

## Jim Reddoch appointed as commissioner of Alabama mental health

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Gov. Robert Bentley recently announced Jim Reddoch as the new commissioner of the Alabama Department of Mental Health.

Reddoch will fill the commissioner's position held by Zelia Baugh, who submitted her resignation, effective June 30, citing family priorities.

Reddoch will continue the work of integrating mental health patients into more modern, community-based care consistent with the progress the department has made in implementing the governor's vision for mental health in Alabama.

Reddoch has had experience in nearly every area of mental health services in the state. Currently, Reddoch serves as executive director of Indian Rivers Mental Health Center. Reddoch was director of the Taylor Hardin Secure Medical Facility in Tuscaloosa from 2000 to 2009. During his tenure at Taylor Hardin, Reddoch was also designated as an assistant attorney general for the State of Alabama.

Before serving as director of Taylor Hardin, Reddoch was the director of Bryce Hospital in Tuscaloosa from 1992 to 2000. He was also a deputy commissioner for the Department of Mental Health from 1988 to 1992.

"I believe Jim's wealth of experience will serve the state well, most importantly the patients of the Alabama Department of Mental Health," Bentley said. "We have made tremendous progress in moving patients into a more modern, community-based care network. We are also making sure our traditional mental health facilities best meet the needs of the patients they serve. Jim Reddoch's background and expertise will help us accomplish our mission."

"I am committed to building on the department's progress of developing the highest-quality services possible for all of the patients we serve," Reddoch said. "From community-based care networks to services within our traditional mental health facilities, we will strive to meet the needs of everyone we serve."

Baugh has offered to be available for any assistance needed during the transition in leadership.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the people of this state. However, it has become increasingly apparent to me that my family priorities require most of my attention at this time," Baugh said. "I believe the department is well-positioned to continue to make progress toward providing the highest caliber services to Alabamians with intellectual disabilities, mental illnesses, or substance addictions. Throughout the department, there are dedicated individuals who are

making a positive difference in the lives of consumers and their families, and I am honored to have served as commissioner.”

“I appreciate the work Zelia has done to modernize mental health care services in this state,” Bentley said. “She has fully dedicated herself to meeting the needs of patients and their families. As recently as last week, her efforts were recognized on a national level as she spoke with a Senate committee about the state’s modernization efforts. She has made a lasting contribution to mental health services in Alabama.”