



*Changing Lives to
Ensure a Safer Florida*

FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT of
CORRECTIONS

Governor

RICK SCOTT

Secretary

MICHAEL D. CREWS

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<http://www.dc.state.fl.us>

March 13, 2014

Via Electronic Transmission

The Honorable Ashton J. Hayward
Mayor of Pensacola
222 West Main Street
Pensacola, FL 32502

Dear Mayor Hayward,

The Department of Corrections' priority is the safety of Florida families and it strives to be a good neighbor in each and every community location. I am writing this letter to clarify some misunderstanding about the relocation of the Pensacola Probation and Parole Office to 1625 North Palafox Street.

The Department noticed the Probation and Parole Office through newspaper ads in the Pensacola News Journal on July 16 and 23, 2013. Additionally, the Department followed the public notice requirements outlined in Florida Statutes and Administrative Rule when competitively procuring the Palafox location (F.S. 945.28). In this case and for all Probation and Parole Offices across the state, the Department self-imposes more restrictive requirements on location and distance from prohibited sites than is required by statute.

We have heard concerns the Palafox location is thought to be a "community corrections center," which houses state inmates that are currently incarcerated and facilitates their reintegration back into the community through participation in work-release, substance abuse treatment, and other rehabilitative programs. This type of facility also requires different public notice requirements (F.S. 944.033). The Palafox location is not a community corrections centers, it is a Probation and Parole Office.

The primary function of a Probation and Parole Office is to supervise offenders who are on probation (not inmates who are still incarcerated) and ensure they comply with the law and order of the courts. Individuals that will be reporting to the Palafox location are not "placed" there by the Probation and Parole Office, rather they already live and work in the community. These individuals are not inmates who are incarcerated and they do not reside at the facility. In fact, of the 3,200 offenders supervised in Pensacola, over 90 percent were not incarcerated prior to their current court ordered probation; they were sentenced directly to probation and have never left the community. They are interacting with residents on a daily basis at work, social settings and even at school events. The court deemed the most appropriate sentencing alternative for these individuals is to be supervised in the community rather than incarcerated, and that they would atone for their crime by serving probation, paying restitution and, in some cases, performing community service work.

Placement of a Probation and Parole Office on Palafox Street is consistent with services provided by other locations in the immediate area. A county probation office, mental health and substance abuse facility, mission and thrift store that assists the homeless, Florida Department of Law Enforcement office, as well as many law offices, are all presently operating in the neighborhood.

Probation officers are vigilant in early detection of non-compliance with court orders, which includes both routine and random drug testing. Should a violation occur, most arrests will take place in a setting other than the Probation and Parole Office. If an arrest does occur in the office setting, it will be done in a discrete manner with safety for staff and the community being the primary focus. Office arrests are done with law enforcement support, escort and transport in a safe and efficient manner. In most cases an arrest would be imperceptible to anyone other than those actually conducting the arrest.

We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with the City and citizens of Pensacola for many years, and we look forward to continuing this relationship into the future.

Respectfully yours,



Barbara Scala
Regional Director, North Region
Community Corrections

cc: Jewel Cannada-Wynn
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