



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES

Ted Strickland, Governor • Thomas J. Stickrath, Director

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Ohio Department of Youth Services Plans Facility Closures

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) announced today a plan to close Marion Juvenile Correctional Facility (MaJCF) and Freedom Center (FC) by July 2009. The action is being taken in an effort to increase operational efficiency, allow for the reprioritization of funds to remaining DYS facilities, and to expand community-based options for youthful offenders.

“The decision to close a facility is never easy, the significance of this announcement on the employees and communities affected was not taken lightly,” said Tom Stickrath, Director of DYS. “We have a tremendous workforce at these facilities, and I pledge to do what I can to connect our employees with resources that can help to lessen the impact of the closures.”

The state’s current economic crisis and a decreased DYS population were factors in the closure decision. Over the course of the past year, the DYS population has dropped from an average of 1843 in 2007, to 1555 in 2008. Closing two facilities would allow for consolidation of services to a smaller population and save the state an estimated \$24 million annually.

MaJCF, located in Marion, was built in 1999 and has 302 staff with 176 youth. FC, a residential treatment facility for females, currently houses 18 youth and employs 29 people. Located in Delaware County, the FC building was built in 1956 and has served various different purposes over the past 53 years. The MaJCF youth will be distributed to the other five DYS facilities based on their risk and need level, and the FC youth will be moved to Scioto Juvenile Correctional Facility (SJCF).

DYS is the juvenile corrections system for the state of Ohio. DYS is statutorily mandated to confine felony offenders, ages 10 to 21, who have been adjudicated and committed by one of Ohio’s 88 county juvenile courts. DYS operates eight correctional and rehabilitation facilities and provides parole services from six regional sites.