chances to our returning citizens. It is going to take a holistic approach to help the formerly incarcerated.”

Tennessee Correction Commissioner Tony Parker, Arkansas Correction Director Wendy Kelley, Louisiana Public Safety and Corrections Secretary James Le Blanc, and Georgia Assistant Corrections Commissioner Jay Sanders will participate in a discussion focusing on re-entry, based on a view from the top.

Ideas also will be shared about overcoming barriers to employment and the benefits of collaboration. There will be a total of four discussion sessions.

Andre Norman, a former gang member who turned his life around after 14 years in prison and is now a motivational speaker, will be the keynote speaker. Norman, of Massachusetts, is currently working with the South Carolina prison system in a new leadership program that targets violent offenders.