



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

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Justice Davis to swear in SOISO officer in Martinsburg

For immediate release Wednesday, October 26, 2011

MARTINSBURG, W.Va. – Justice Robin Jean Davis will swear in a sex offender intensive supervision officer (SOISO) in Martinsburg at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, November 1, in the courtroom of Circuit Judge Christopher C. Wilkes in the Berkeley County Judicial Center.

The ceremony will take place immediately upon the conclusion of the regional truancy meeting on November 1, also in the judicial center in Martinsburg. That meeting is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. and will end about 11:30 a.m.

Brigitte Buckland, a former Division of Corrections parole officer, replaces an officer in Region One who resigned. Region One consists of Berkeley, Jefferson, Morgan, Mineral, Grant, Tucker, Hampshire, Hardy, and Pendleton Counties. Other officers in the region were sworn into office in July by Chief Justice Margaret L. Workman.

The specialized officers work under provisions of the Child Protection Act of 2006 (House Bill 101, passed June 14, 2006). The law requires extended supervision for sex 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.

The first group of sex offender probation officers was hired in November 2008. The supervision program is being expanded one region at a time throughout the state. With the hiring of these officers, there are now twenty-seven SOISO officers in forty-four counties.

The SOISO program was developed under the leadership of 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.

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