



May 1, 2019

The Honorable Wm. Weston J. Newton
Chairman, Legislative Oversight Committee
South Carolina House of Representatives
Post Office Box 11867
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Dear Chairman Newton:

I am in receipt of your letter dated April 3, 2019. Thank you for providing the SC Department of Juvenile Justice (Department or DJJ) the opportunity to respond to an “unsubstantiated . . . allegation about potential impacts attendant to staffing” at the Department’s Broad River Road Complex (BRRC) that you received via email from a DJJ employee. As you indicate, the allegations in this email raised concerns about the “safety and welfare of juveniles and employees” at BRRC due to staffing shortages. While not all of the information shared with the Committee in this email is represented accurately, I do agree strongly with the overall theme of the email that unfilled correctional positions have a significant impact on the ability of our secure facilities to function at optimal effectiveness and efficiency. And that is an area where I continue to need the assistance of the General Assembly.

First, let me say that the Department of Juvenile Justice is not the same agency it was three years ago when I arrived as the Interim Inspector General. During my tenure, and particularly in the time since I have lead this agency as Director, DJJ has made great strides with improving the structure and foundation of the agency, enhancing policies and training opportunities for staff, and increasing youth accountability and services. DJJ employees work hard each day, all across the state of South Carolina, to provide top-quality services and support to the youth entrusted to our care. And I continue to work hard each day to advocate for DJJ employees to be equipped with the tools and supports that they need so that we can accomplish our mission.

However, our reality is that DJJ continues to face the same challenge in our secure facilities that we have faced for over a decade: officer recruitment and retention. As I have shared with members of the General Assembly and DJJ stakeholders at every opportunity I have had since becoming Director, DJJ’s correctional officers are grossly underpaid compared to their counterparts. DJJ’s inability to pay correctional officers a competitive salary means that many DJJ correctional positions remain unfilled and that we experience an unacceptably high turn-over rate. As I explained to committee members during recent budget presentations, I am not only losing officers every day to other state and local agencies but I also am losing officers to

manufacturing industries and fast food restaurants. Over the past 7 months, I have lost over 140 officers. Due to salary levels, DJJ correctional officers are leaving a career to take a job.

For the past two budget cycles, DJJ has asked the General Assembly for funding to increase the starting salaries and existing salaries for front-line correctional officers to ensure that we can pay officers a competitive salary. I appreciate the support the General Assembly provided last budget cycle to increase correctional officer pay. However, due to other agencies also receiving increases, salaries at DJJ continue to lag behind and remain uncompetitive. The current DJJ starting salary for a correctional officer with no experience and a high school diploma is \$28,697. This amount is \$3,000-\$4,000 less than the starting salary of correctional officers at other state and local correctional agencies. This year, DJJ asked for funding to bring the starting salary for officers up to \$32,000. (My salary request this year also included increases for community specialists who serve as intake and probation/parole officers in county offices. The current DJJ starting salary for a community specialist with no experience and a bachelor's degree is \$28,598, which is \$5,000-\$6,000 less than their counterparts at comparable state agencies. I asked for funding to bring the starting salary for community specialists to \$34,000.) The total funding request for these salary increases was for \$4,031,155 in recurring general funds (Exhibit 1), and my understanding is that \$1,014,958 in funding was approved by the House and by the Senate for this purpose to date.

I also asked the budget committee members to equalize the base salaries among agencies that have employees doing similar jobs. This agency under previous administrations did not seek staff increases and did not ask for operational increases for other needs like educational services. Those are areas under my administration that I have to correct in order for DJJ to have a strong foundation, and I will continue to ask for help in doing so. DJJ is continuing to participate in job fairs and other recruitment measures to attract staff to positions, particularly correctional positions, at the Department. While we have been able to maintain minimum coverage in our secure facilities, doing so by having officers work extra hours and extra shifts is not sustainable and leads to poor morale and officer burn-out. Without the ability to offer a competitive salary, DJJ continues to struggle to hire and retain qualified staff.

Regarding other matters raised in the email you received, it is correct that correctional officer shifts changed this past summer. A survey was conducted to gain input from officers regarding moving to a twelve hour shift. I reviewed the results and subsequently requested a second survey, with instructions to increase the sample size of officers surveyed to ensure that the majority of officers wanted to make that change. The second survey, which had a participation rate of 83.7% of all correctional staff, confirmed that more officers indicated a preference for a twelve hour shift than indicated a preference for an eight hour shift. (Exhibit 2) This preference was particularly strong for officers at BRRC, where 90 JCOs surveyed preferred a twelve hour shift compared to 38 JCOs who preferred an eight hour shift. Officers expressed that a twelve hour shift helped them with work-life balance, as they would have the opportunity to have a more predictable schedule and more time off. The decision to move to a twelve hour shift was made after considering operational needs of our secure facilities and after giving strong consideration to the officers' request that management do so.

Regarding overtime, I did have to make a tough decision several months ago that, due to DJJ resources, correctional officers would receive compensatory time rather than payment for overtime hours worked.¹ This decision was made after I was advised by staff in the Office of Fiscal Affairs in August 2018 that that we had paid over a million dollars in overtime since the start of the fiscal year on July 1, 2018. I was advised that should this level of spending continue, we would more than exhaust our allotted overtime budget. And in fact, despite supervisors at secure facilities being provided with this information and being strongly encouraged to manage staffing in a way to curtail overtime, the entire overtime budget was exhausted by October. At that point, with our resources depleted, I had no choice but to make the decision that DJJ would compensate officers with compensatory time rather than overtime pay.

Even factoring in the use of savings from vacant positions to pay overtime, DJJ is not in a financial position to expend more than two times our overtime budget. As the agency director, I'm responsible for the fiscal prudence of the entire agency and to ensure the welfare of all staff. I made the decision to compensate staff with compensatory time as opposed to continuing payment for overtime and then be faced with a situation where I would be forced to lay off staff to ensure we balanced the budget. We have continued to evaluate our budget throughout this fiscal year, and I am pleased to share that I will announce to staff later this week that we will be able to reinstitute overtime pay beginning next week for hours of overtime earned after May 1, 2019.

The truth is, I want to give all my employees an increase, especially my frontline staff, and I have communicated such to DJJ staff. (Exhibit 3) I've also communicated directly with DJJ correctional officers about why it was necessary for me to temporarily discontinue overtime pay. (Exhibit 4) I also shared with budget committees my concerns with the amount of overtime my staff are having to work in order to ensure minimum coverage is maintained. Again, the majority of overtime hours are accumulated by officers working extra hours, above and beyond their regularly scheduled shifts, due to the number of unfilled JCO positions we have and the need to maintain coverage. DJJ is appreciative of the pending Senate proviso that would provide one-time additional funding to DJJ to pay our officer's overtime for the current fiscal year. It is a great gesture, but it is a temporary fix for a multi-faceted and long-term problem. Without a permanent fix to officer salary levels, this situation will continue to occur.

DJJ's correctional officers, and DJJ staff across the state, are providing the very best care for our young people with the resources that are available. The climate and culture within DJJ is shifting. The culture of this agency did not develop overnight, and the correction will not occur swiftly either. But we are making steps in a positive direction every day. For example, we have deployed several training modules for staff agency-wide to help us with organizational trust and teambuilding through Franklin Covey's Speed of Trust and 7 Habitats for Highly Effective People. Covey's 7 Habits on the Inside training, which has been shown to reduce recidivism through behavioral change, will also be provided to DJJ youth. Members of my Executive

¹ According to DJJ policy regarding overtime, "[f]or employees involved in security activities on a 28-day, 160-hour cycle, overtime is hours actually worked in excess of 171 hours in a 28-day cycle. DJJ will compensate the employee either by payment at the rate of 1 ½ times his/her regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 171 hours, or by compensatory time given at the rate of 1 ½ hours for every hour worked in excess of 171 hours....The responsible Executive Manager will determine if the Department will pay or if compensatory time will be used, depending upon DJJ's resources."

Management Team are working on step ladder increases and succession planning for their respective divisions and offices. And, for nearly a year, I have hosted a monthly Director's Roundtable with frontline staff who share with me their concerns and discuss with me ways to improve the agency. DJJ still has some uphill battles, but our dedication to progress is evident.

Finally, I am thankful to the General Assembly for providing DJJ with funding to support housing and related treatment services for severely mentally ill youth committed to DJJ. I continue to maintain that these youth are better served by mental health professionals in the community, but in the absence of others stepping forward with solutions to serve this population, I had no choice but to act and to request funding for DJJ to create housing and programming to fill this need. However, our state needs, and our citizens deserve, overall system reform that ensures a child with a mental illness receives needed treatment services in the community and never encounters the justice system. And community treatment of seriously mentally ill youth is just one facet of juvenile justice reform that is needed in South Carolina.

Recent South Carolina data shows that although only 10% of cases referred to DJJ in FY17 involved violent or serious offenses, over two-thirds of DJJ's budget was spent on out-of-home placements for youth. Of the 743 DJJ youth who were in a secure residential facility or alternative placement setting on any given day in FY17, the majority of these youth were charged with or adjudicated delinquent for a low-level offense. Specifically, only 37% of youth placed in a secure pre-trial detention center were charged with a felony offense. The remaining detained youth were charged with misdemeanor offenses (28%), status offenses (4%), or placed in detention for an administrative reason, e.g. pick-up order for a technical violation of probation (31%). Similarly, only 38% of all youth committed for a residential evaluation were adjudicated delinquent for a felony offense, and only 23% of these youth who received a residential evaluation received a commitment order following their evaluation. An even smaller percentage of youth committed to DJJ in FY17 were adjudicated delinquent for a felony offense – only 28%. In fact, the most common reason for commitment to DJJ is youth misconduct that does not rise to the level of a criminal offense: 7 of the top 10 commitment "offenses" are a technical violation of probation.

For these youth served in an out-of-home placement, outcomes are poor when compared to youth served in the community. A 2015 recidivism study conducted by the Pew Charitable Trusts revealed that South Carolina youth had a re-adjudication/conviction rate of nearly 50% within three years of release from commitment compared with a re-adjudication/conviction rate of 35% within 3 years of release from probation supervision and a 14% adjudication/conviction rate within 3 years of completion of a diversion program. Overall, this data appears to suggest an over-reliance in South Carolina on residential, out-of-home placement for youth who do not pose a risk to public safety – a practice that comes at a high cost to taxpayers, both in terms of dollars and in increased recidivism rates.

I have submitted a package of juvenile justice system reforms to the General Assembly for your consideration, and I look forward to working with legislative leaders and juvenile justice stakeholders to implement system improvements. The reforms DJJ proposes are targeted to provide a better return on taxpayer investment through improved public safety and more robust community-based rehabilitative opportunities for youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

Overall, the policy goals of these reforms to South Carolina's juvenile justice code are to improve public safety, reduce recidivism, and provide better outcomes for youth and families by focusing costly out-of-home secure confinement on the most serious and high risk offenders, by strengthening community supervision to hold youth accountable, and by increasing access to effective front-end prevention and intervention services provided to youth and families in their home communities.

As seen in other states, besides containing costs, these system reforms result in increased public safety by enhancing community-based services that are proven to reduce recidivism and by reserving costly residential services for serious and higher risk youth. The reforms I have submitted are designed so that South Carolina can build on the lessons learned and positive outcomes achieved by many other states who have embarked on this challenge to better protect public safety and control spending. These reforms align with the experience of other states and with research which has shown that community-based programs that meet youth needs, build critical skills, and promote positive development can more effectively get youth back on track to successful adulthood than residential settings that disconnect youth from critical family and social supports, interfere with prosocial development, and do a poor job of preventing reoffending. If we as a state can truly take a look at juvenile justice system reform, we can correct the understaffing problems DJJ faces, save taxpayer dollars, reduce recidivism, and create safer communities.

The South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice is empowering our youth for the future, and I sincerely thank the members of the Committee for your support as we continue to enhance services provided to youth and communities across South Carolina. I trust you will find the above information and attachments responsive to your request. If I can answer any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,



Freddie B. Pough
Agency Executive Director

cc: Honorable Henry McMaster, Governor of South Carolina
House Legislative Oversight Committee

Attachments:

- Exhibit 1: DJJ 2019-2020 Budget request
- Exhibit 2: DJJ Correctional Officer's survey results (12 hour shift schedule)
- Exhibit 3: Director's weekly note about budget
- Exhibit 4: Director's correspondence to correctional officers



South Carolina
DEPARTMENT OF
JUVENILE JUSTICE
Freddie B. Pough, Director

P.O. Box 21069
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www.state.sc.us/djj



Henry McMaster
Governor
State of South Carolina

EXHIBIT 1

[DJJ 2019-2020 Budget request]

| | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|----|
| AGENCY NAME: | Department of Juvenile Justice | | |
| AGENCY CODE: | N120 | SECTION: | 67 |

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| AGENCY PRIORITY | 2 |
|------------------------|---|

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| TITLE | Increase starting salary for Juvenile Correction Officers and Community Specialists |
|--------------|---|

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

| | |
|---------------|--|
| AMOUNT | General: \$4,031,155 Federal: Other: Total: \$4,031,155 |
|---------------|--|

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2019-20? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| NEW POSITIONS | 0 |
|----------------------|---|

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST | Mark "X" for all that apply: | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | IT Technology/Security related |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Consulted DTO during development |
| | Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority # _____ | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES | Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective: | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Education, Training, and Human Development |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Healthy and Safe Families |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public Infrastructure and Economic Development |
| | Government and Citizens | |

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| AGENCY NAME: | Department of Juvenile Justice | | |
| AGENCY CODE: | N120 | SECTION: | 67 |

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

Goal 2 -Improve Services for Juveniles Committed to DJJ Facilities

What specific strategy, as outlined in the FY 2018-19 Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Individuals through salaries and fringe of Juvenile Correction Officers and Community Specialists and Human Services

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

The goal of this request for funding is to increase the starting salaries and existing salaries for front-line institutional correctional officers and community specialists to reduce overall shortages due to outside competition and the nature of the dangerous work in a correctional setting. Currently, 538 correctional officer positions and 246 community positions would be subject to a base salary increase. The current starting salary for a correctional officer with no experience and a High School Diploma is \$28,697. If the requested funding is approved this will increase to \$32,000. The current starting salary for a community specialist with no experience and a Bachelor's degree is \$28,598. If requested funding is approved this will increase to \$34,000. No new FTEs are requested as there are sufficient vacant FTEs. Recurring funds include \$3,105,906 for classified positions, and \$925,249 for employer contributions.

Starting Salaries for Comparable positions at other agencies:

SCDC:

- Correctional officer starting salary - \$32,263
- Caseworkers - \$29,100

DSS/DMH:

- Caseworkers – (DMH) \$34,808

PPP:

- Probation Officers - \$35,000



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EXHIBIT 2


[DJJ Correctional Officer's survey results (12 hour shift schedule)]



MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 7, 2018

TO: Velvet McGowan, Interim Deputy Director
Division of Security Services

FROM: Kenneth L. James, PREA Coordinator
Quality & Compliance 

SUBJECT: Analysis of Security Services Survey

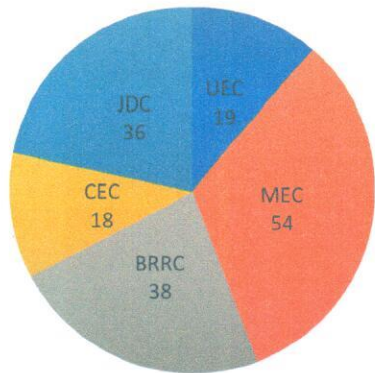
The South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Division of Security Services, recently conducted a survey of security staff regarding the essential elements of the operations, facilitated with the assistance of the Division of External Affairs, Office of Quality & Compliance's Quality Assurance (QA) unit. A summary of the survey results are attached, and what follows is an analysis of results of the multiple-choice answers and the open-ended responses, along with some recommendations.

Overview

The survey was administered using hardcopy, and was open on July 23, 2018. Three-hundred and fifty-six (356) security personnel completed the survey, which based on the most current staffing analysis showing 425 JCO staff employed at DJJ, gives the survey a participation rate approximately 83.7%. The survey consisted of circling a preference of the shift schedule with an option of either 8 hour shift schedule yes or no, or 12 hour shift schedule yes or no.

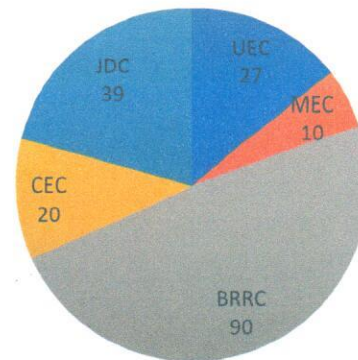
The survey responses fell between one-hundred and eighty-six (186) staff employed at DJJ prefers 12-hour shifts over 8-hour shifts. One-hundred and sixty-five (165) staff employed at DJJ prefers 8-hour shifts over 12-hour shifts. Five staff employed at DJJ prefers both 8 and 12-hour shifts. From these five employees two are from UEC, one is from MEC and two are from BRRC.

8-Hour Shift



■ UEC ■ MEC ■ BRRRC ■ CEC ■ JDC

12-Hour Shift



■ UEC ■ MEC ■ BRRRC ■ CEC ■ JDC

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this analysis of the survey. I trust you will find this information useful in making adjustments to the Security Services operations that will benefit the staff and Agency, so we may continue *"empowering our youth for their future."*

If you have any questions, I can be reached at 803.896.9527 or KLJAME@scdjj.net.

Attachments: Security Survey Results PDF

cc: Sharonda Sutton, Director of Institutional Management, Division of Security Services



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EXHIBIT 3

[Director's weekly note about budget]

Monique McDaniels

Subject:

FW: From the Director's Desk- 1/18/19

From: Freddie B. Pough

Sent: Friday, January 18, 2019 9:09 PM

To: SCDJJ <SCDJJ@scdjj.net>

Subject: From the Director's Desk- 1/18/19

Team DJJ, thank you all for another great week of service to our youth and the citizens of South Carolina. Like many of you, I've spent many years as a public servant – whether it be as a Juvenile Correctional Officer years ago or currently as your Director. Over that time, I've learned it's you, the staff, who shape our agency and make it strong. It's a tall task getting nearly 1,500 people rowing the boat in the same direction, but we're getting better at it each day. We all have a stake in what happens here, and I'm proud to see so many of you taking ownership of our work. It makes me so proud to see silos being removed. It encourages me to see teammates working cross-divisionally to accomplish the mission.

Speaking of our mission, I want to share with you an example of just how profound an impact we can have on our youth, as well as the type of loving, generous teammates we have among us. Recently, a young man was released from BRRC with plans to attend college at Allen University. He dreams of playing basketball and has some real potential. Our staff organized a meeting with Allen's basketball coach ahead of his release. The coach has agreed to offer the young man a walk-on, tryout with the team. However, this plan was almost derailed before it even left the station. The young man had undergone quite the growth spurt while under our supervision, and none of his clothes fit anymore. Mom couldn't afford a new wardrobe or other necessities to send her son off to college. That's when several of our staff across multiple divisions/offices stepped in. Between their generosity and help from 100 Black Men of Greater Columbia, this young man was able to go shopping for new clothes, put down a deposit on campus housing, and get a cell phone so he can stay in touch with his DJJ family. Those of you directly involved know who you are, and I am so incredibly proud of you. You are truly an inspiration and you the measure of how we are telling OUR STORY!

Switching gears...I want to give you all some honest, open context in regards to our fiscal standing. We struggle to compete with other agencies and the private sector when it comes to salaries. We currently do not have the budget to competitively pay our officers and other frontline staff. But this week I will again be asking for salary

increases for those positions. I believe our lawmakers and taxpayers should be supporting state government, including DJJ. I hope this will be the year our legislators decide to further invest in us and our mission.

When I make our case to the Legislature and ask for more money, I intend to shoot straight with them – “Here is what we need and here’s why...” Internally, I hope we approach our daily tasks in the same way. Speak honestly to one another with clear intent and an open mind. We are on the same team. Let’s create an honest, trust-building culture. Things like the Roundtable and this very weekly message are meant to be bricks in that foundation.

Team, as I move forward with our budget talks and make our case to lawmakers, I promise to keep you all abreast of any updates. I hear and understand many of your concerns. I know every decision isn’t popular and sometimes hard to understand, but they are all necessary to ensure OUR Agency is operating effectively and efficiently. I am sincerely thankful for all you do to EMPOWER our youth and invest in their lives.

Let’s Keep Pounding!

Respectfully,

Freddie B. Pough

Agency Director

SC Department of Juvenile Justice

Office: (803) 896-5940

Email: fbpoug@scdjj.net

Website: www.state.sc.us/djj/

"Empowering our youth for the future"

Monique McDaniels

From: Freddie B. Pough
Sent: Friday, February 1, 2019 7:30 PM
To: SCDJJ
Subject: From the Director's Desk: 2/1/19

Team DJJ,

February is here! Our first month of 2019 was a busy one, and it sparked great excitement and optimism for the months ahead. Each month, new hires go through our New Employee Orientation (NEO). That on-boarding process introduces our new teammates to the agency and gives them a snapshot of the mission and vision they're joining. In thinking about that process, it reminded me of how we're building the strongest team possible, to ensure we accomplish our goals and bring forth the vision of our new DJJ. I'm proud of the agency we're presenting to those new faces and the quality of work we are providing to our youth and families across South Carolina.

I've spoken candidly with you all through my weekly note about our budget limitations and other outside influences that impact how we operate as an agency. I want to offer another update regarding my budget meetings with lawmakers downtown this past month. I made the same presentation to the Senate and House. I spoke with them about fairly paying our staff, to ensure we can compete with salary offers from other state agencies. I asked for pay increases and additional funding to help with infrastructure and the operational needs of our agency. I hope what I shared motivates them to balance our needs with the available fund balance for the state. We will likely have an answer about our budget at the end of the legislative session, near the end of June. For now, we will stay focused on our mission at hand and the enhancements we're making to our daily operations.

With such a talented, big-hearted staff, it's easy to stand before a Senate or House committee and champion the work we are all doing. I was able to share with them the emotional work we are tasked with executing. I shared with them a similar occurrence that took place this past weekend at MEC with one of our female youth. This young lady was in an emotional state of distress. She became violent toward herself and those nearby. MEC leadership and staff handled the situation with incredible poise, self-restraint and compassion. They de-escalated the situation and their actions under pressure ensured the safety of both staff and the young lady. I'm

so proud of all involved for going above and beyond to serve that young lady in a time of need, and also set a textbook example for how to respond in that kind of situation. Well done!

I was also delighted this week to see how our Kershaw County office is improving morale, setting goals and informing their community through office activities. Kershaw Community staff is meeting at least once a month for a meal to build trust and communication. They recently designed "vision boards", to establish professional and personal goals, which are hanging in their office. They also decorated the lobby doors to inform visitors of important dates and events, while simultaneously creating a more welcoming work space. I love seeing how we're building trust, investing in one another and creating a positive, supportive workplace. Great job Kershaw County, keep up the good work!

Today, DJJ went Red for "Go Red for Women" Day! This is in recognition of women's heart health. I saw so many of you wearing your red in support of this initiative through the American Heart Association. In doing so, you're really supporting and empowering every woman here at DJJ, as well as your friends and family outside the agency. Whether it is your wife, sister, mother or coworker, almost all of us know someone who has battled cardiovascular disease. The women in our lives are irreplaceable. I don't know what I'd do without the strong ladies in my life. I thank all of you who made the simple gesture to support the women in our lives.

DJJ, we are a team! Whether you went through NEO two weeks ago or you've been here twenty years, we all have a role to play in changing young people's lives and building a stronger South Carolina for years to come.

Thank you for all you do.

Let's Keep Pounding!

Respectfully,

Freddie B. Pough

Agency Director

SC Department of Juvenile Justice

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Email: fbpoug@scdjj.net

Website: www.state.sc.us/djj/



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Governor
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EXHIBIT 4

[Director's correspondence to
correctional officers]

Addressing concerns

From: Freddie B. Pough fbpoug@scdjj.net

To: Security Operations securityoperations@scdjj.net

Cc: Velvet F. McGowan vfmcgo@scdjj.net

Date: Tuesday, April 2, 11:30 AM

Good morning Institutional Services Teammates-

-

Thank you all for the work that you are doing to help protect, serve and rehabilitate our young people. I wanted to take a few minutes and reassure each of you that I'm hearing the buzz and I am very sensitive to your concerns and success here at DJJ. Over the last several months I have received several letters and emails about overtime, scheduling, staffing, and management. Let me begin with overtime. The issue with overtime has plagued DJJ for many years, and it's a very sensitive topic. It was even an issue when I was here as a JCO nearly 20 years ago. I too was the recipient of compensatory (comp) time that was difficult to use as a result of a lack of staff. But as it relates to now, as I addressed a couple of months ago in my weekly *From the Director's Desk*, here's what happened: Within months of our 2018-2019 budget being loaded we exhausted the entire overtime budget. I was advised by Fiscal that the amount set aside for overtime for the entire year was depleted by October. With that information I had to make a decision. I had to make a decision for the well-being of the entire agency. I had to decide rather to turn off overtime, or continue to allow it and force the budget into a deficit. I had no choice but to turn it off. I chose not to allow the budget to run into a deficit so that I could ensure every team member could at least continue to earn the salary they were offered when they were hired. The reality is, if I would have continued to allow overtime, it would have resulted in team members having to be laid off or worse, and they would have performed a job function and wouldn't have received a paycheck. It was not an easy decision, but it was one that needed to be made.

With that being said, please know that as soon as the budget allows, overtime will return. When that occurs, it will be managed carefully. Managers on every level will be held accountable to ensure that overtime is used appropriately, fairly, and consistently. I know that many of you have earned quite a bit of comp time and it seems as if it will be to no avail. I want you all to know that I am continuously working with the House and the Senate in an attempt to provide a solution. In fact, this morning I will be sending a recommended amendment to a proviso that will hopefully result in a favorable, financial solution to this issue. Obviously I cannot make any promises, but I need you all to know that I am trying. I have been where you are, and I whole heartedly understand! I need you all to know that I have pleaded with the House and the Senate for

higher salaries. I have asked them to please consider paying all State Correctional Officers the same salary. I have explained that this would be a huge help with recruitment and retention, and I am hopeful that

they will support this request.

Because of the economic boom in the state it has become increasingly more difficult to recruit and retain officers. Although that is good for the state, it makes things extremely difficult for us here and other state agencies. I am fully aware of our staffing shortages and have asked Human Resources to do all that they can to help us recruit. But again, it's difficult to attract teammates with the current salaries; but I'm working diligently to get those increased.

Team, you all have been tremendous through all of this. You have continued to care for our youth and serve the citizens of this state to the best of your abilities and I truly appreciate each of you! I've heard your concerns and I need you to know that we are working hard to create a better DJJ. From asking many of you to participate in videos for social media, to surveys about the schedule, we are all truly giving it our best effort. But I need your help. Please funnel your concerns to the members of the Director's Roundtable. Allow me the opportunity to address your concerns in a fair and consistent way. If you feel that you have been wronged by management, please file an Employee Complaint so your concern can be investigated. I need you all, and I want you all to be proud to come to work and continue the great work you're doing. I welcome your suggestions to help make things better. Please email me with not only the problem but a solution that we can work on together.

In conclusion, because we are such a large agency I don't get to see many of you; which is why I started the weekly note. But I hope you all know that I appreciate you all and I highly value your contributions to our agency. I hope this communication is received well, and that I can gain your support in improving the agency as we empower or youth for the future!

Respectfully,

Freddie B. Pough

Agency Director

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"Empowering Our Youth for the Future"

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