



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **MDOC Removes 240 Inmates From Alcorn County Regional During Joint Investigation With Auditor's Office**

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JACKSON - The Mississippi Department of Corrections removed 240 state inmates from the Alcorn County Regional Correctional Facility in Corinth today following a joint investigation of alleged actions that jeopardize public safety.

The minimum-non-community and medium-custody inmates have been placed in other MDOC facilities. MDOC learned of the alleged misconduct from the State Auditor's Office (OSA) several weeks ago, and the two agencies have since worked together.

"These allegations were disturbing to hear," said Commissioner Marshall Fisher. "Inmates allegedly were allowed to change uniforms disguising their custody status, work on personal vehicles and go across state lines."

"I thank State Auditor Stacey Pickering's office for bringing these serious allegations to our attention," Fisher said. "The alleged actions indicate clear violations of MDOC practices and procedures. Therefore, we were compelled to act accordingly. I want to be clear once again that we have zero tolerance for such flippant practices."

Agents from OSA and the FBI were on hand today interviewing various people. OSA agents are investigating funds that are under the control of employees at the Alcorn County Justice Center. Specifically, OSA Agents are looking into the use of state inmates working on private property, the possible misappropriation of funds received for the sale of pallets by employees of the Justice Center, as well as other irregularities in the Justice Center's finances.

"My office will continue looking into the resources that were improperly handled," Pickering said. "I would also like to thank Marshall Fisher and his team at the Department of Corrections, along with the FBI and United States Attorney's Office, for their work and support during this investigation."

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Before the inmates were removed, agents from MDOC and the Auditor's Office conducted a shakedown of the facility. The findings are pending.

MDOC is suspending its contract with Alcorn County until further notice. The county must submit a written plan of action including preventative measures to avoid any future occurrences related to security breaches. Only then will MDOC reconsider assigning state inmates again.

Minimum-non-community and medium custody inmates must be under direct armed supervision whenever they are outside the perimeter of the designated facility, based on MDOC policy.

Today's actions marked the second time in two years in which MDOC has had to suspend housing inmates at Alcorn County Regional. In November 2013, MDOC stopped sending inmates to the regional after learning six ineligible inmates had been given unauthorized passes. One of those inmates died while out, alerting MDOC to the violation. The county later submitted a plan of action before receiving more inmates.

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