



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Commissioner of the MD Division of Pretrial Detention and Services Takes on New Challenges after Three Years

Becomes New Head of Commission on Correctional Standards

Towson, MD (August 21, 2009) - Howard Ray, Commissioner of the Division of Pretrial Detention and Services (DPDS) inside the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), will be reassigned as the Executive Director of the Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards effective August 26, 2009.

Mr. Ray has led DPDS since 2006, and under his leadership the Division has made significant progress. Highlights within DPDS include a 71% reduction in serious assaults on staff from FY2006 to FY2009, inception of a new juvenile services program in conjunction with the University of Maryland, and the first ever license for a Methadone Maintenance program awarded to a state prison system by the US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Also, under his watch the Division received its first ever 100% compliance rate in its Standards and Compliance Audit conducted by the MD Commission on Correctional Standards. And, under his leadership DPDS has become a better and more active partner in Baltimore City's criminal justice system.

Mr. Ray began his tenure with DPDS as Deputy Commissioner in 2003, became Acting Commissioner three years later, and was confirmed as Commissioner in the fall of 2007. DPDS is responsible for processing over 80,000 arrestees a year, as well as the pre-trial confinement of an average of 3,900 detainees a month in the City of Baltimore. The Division houses juvenile detainees charged as adults and also women detainees awaiting trial.

Mr. Ray's vast correctional experience, spanning more than 30 years, will be instrumental in the Department's ongoing efforts to enhance the mission of the Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards (MCCS). Ray has also been a sitting member of the Commission over the past few years, giving him an inside perspective of how it operates.

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The State's correctional regulatory authority, the Commission is charged with developing and enforcing standards of sound correctional management and practice for local, state and privately-operated correctional facilities, as well as home detention operations.

Vital to the Department's vision, MCCS will undergo a complete evaluation of its operations in the coming months, with the goal of enhancing its mission and working better with the local and private entities it regulates, better serving the citizens of Maryland.

Throughout his career, Mr. Ray has developed a particular skill set through his work at both the local and state levels, as well as his experience in the private sector. His unique background will greatly enhance DPSCS' efforts to evaluate the efforts and goals of the MCCS as the agency moves forward.

"Howard has been, and will continue to be, an important asset to our Department," said Secretary Gary D. Maynard. "His 30 year perspective has not only helped improve operations at our Pretrial Division, but his experience will be invaluable as we evaluate the work of the Correctional Standards Commission in an effort to enhance the State's relationship with our local correctional authorities, and improve our department's continued focus on sound policy development and enforcement.

"I expect the steady hand and strong commitment he has shown in his role as Commissioner of Pretrial Detention and Services will have the same positive impact statewide as Executive Director of the Commission."

Current Chairman of the Commission of Correctional Standards Walter Ridley added, "Mr. Ray's wealth of experience, and the challenges he has faced during his long career, make him the perfect leader as we work together to build on and improve the Commission's efforts to serve the citizens of Maryland."

"I'm proud of the team I have assembled at Pretrial and what we have been able to accomplish in a short amount of time," said newly appointed Executive Director Howard Ray. "But we are at an important moment in time given what the Department has achieved over the last few years. I am excited about taking on new challenges in guiding the Commission into the future, and to help meet the Department's mission to protect the public."

Beginning August 26, 2009 Division of Correction Assistant Commissioner Randall Watson will serve as Acting Commissioner of the Division of Pretrial Detention and Services, while the Department conducts a thorough search for appropriate candidates for this position.

Gina Clay, currently the Acting Director of the MD Commission on Correctional Services, will resume her role as Assistant Director to the agency.

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