

Jackson County Family Court- Field Services Receives Re-Accreditation
(15 years and going strong!)

Congratulations to the Jackson County Family Court Field Services department for achieving **perfect scores** once again in their recent two day American Correctional Association (ACA) re-accreditation audit process:

Juvenile Probation and Aftercare Services, 228 standards (1 mandatory) -100%
Electronic Monitoring 129 standards (3 mandatory) -100%

It is the mission of Field Services to continuously create and carry out habilitative and rehabilitative initiatives that provide youth and their families with coping skills, competencies and experiences that prevent referral to, and further penetration into the Justice System. The department accomplishes this mission through the provision of multiple comprehensive, treatment focused community based programs and services to both pre-adjudicated and adjudicated youth and their families.

The November 28-29, 2022 audit marked the fifth audit of the Field Services department. American Correctional Association audits are voluntarily conducted every three years for the purpose of demonstrating the department's ability to maintain a balance between protecting the public, and providing an environment that safeguards the life, health and safety of the youth and families served.

Throughout the two day re-accreditation process, the auditor, Michael Radon, MRADON Consulting Inc., emphasized how impressed he was with the pristine condition of the electronic files, which documented the existence of policy, as well as the evidence of practice. Reflecting on his multiple on-site visits to probation offices and community programs throughout the country, Mr. Radon stated *“Documentation is one thing, but it is clearly evident that every single staff person I’ve met and spoken with is fiercely committed to the youth, families and the communities in which they reside. I was blown away by the COVID response this team implemented to make sure youth under their care not only met the conditions of supervision set forth by the court, but were able to navigate their way through the perils of food insecurity, interruption of education, housing instability and pandemic health threats.”*

“Leadership and vision are everything. The Field Services employees under the leadership of Deputy Court Administrator Theresa Byrd and Director Kelly Hams Pearson are the real deal! My highest compliment to them is that if a child of mine was placed under community supervision I would rest easy knowing that they are being served by that group of folks. They all exude a culture of excellence, passion and commitment to their work on behalf of the children and families of Jackson County!”

Hams-Pearson stressed that the achievement would not have been possible without all of the partnering departments of the Court, especially Support Services who flawlessly provides for all of Field Services operational and facility maintenance needs and Assessment and Development staff who are always willing and able to provide program

data and research support. Gratitude also goes to Residential Services, the Legal department and the Case Assessment Unit who all offer true partnership through open communication and shared resources, thereby allowing youth to seamlessly navigate a juvenile justice system that instead of being intimidating and confusing, is trauma sensitive, accommodating and tailored to individual needs.

A very special “thank you” goes to Ms. Carolyn Meadows, the Family Court’s newly appointed Accreditation Manager who did an extemporaneous job coordinating the double audit in the first year of her new role. With more than forty years with the Family Court, it was not Ms. Meadows “first rodeo,” just her first audit!

It is also important to acknowledge and express appreciation to our Field Services ACA Audit team members Ricky Barbieri, Teressa Storch, Jennifer Godwin, James Chapple, Melba Faulkner Jenkins, Bonnie G Johnson, Keith Robinson and Cameron Hardy. This accomplishment is truly a Court wide, team effort. Everyone deserves a rousing round of applause!