



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

Administrative Office  
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East  
Bldg. 1, Room E-316  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305  
(304) 340-2305 Jennifer Bundy  
(304) 340-2306 April Harless  
(304) 558-4219 / TTY  
(304) 558-1212 / FAX  
Web Site: <http://www.state.wv.us/wvsca>  
Information Services Division  
Email: [Jennifer.bundy@courtwv.gov](mailto:Jennifer.bundy@courtwv.gov)  
Email: [April.harless@courtsww.gov](mailto:April.harless@courtsww.gov)

### **Sex offender intensive supervision officers sworn in to work in central West Virginia** For immediate release Monday, April 26, 2010

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** – Supreme Court Chief Justice Robin Jean Davis swore in six new sex offender intensive supervision officers during a ceremony today in the Supreme Court Chamber.

They will work in Region Two, which includes Monongalia, Marion, Preston, Taylor, Barbour, Lewis, Upshur, Harrison, and Randolph counties.

The specialized officers are working under provisions of the Child Protection Act of 2006 (House Bill 101, passed June 14, 2006). The law requires extended supervision for sexual offenders, especially those convicted of crimes against children.

The officers' only duty is to supervise sex offenders. They work out of their cars, not offices. They work holidays, nights, weekends, and hours in between to provide intensive supervision. The officers also work with circuit court judges and treatment providers to make sure offenders are complying with court orders. The extended supervision includes polygraph examinations and electronic monitoring.

“This is a very, very, very important position from the Court’s perspective. We see these horrific cases every day,” Chief Justice Davis said.

Justice Menis Ketchum also attended the ceremony.

John McCoy, a former Monongalia County probation officer, will be the regional team leader. Preston County Probation Officers David Bailey and Bill Cobasky are transferring to this specialized sex offender unit. The three new officers are Jaime Jenkins, a former employee of the Division of Juvenile Service who is a certified sex offender treatment specialist; Neil Parsons, II, a former employee of the Division of



Six sex offender intensive supervision officers were sworn in by Chief Justice Robin Jean Davis on April 26, 2010, in the Supreme Court Chamber. Mike Lacy, left, Director of Probation Services in the Supreme Court Administrative Office, and Chief Justice Davis developed the intensive supervision program in 2006 and 2007. This is the third group of officers to be hired.

*Photo by Michael Switzer*

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Correction and a former Parole Officer; and Angelia Pyles, a former employee of Appalachian Community Health, where she was a Children and Adult service coordinator.

The officers have been on duty since April 16.

The officers were the third group to be hired. The first were hired in November 2008 to work in Region Five, which consists of Boone, Cabell, Lincoln, Logan, Mingo, Putnam, and Wayne Counties. The second group was hired October 1 to work in Region Six, which includes Fayette, Raleigh, Pocahontas, Greenbrier, Monroe, Summers, Mercer, McDowell, and Wyoming Counties.

The officers working in the first two regions already have caught sex offenders who were planning to reoffend and have taken them back to court.

“We believe the program is working. It is making our communities safer and making our children safer. Our communities in Region Two will be safer and will be better places to live,” said Mike Lacy, Director of Probation Services in the Supreme Court Administrative Office.



Chief Justice Robin Jean Davis speaks during a sex offender intensive supervision officers swearing in ceremony on April 26, 2010, in the Supreme Court Chamber. Chief Justice Davis swore in six new officers, the third group to be hired into the program.  
Photo by Michael Switzer

The supervision program is being expanded one region at a time throughout the state. A total of thirty probation officers eventually will be hired to carry out provisions of the law. They work under the supervision of Caren Bills, the Deputy Director of Probation Services.

The program was developed by Mr. Lacy and Chief Justice Davis when she was Chief Justice in 2006 and 2007. Her support was crucial in refining the vision of the supervision protocol. Her work was a continuation of her interest in protecting children in our communities during her "Year of the Child" in 2006 and "Year of the Child, Too" in 2007.

The Supreme Court is proud of West Virginia's Corps of probation officers, who are among the best in the nation, said Supreme Court Administrative Director Steve Canterbury.

“The ‘special forces’ within that elite group are the sex offender supervision officers,” Mr. Canterbury said. “The reality is, most criminals have some skewed sense of logic when they commit crimes. With sex offenders, there is no logic. It is a force beyond logic.”

That makes them especially difficult to supervise in the community, Mr. Canterbury said.

“You are the cream of the crop. We have the greatest expectations of you,” he told the new officers.

“I’m impressed by them. I think we have a wonderful group of new officers,” Mr. Lacy said.

Chief Justice Davis said Mr. Lacy also is one of the best directors of probation in the United States. “On behalf of the Court, Michael, we thank you for all your work,” she said.