



**Department of
Youth Services**

Message from DYS Director Harvey Reed

Task Force Update

July 19, 2013

Dear Staff and Stakeholders:

Yesterday the Governor's Interagency Task Force on Sexual Misconduct met to discuss the progress of improving safeguards at DYS. Cabinet directors shared findings from their unannounced visits to all 4 DYS facilities that took place on July 11, 2013. The directors observed that staff and youth are aware of the seriousness of this issue and that staff have been aggressively taking steps to make substantial progress.

During the meeting, the Task Force also:

- Reviewed the progress regarding immediate recommendations
- Received the climate monitors' plan, which includes unannounced visits for the rest of the year
- Discussed communication efforts, including memos to youth in facilities and on parole (please see attachments)
- Reviewed the plan for implementing meaningful rounds and live camera monitoring
- Discussed information sharing and reporting protocol between the Ohio State Highway Patrol, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and DYS
- Endorsed DYS pursuing a "Tipline" for youth and staff to voice concerns and report incidents
- Reviewed the schedule for cultural assessments at all sites
- Examined the remaining, longer-term recommendations

As initiatives roll out and the Task Force continues to meet, I will keep you updated. I appreciate your support of DYS and commitment to this important work. As we implement the Task Force recommendations, our facilities will be made safer and more positive.

July 11, 2013

TO: All Youth
FROM: Director Reed
SUBJECT: Safety and Reporting

You may have heard about the Bureau of Justice Statistics Survey of Youth in 2012. The survey found that DYS had a high number of youth reporting sexual victimization. This is not okay with me because when you come to DYS, you have the right to live in a safe and healthy environment that is free from physical, sexual, emotional or other harassment or abuse.

We are taking this issue seriously and working to make improvements. Governor Kasich called for an Interagency Task Force on Sexual Misconduct to help us. Task Force members are visiting all of the facilities. Many of you have spoken with climate assessors and others from central office who asked if you have experienced or witnessed any inappropriate sexual activity or abuse as well as your ideas for reporting, ways we can collect information and how we can improve the facilities.

Your help will continue to be needed. By reporting, you are doing your part to help keep yourself and others out of harm's way and safe. If you report some kind of misconduct, your information will be taken seriously. You will not be punished or retaliated against for reporting.

Some of the ways you can currently report sexual activity or any misconduct include:

- Tell a staff person that you trust
- Fill out a grievance form and put it in the grievance box
- Write to the Chief Inspector's Office at the Ohio Department of Youth Services, 30 W. Spring St., 5th floor, Columbus, OH 43215
- Contact the Legal Assistance Program (please refer to the poster "Your Legal Rights" for telephone number or mailing address) or your own private attorney
- Write to the Correctional Institution Inspection Committee (CIIC) by completing the CIIC form and mailing it to CIIC, Riffe Center, 15th floor, 77 S. High St., Columbus, OH 43215

We will increase the ways you have for reporting, and I will let you know when new options are in place.

Thank you for your cooperation. I want your stay at DYS to be safe and meaningful and prepare you for a successful future.

cc: Staff and Stakeholders

July 11, 2013

TO: All Youth on Parole

FROM: Director Reed

SUBJECT: Safety and Reporting

You may have heard about the Bureau of Justice Statistics Survey of Youth in 2012. The survey found that DYS had a high number of youth reporting sexual victimization. This is not okay with me because when youth arrive at DYS, they have the right to live in a safe and healthy environment that is free from physical, sexual, emotional or other harassment or abuse.

We are taking this issue seriously and working to make improvements. Governor Kasich called for an Interagency Task Force on Sexual Misconduct to help us. The Task Force and I would like to hear from you with any information that you would like to share.

Please feel free to speak candidly with your Juvenile Parole Officer about the experiences you had while in a DYS facility. We are especially interested to know if you experienced or witnessed any inappropriate sexual activity or abuse as well as your ideas for how we can improve the facilities.

By reporting, you are doing your part to help keep others out of harm's way and safe. If you report some kind of misconduct, your information will be taken seriously. You will not be punished or retaliated against for reporting.

In addition to talking to your Juvenile Parole Officer, some of the additional ways you can currently report sexual activity or any misconduct include:

- Tell a staff person that you trust
- Fill out a grievance form and put it in the grievance box in the regional parole office or give it to the Regional Grievance Coordinator
- Write to the Chief Inspector's Office at the Ohio Department of Youth Services, 30 W. Spring St., 5th floor, Columbus, OH 43215
- Contact the Legal Assistance Program (please refer to the regional parole office poster "Your Legal Rights" for telephone number or mailing address) or your own private attorney

We will increase the ways you have for reporting, and I will let you know when new options are in place.

Thank you for your cooperation.

cc: Staff and Stakeholders