



**JOINT NEWS RELEASE from the Shelby County Mayor's Office
Juvenile Court of Memphis & Shelby County**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**SELECTION OF AN ATTORNEY FOR APPOINTMENT PURSUANT TO RULE 13
FOR TEENS WITH DELINQUENT CHARGES WILL BE MOVED TO THE OFFICE
OF THE SHELBY COUNTY MAYOR**

According to TCA Rule 13; (The Judge SHALL maintain a roster of qualified attorneys...); but, to comply with the former DOJ Monitor's suggestions for a more independent process, the duties to select Panel Attorneys appointed by the judge will now be handled by the office of Mayor Lee Harris

Memphis, TN - Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris and Memphis & Shelby County Juvenile Court Judge Dan Michael have agreed to remove the duties of selecting defense attorneys for juvenile defendants from a staff member working at the Juvenile Court to a person to be hired by the Mayor. If the resolution is approved by the Shelby County Board of Commissioners this change should satisfy the former Due Process Monitor's suggestion for a more independent process,



even though JCMSC has always followed State Law in this function and will continue to do so under this new plan.

“We have been working very hard for the past six years to address the various issues in the monitors’ reports and we continued the hard work throughout the process,” says Judge Michael. “Since the DOJ closed the Memorandum of Agreement, we have added additional resources to address any remaining challenges, focused on all the monitor’s reports and met with the Mayor, County Attorney Marlinee Iverson, and other stakeholders to see how we can continue to improve on our services to the children and families we serve. I feel establishing a more independent defense panel process works in the best interest of all parties and I’m extremely pleased Mayor Harris is willing to move the panel selections duties to his office.”

“We’re announcing today a path to resolution of the panel attorney structure which was strongly challenged by the DOJ’s former Court Monitor’s reports,” says Mayor Harris. “It’s important to keep in mind that everyone involved in this journey—the Sheriff, the Juvenile Court Judge, the County Attorney and our Office take these reports and issues very seriously. We have read the reports thoroughly, discussed the matters identified at length, and we’re moving together to remedy each concern. That’s what today’s announcement is all about.”

(end of release)