

# NEWS RELEASE

## DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

### Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

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**Presented by Jason P. Miller, Chief of Communications and Community Relations**

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## DOC names Melissa Kearney Statewide Probation and Parole Director

**Dover, DE** - Today Bureau of Community Corrections Chief Marvin Mailey announced that Regional Probation and Parole Manager Melissa Kearney has been promoted to Statewide Probation and Parole Director, effective February 14. This position provides leadership and direction over the five regional Probation and Parole offices that together oversee probation and parole, pretrial services, electronic monitoring and other supervision programs for more than 10,000 individuals who are serving probationary sentences or are on pretrial supervision in the community. Kearney replaces Rick Figurelle whose retirement caps off a distinguished 35-year DOC career, including service as Statewide Probation and Parole Director for the past 12 months.

“Melissa is a proven and respected leader who will immediately leverage her decades of experience, commitment to innovation, and DOC’s network of community partnerships to enhance our focus on public safety while expanding pathways for offenders to achieve their reentry goals,” **Bureau of Community Corrections Chief Marvin Mailey said.**

Kearney, who has served as Regional Manager at the Cherry Lane Probation and Parole office in New Castle County since March, 2020, began her career as a Probation Officer with the DOC in 1995. She has spent a majority of her career supervising the Domestic Violence Unit in New Castle County, where she has represented DOC on multiple task forces and committees and served as a leader in the domestic violence community. She was promoted to Supervisor in 2001 and established the Victim Services Program for Probation and Parole in New Castle County that same year. She introduced a validated assessment tool for the domestic violence population and initiated a pilot project leveraging technology to communicate with Delaware Courts. In 2018, Melissa was appointed Supervisor of Pretrial Services in New Castle County, where she oversaw bail reform implementation efforts. She is an active participant in the DOC's American Correctional Association (ACA) Committee and is a member of DOC’s Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team. As Regional Manager she supervises the state's largest Probation and Parole office which includes Task Force Units, Home Confinement, GPS, Sex Offenders, Pretrial, GVI, Re-Entry, and standard supervision units. Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic Kearney has worked collaboratively with the courts and other stakeholders to coordinate the participation of probation officers in remote court proceedings, including Violation of Probation hearings.

“Delaware’s Probation and Parole officers work around the clock in challenging environments to achieve our dual mission of public safety and offender rehabilitation. Like many others, I have chosen to dedicate my career to this important and rewarding work, and I am honored to support our exceptional officers and staff in a central leadership role,” **Statewide Probation and Parole Director Melissa Kearney said.**

“The Department of Correction offers a sincere thanks to retiring Statewide Probation and Parole Director Figurelle for devoting his career to public service,” **Chief Mailey said.** “His leadership has helped modernize our Probation and Parole operations for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and over the past 12 months his steady hand has helped Probation and Parole to be resilient as we have navigated the immense challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic.” Figurelle spent his entire 35-year career at the DOC, working at each position level within Probation and Parole and serving in senior leadership positions within the Bureau of Community Corrections for nearly 15 years.

Probation and Parole falls within the DOC’s Bureau of Community Corrections which works to reduce crime and support public safety by assessing offender risks and needs and providing responsive supervision through comprehensive evidence-based reentry-focused programs that feature substance abuse treatment, mental health services, career counseling, education and training for individuals serving probationary sentences in the community and those completing work release and violation of probation sentences in Community Corrections Centers. Bureau staff collaborate on a daily basis with medical and behavioral healthcare professionals, community organizations, service providers, state agencies, employers and the Judiciary to connect men and women under their supervision to systems of support that improve their chances of leading productive lives in our communities. They also play an active role in collaborative crime reduction initiatives, including the Group Violence Intervention project in the City of Wilmington.