
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Dear Colleagues:

It's been a fairly quiet week in Baton Rouge, but that's about to change. Monday is the opening session of the Legislature, and that is sure to keep us – me, anyway, in the crosshairs. Every legislative session is a rough ride, and this one promises to be a real doozy, with the budget issues that all state agencies are facing.

We had a wonderful visit this week from James A. Gondles, Executive Director of the American Correctional Association (ACA). Mr. Gondles paid a visit to central office and Jetson – not an audit or inspection, just a visit. I am pleased to tell you how complimentary he was about what he experienced. One of the things Mr. Gondles mentioned specifically was the statement at the end of our Guiding Principles: “Have Faith: together we help change lives.” It's really nice to have someone who is at the pinnacle of our profession provide such positive feedback.

Mr. Gondles also commended OJJ as our facilities again pursue ACA accreditation. We are also pursuing central office ACA accreditation for the first time, and of course, Field Services' ACA accreditation was renewed some time ago. The visit to Jetson brought more compliments to the staff there, as Mr. Gondles commented on the pleasant environment and orderly atmosphere on the campus. He spent some time with staff and youth in several housing units and toured the infirmary. Thanks to Director Daron Brown and all the hardworking JCY staff for presenting our best face.

We are flying high with “JETS,” our new Juvenile Electronic Tracking System. IT Director Dawson Andrews and his team have been working to develop the new system, which will take off and go live Monday. Dawson says that JIRMS will cease to operate April 30 if no major issues are discovered with JETS, which combines Case Management with JIRMS. Many thanks to Dawson and his team, and to Hammond Administrative Coordinator Courtney Pegues and CO IT Liaison Officer Stacey Miller, who conducted training sessions for staff, assisted by Sean Labat, I.T. Applications Project Leader.

More good news! We finally have an up-to-date Employee Manual, that will be distributed next month. Thanks to the folks at Swanson for handling printing and binding of the Employee Rules of Conduct, to be given to facility frontline staff who do not have computer access. The manual will be sent electronically to the staff who have computers. Thanks to the CQIS staff for taking the lead on this project.

Can you believe hurricane season is almost upon us already? Glenn Holt, Capital Outlay Program Manager, has been preparing the agency since the last go-round, so it's always hurricane season for him. He has been updating procedures, working on lessons-learned documents from past experiences and identifying key staff for disaster response, so we can be even better prepared if the need arises.

These examples of the outstanding work being done in all areas of the agency makes me proud of every one of you. There is such good work being done all over the agency, to meet the mission and help change the lives of the kids in our care. Wishing you all a pleasant weekend, and as always, my thanks for all you do.

Sincerely,
“Doc”

Dr. Mary Livers

Mary L. Livers, MSW, PH.D, Deputy Secretary

Office of Juvenile Justice • PO Box 66458 • Baton Rouge, LA 70896 • e: Whatsupdoc?OJJ@la.gov • www.ojd.louisiana.gov