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## what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everybody:

TGIF!! Friday is here once again, and once again, I can't believe it got here so quickly. Almost everything I've done this week has been related to the budget - the 40+ hours I've put in this week have been dedicated to budget issues or working toward consolidation.

I'm sure y'all are aware that many state agencies are looking at how to consolidate functions and achieve more efficiencies for the state of Louisiana. In fact, I was reading a national publication the other day, and there were numerous articles about consolidation of services and merging of functions. We are in the process of working with DPS to do just that in the areas of Human Resources, Management and Finance, and Information Technology. As employees of OJJ we will do all that we possibly can to make a smooth transition to ensure that services are supported in a seamless manner. I have been assured that DPS will provide us with excellent services and will be very responsive to our needs. I look forward to a spirit of cooperation.

I will keep you informed as to what this all means as soon as we have the details worked out and a basic agreement in place. Although the implementation date is July 1, this will be a process, and I appreciate your patience and understanding as we work through the details.

I also have to share with you, that this afternoon you will receive an official notice of pending layoffs. This is a required procedure when an agency anticipates the need for laying off employees. I know this raises a tremendous amount of anxiety and it is the uncertainty of it all that is so nerve-wracking. What I have learned and would like to pass along to you is that we should try to manage our anxiety by not worrying about the unknown. You will know as soon as the final actions have been planned and approved, and we will notify each person who is affected and work with you. I wish there was something more we could do to be of support.

At this stage in the process there are still many unknowns, so try to manage your anxiety as best you can and keep your focus on our work and the job you do. Let's just take it one day at a time.

I hope next week's message will have a happier tone. Life is not always a bed of roses, and so it is with *What's Up, Doc?* Sometimes it's lighthearted and fun and sometimes, not so much. This is one of those not-so-much times. Please stay true to our mission as we go through these many changes. We will continue to evolve and be the best juvenile justice agency in the country.

You are still the best staff that anyone could hope to work with, and my heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you, wherever you serve, for your constant and consistent work to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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

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