

Supreme Court makes appointments to Drug Court Advisory Committee

April 11, 2012

The Mississippi Supreme Court has reappointed five people to the State Drug Court Advisory Committee.

Those reappointed to the Advisory Committee are Circuit Judge Michael M. Taylor of Brookhaven, Rankin County Court Judge Thomas H. Broome of Brandon, DeSoto County Court Judge Allen B. Couch Jr. of Hernando, District Attorney Patricia Burchell of Hattiesburg, and Rep. Bobby Moak of Bogalusa.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. made the appointments in an order filed April 11. The terms will end December 31, 2013.

Members of the Advisory Committee serve staggered terms. Other members of the Advisory Committee are Adams County Court Judge John N. Hudson of Natchez, Lauderdale County Court Judge Veldore F. Young of Meridian, Commissioner of Corrections Christopher Epps of Jackson, former Mississippi Department of Mental Health Director Herbert Loving of Jackson, and Special Assistant Attorney General Patricia B. Marshall of Ridgeland. 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 43 drug courts, and additional programs are in the planning stages. About 3,200 people are enrolled in drug court programs statewide. Drug courts last year saved an estimated \$38 million in incarceration costs – roughly equivalent to the state general fund appropriation for operating the entire state court system.

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