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# what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everybody:

Shoosh! Where did June go? It just came and went. I know it's been hectic for everyone, but here at central office, June flew by because the legislative session lasted so long into summer.

So – Happy Birthday, New Fiscal Year! I'm very happy that we are experiencing a new fiscal year (starting today). The news headlines tell us that the Minnesota state government shut down today. The state does not have a budget and some 23,000 state employees were sent home, or they are working today without pay, until the budget is ironed out. Many social service agencies lost their funding for programs such as job training and homelessness prevention. A judge ruled that, at the least, basic health and safety services must continue, including state police and custodial care for prisoners and people in treatment centers and nursing homes.

So, we should be very happy that our executive and legislative branches worked hard and got our budgets approved. The original executive budget that we proposed was approved, but as we go forward, we need to continue to look for efficiencies and we must be extremely frugal in our spending. Let's hope we have no major emergencies.

We had a meeting this week with an architect who is looking at the cost-feasibility of renovating the Jetson campus versus construction of a replacement on the same site. We had a good exchange and more information is being gathered. We are planning another meeting to continue the discussion and we can expect some proposals by the end of the month. We are really looking forward to the results.

On Wednesday we had a leadership meeting here at central office, with leaders from all over the agency. We addressed a lot of timely topics – legislation and budget, an update on the Acadiana facility, status of the crisis leave pool, crime victim notification, community outreach plans and data-driven decision-making. We also had breakout sessions to discuss staff development and the new Leadership Manual we have developed. If you are curious about any of the topics discussed at the meeting, your regional manager or director will be happy to share the information with you, and would do that anyway in your staff meetings. One thing I want to emphasize is the Leadership Manual – it will be available to everyone in the agency as soon as we make the changes recommended at the leadership meeting. Stay tuned - I hope you all will be able to get it into your hot li'l hands very soon.

I hope that everyone enjoys their Fourth of July celebration. The fire ban still exists in most places, so be careful out there. If you will be traveling, please be careful on the road. Enjoy whatever your traditions are – and I'm pretty sure a cookout will be involved. Or maybe a drive-through for barbecue before you hit the AC. I know that many of our secure care staff will be at work with the youth, and you will do everything possible to make sure the kids also enjoy an Independence Day celebration. Thanks to all of you in every OJJ location for all you do every day – holidays included - to meet the mission.

GOD BLESS AMERICA! We have many freedoms and we are blessed in so many ways. We have much to be grateful for, this year and every year.

Sincerely,  
"Doc"

*Dr. Mary Livers*

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