

Supreme Court makes appointments to Drug Court Advisory Committee

January 25, 2011

The Mississippi Supreme Court has appointed DeSoto County Court Judge Allen Couch, Lauderdale County Court Judge Veldore F. Young, and District Attorney Patricia Burchell as new members of the State Drug Court Advisory Committee.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. made the appointments in an order filed Jan. 13.

Judge Couch, of Hernando, replaces Ruth Ann Rigby of Jackson, alumni relations coordinator for Pine Grove Behavioral Health and Addiction Services. Judge Young, of Meridian, replaces Circuit Judge Betty W. Sanders of Greenwood. Burchell, of Hattiesburg, replaces Eighth District Drug Court Coordinator Marcus Ellis of Walnut Grove.

The Supreme Court also reappointed as Advisory Committee members Adams County Court Judge John N. Hudson of Natchez, Commissioner of Corrections Christopher Epps of Jackson, Mississippi Department of Mental Health Director Herbert Loving of Jackson, and Special Assistant Attorney General Patricia B. Marshall of Ridgeland.

Members of the Advisory Committee serve staggered terms. Other member of the committee are Circuit Judge Michael Taylor of Brookhaven, Rankin County Court Judge Thomas H. Broome of Brandon, and Rep. Bobby Moak of Bogue Chitto. Administrative Office of Courts Director Kevin Lackey of Ridgeland is an ex-officio member of the committee.

The State Drug Court Advisory Committee was established by the Mississippi Legislature to recommend improvements to drug court policies and procedures. The Advisory Committee was also responsible for developing statewide evaluation plans and models for monitoring critical aspects of drug court operations.

Mississippi currently has 38 drug courts, and additional programs are in the planning stages. There are 17 adult felony programs, 14 juvenile programs, five misdemeanor level programs, and two family treatment court pilot programs.

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