



# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MDOC Plans to Close Leake County Private Prison

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JACKSON – The Mississippi Department of Corrections plans to close the Walnut Grove Correctional Facility in Leake County in September.

The decision is based on budget constraints and the prison population.

“MDOC’s budget is lower than what we anticipated,” Commissioner Marshall Fisher said. “Pursuant to an intensive budget review and evaluation, we have determined this is the most prudent action. We have the space in our state-run prisons to house the 900 inmates at Walnut Grove.”

Fisher said MDOC has been pleased with Management & Training Corporation’s performance at Walnut Grove and the other three privately-operated prisons (Marshall County Correctional Facility, East Mississippi Correctional Facility and Wilkinson County Correctional Facility) it manages for the state.

“We look forward to continuing to work with MTC,” Fisher said. “Ending our contract for Walnut Grove is about being fiscally responsible.”

MTC employees at Walnut Grove are welcomed to apply for positions at MDOC.

MTC has managed Walnut Grove, which opened in March 2001, since 2012. The current contract cost is \$14.6 million annually.

Closing the private prison is one of several tough decisions MDOC has made under Fisher’s administration within the last 18 months. Four community work centers have closed, the paid Joint State County Work Program has ended, and populations at the 15 regional jails have been reduced to contractual obligations.

“We are continually assessing MDOC’s operation,” Fisher said. “While the focus is on being fiscally responsible, public safety remains our No. 1 priority.”

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