

May 15, 2020

Director Garcia Announces Leadership Appointment

(Des Moines, Iowa) – The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) Director Kelly Garcia announced the appointment of a key leadership position today.

Cory Turner will serve as the Division Administrator (DA) for Mental Health and Disability Services (MHDS) overseeing DHS' six facilities.

Turner graduated from Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas, with a Master's degree in Liberal Studies with an emphasis in Justice Studies and a Bachelor of Science degree in Justice Studies. He brings a broad range of experience to the DA position including experience with the juvenile justice system, civil commitment programs for sexually violent predators and general psychiatric programs. Turner was director of the Kansas Sexual Predator Treatment Program (SPTP) for two years, and director of the Kansas Psychiatric Services Program for six years before moving to Iowa. He also has extensive experience working with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and The Joint Commission (TJC).

He has served for the past five years as superintendent of the Cherokee Mental Health Institute (CMHI) and the Civil Commitment Unit for Sexual Offenders (CCUSO). He has been the interim DA for MHDS Facilities since January 2020. "Cory has been a steady leader while serving as the interim DA. Cory has a fresh approach to team building which fosters good morale and is exactly the kind of leadership we need overseeing our facilities," said Director Garcia. "We have a lot of progress to make. Cory has developed a great rapport with the teams at all six of DHS' facilities. He is the right person to take our DHS facilities down the right path at this critical time."

Turner will continue to serve as superintendent at CMHI and CCUSO, and will work from Cherokee, which will ensure that agency leadership is closely connected to facility operations. "Having DHS leadership embedded at one of the facilities allows a deeper understanding of the operational impacts of policy changes," said Director Garcia. Director Garcia and Turner are working to elevate the roles of superintendents within the leadership structure at DHS.

Turner lives in Cherokee, Iowa, with his wife, son and one dog. He is an avid runner and self-described champion of the underdog.

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For more information
Matt Highland
mhighla@dhs.state.ia.us
515-281-4848