



April 17, 2024

**Media Statement from Memphis and Shelby County Juvenile Court**

**Judge Tarik Sugarmon**

**Proposed transition of Youth Justice and Education Center operations from  
Shelby County Sheriff's Department to Juvenile Court**

The Shelby County Juvenile Court is dedicated to collaborating with the Shelby County Sheriff's Office to find the optimal solution for the long-term welfare of youth and their families at the Youth Justice and Education Center (YJEC). While transitioning the operations of YJEC to Juvenile Court is a viable objective, according to an initial assessment conducted by the Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators in late 2023, a transition will necessitate a thorough assessment to ascertain and acquire the necessary resources essential for ensuring a secure and conducive environment for the youth at the facility.

A successful transition in operational support for YJEC will entail a multifaceted approach, including the recruitment and hiring of qualified staff, budget allocation for facility upgrades, and the development of comprehensive operational plans communicated to stakeholders such as residents, families, and service providers, including medical, food, and education services.

We are committed to working closely with the Sheriff's Department to chart the way forward. However, given the intricate nature of the transition process, we do not anticipate its completion in 2024.

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