

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Oct. 29, 2019
Contact: Office of Communications
Phone: (601) 359-5289, 359-5608, 359-5689
E-mail: MDOCOfficeofCommunications@mdoc.state.ms.us

MDOC receives \$1 million grant to expand re-entry services to south Mississippi

JACKSON, MISS. – The Mississippi Department of Corrections has been awarded a \$1 million federal grant to expand re-entry and aftercare services to the southern part of the state.

The Second Chance Act (SCA) Improving Reentry for Adults with Co-occurring Substance Abuse and Mental Illness (CSAMI) will assist 175 individuals leaving prison and returning to Hancock, Harrison, Pearl River, and Stone counties for three years.

Two previous grant fundings have assisted individuals diagnosed with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders in the central and northern parts of the state.

“Our goal ultimately is to address all areas of the state,” MDOC Commissioner Pelicia E. Hall said in announcing the grant at the recent Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force meeting earlier this month.

Successfully addressing addiction or substance abuse and mental illness among individuals in the criminal justice system should ultimately reduce recidivism and decrease future victimization, Commissioner Hall said.

“We know a lot of people end up in prison because they were trying to feed their addiction, or they were under the influence when they committed their crime, or they are mentally ill and belong in treatment rather than incarceration,” Commissioner Hall said. “We recognize that addressing these issues is so important to the success of our returning citizens.”

In 2016, the department collaborated with the Mississippi Department of Mental Health and Hinds Behavior Health Services for a pilot program in Hinds County.

Leveraging success from that re-entry project, the MDOC received a grant in 2018 to provide services for individuals with co-occurring substance abuse and mental illness in Panola, Lafayette, Marshall, Tate, Calhoun, and Yalobusha counties.

The re-entry project begins while the individuals are incarcerated and then follows them after release. Under the latest grant, within 30 days before release, the MDOC and the Community Mental Health Center will develop integrated case and treatment plans for the services in the four southern counties.