

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Search continues statewide for 2 escapees

JACKSON, MISS. – The Mississippi Department of Corrections is continuing to search statewide for two escapees from the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility in Rankin County.

While the search has been concentrated in the area of Pearson Road and Highway 468 in the proximity of the prison, the department is continuing to receive tips from all over the state, Commissioner Pelicia E. Hall said Tuesday.

“We are still pursuing tips statewide,” Commissioner Hall said. “We continue to urge citizens to call. No matter where you are, if you think you see these two men, please call us or other law enforcement. Until they are in custody, we don’t know where they are. We are equally concerned about the safety of the public until the two are apprehended.”

Jonathan Blankenship, 31, and Christopher Benson High, 28, have been on the run since early Friday morning.

Blankenship, #115012, is serving five years for aggravated assault on a police officer and conspiracy to commit a crime in Alcorn County.

High, #139935, is serving 12 years for burglary larceny of an unoccupied dwelling in Carroll County.

The manner in which the men escaped is under investigation. Because of the active investigation and search, the agency is not discussing how the escape occurred.

The statewide lockdown at the prisons continues as a safety protocol.

“While the MDOC understands family members’ concern about their loved ones, the secure custody and control of incarcerated residents and the safety of our staff are our priority,” Commissioner Hall said.

The MDOC is searching with the help of local, county, federal, and other state law enforcement agencies. Rewards totaling up to \$12,500 - \$10,000 from the FBI and up to \$2,500 from Mississippi Crime Stoppers - are being offered.

If you see Blankenship and High, call the MDOC at 662-745-6611, ext. 4200, Crime Stoppers at 601-355-TIPS (8477), the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation (MBI) at 601-987-1530, or your nearest law enforcement agency.

Tips can be submitted to Crime Stoppers online through the Web Tip link on the home page of the Central MS Crime Stoppers or go to www.P3tips.com