

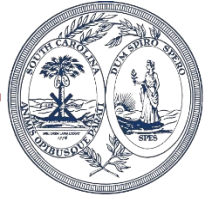


Freddie B. Pough
Executive Director

P.O. Box 21069
Columbia, SC 29221-1069

djj.sc.gov

Henry McMaster
Governor



September 20, 2021
The Honorable Henry McMaster
Governor of South Carolina
1100 Gervais Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Governor McMaster,

Thank you for the honor and opportunity to serve in your cabinet and the great State of South Carolina as the Executive Director of the Department of Juvenile Justice. It has truly been a privilege to serve the citizens of our state by providing services to the more than 4,000 young people who penetrate the juvenile justice system each year. This position has not been without its challenges, but it is beyond words to describe the fulfillment I've received from serving in this role.

During my four-year tenure, one of the goals of my administration has been to reduce the number of youth entering the juvenile justice system to begin with, by bolstering front-end and preventative efforts. To that end, this administration has achieved a 43% decrease in the number of youths referred to DJJ by law enforcement, schools, etc. In the year prior to my becoming Interim Director (February 2016 - January 2017), 10,829 youths were referred to DJJ. In the last year (April 2020 - March 2021), only 6,119 youths were referred. We reduced the number of youths going deeper into the juvenile justice system and being committed to DJJ custody, a 58% decrease in the number of youths committed to DJJ custody. The year prior to my becoming Interim Director (February 2016 - January 2017), 1,030 youths were committed to DJJ custody. In the last year (April 2020 - March 2021), only 433 youths were committed to DJJ.

This administration has also accomplished a significant reduction in recidivism for committed youths (from 13.9% in FY16/17 to 12.2% in FY 2019/20) and our prevention efforts have also yielded a significant drop in the number of youths detained statewide (down 29% since the year prior to my tenure), and youth given secure evaluation dispositions (down 67%). In fact, for the first time since DJJ began tracking evaluations, the number of dispositions given each year for community evaluations (done outside of secure facilities, in the youth's home community) surpassed the number of youths given secure evaluation dispositions (which generally require a youth to be held in a secure facility for 30-45 days).

Governor, I am proud of the work taking place at the agency. At this time of great forward momentum, and the agency's assured ability to alter the juvenile justice landscape of this state, I believe it is the appropriate time to resign my position as the Executive Director of the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice, effective October 15, 2021. It has been my honor and privilege to serve you and the people of South Carolina. I cannot thank you enough for your unwavering support. I am committed to continuing my service and support to you and this agency during this transition. Thank you again for your continued support and leadership during my tenure with the agency.

Sincerely,

Freddie B. Pough