

# IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MDOC Places New Recruiter in Job Market

JACKSON, MISS. – Just like the military, sports or businesses, the Mississippi Department of Corrections now has a recruiter dedicated to attracting new employees, especially correctional officers.

Clintis McCray knows corrections. After all, he worked for the MDOC for 27 years before retiring in 2013. He returned earlier this year to help in hiring.

“For me, it’s been a career, and that is what I want to pass on to young people who are looking for a job,” McCray said. “I tell them ‘Don’t just look for a job. Look for a career.’”

Commissioner Pelicia E. Hall said the department hopes the addition of McCray puts a face on whom to contact for employment opportunities.

“We would like to be at a point where the agency says it has enough correctional officers, but we are so short, we will be always recruiting,” Commissioner Hall said.

The department’s number of vacancies has increased to nearly 600 correctional officers alone and overtime topped more than \$10 million last year.

“The department realizes that the job market is competitive and our wages are not what we want them to be,” Commissioner Hall said. “However, we are hoping that Mr. McCray’s military and corrections background will make a difference.”

McCray, a former battalion commander with the 112<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion, is crisscrossing the state recruiting at WIN Job Centers, military locations or events, and community sites. He has visited Biloxi, Forest, Mendenhall, Pearl, Hattiesburg, Indianola, and Oxford to name a few.

This week, McCray was at WIN Job Centers in Forest and Indianola and at the Vicksburg Convention Center. On Saturday, he will be at the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Military Job Fair at the Jackson Convention Center in Jackson from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

“I have heard a lot of stories since I have been out there (from people looking for work),” McCray said. “Sometimes, I meet 45-, 46- and 47-year-olds looking for work. One lady told me she was afraid she may get laid off.”

He said he told the woman as well as other potential employees that corrections is a stable career with the possibility of layoffs scarce and benefits assured.

He is accustomed to answering numerous questions about training, such as what is the training like, how long is it, is it overnight, is it paid, and what are the hours.

“Some want to know if the pay is negotiable,” McCray said. “They want to know, if they have a two-year or four-year degree, would that make a difference in their pay. I have had probably six or eight people to ask about promotions (at different locations). They wanted to know how long it would take to get promoted.”

Hiring McCray is in addition to other steps the department has taken to increase the number of new employees. Applicants can apply every day at the three prisons (Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, Mississippi State Penitentiary, and South Mississippi Correctional Institution) other than during the weekend interview and screening days; and training is held four weeks at each of the prisons.