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OFFICERS SEARCH HINDS RESTITUTION CENTER UNDER OPERATION ZERO TOLERANCE

JACKSON – Several offenders at the Hinds County Restitution Center were caught with cellphones, cigarettes and an assortment of other contraband when officers surprised them Friday under Operation Zero Tolerance.

One offender had \$600 – too much cash for a restitution center. Offenders can have only \$20 at one time and that amount must be in \$1 or \$5 bills or coins.

The restitution center, on Gallatin Street in Jackson, is the seventh facility to be searched in the statewide contraband crackdown Commissioner Pelicia Hall has instituted for the safety of staff and offenders.

Minimal risk offenders are placed at restitution centers by a judge to pay off fines, court costs or make payment to victims. The Hinds location is one of four such centers in the Mississippi prison system. It currently has 69 offenders, but as many as 76 can stay there at one time.

“While offenders at restitution centers can come and go for work, they still have rules and regulations to follow like those incarcerated at our other facilities,” Hall said. “In fact, they agree to follow those rules and regulations when they stay at the restitution center. One of those rules is that you cannot carry a large amount of cash on your person. Therefore, offenders know if they are caught with too much cash, that cash will be seized.”

All facilities in the prison system will be searched, Hall said. The renewed security efforts also apply to visitors and vendors and inmates posting on Facebook.

Earlier this week, Operation Zero tolerance struck at the Carroll-Montgomery County Regional Correctional Facility in Vaiden. Shakedowns also have occurred at Wilkinson County Correctional Facility, East Mississippi Correctional Facility, Marshall County Correctional Facility, Yazoo County Regional Facility, and Holmes-Humphreys County Regional Facility since March 2.

