




STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**  
P.O. Box 41101 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1101

August 1, 2022

**TO:** All DOC Staff  
All Incarcerated Individuals  
All Interested Parties

**FROM:** Cheryl Strange, Secretary 

**SUBJECT:** Assistant Secretary of Prisons Announcement

It is with great appreciation for the work Mike Obenland has accomplished in his years of service, that I announce that Mike is retiring as Washington State Department of Corrections' (DOC) Assistant Secretary of the Men's Prisons Division, effective September 1, 2022.

Mike has been with DOC for 33 years and in this time has earned the respect of his team, his peers and those in DOC's care and custody. Mike started his career in 1989 as a correctional officer at Clallam Bay Corrections Center. He served in a variety of leadership roles at five different facilities, including superintendent of Clallam Bay Corrections Center and superintendent of Monroe Correctional Complex.

Mike brought to his position a wealth of knowledge and a deep understanding and commitment to operating safe and humane prisons. I am extremely grateful to Mike for his leadership and the example he has set for the Men's Prison Division and the entire department. I wish him a very happy retirement, which he has earned after his many years of faithful service.

Mike shared with me that this was a bitter-sweet decision. Sweet, in that he gets to retire. But bitter because he feels there is still so much to do. Mike has a genuine love for this work however, his family is his biggest priority, and with this retirement decision, he gets to spend more time with them.

With this departure, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Donald (Don) Holbrook as Assistant Secretary of the Men's Prisons Division effective September 1, 2022.

Don began his career as a correctional officer at the Washington State Penitentiary (WSP) in Walla Walla, WA in 1989. During his 32-year career, Don has been promoted through the ranks as Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, and Associate Superintendent. In 2014, Don was appointed as the Superintendent for the Penitentiary, a multiple custody, 2100 plus bed facility, with over 1100 employees and 400 volunteers. Most recently, Don has served as the interim Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Men's Prison Division.

For Don safety of staff, incarcerated individuals and the community at large has always been his top priority. Don also recognizes the importance of a diverse workforce and what it brings to the team.

***"Working Together for SAFER Communities"***

Assistant Secretary of Prisons Announcement

August 1, 2022

Page 2

He appreciates the ability to have collaborative working relationships with the organization with the goal of working towards a common purpose.

Don has already established his dedication and commitment to the Men's Prison Division and his depth of experience will help him excel as Assistant Secretary for the Men's Prison Division.

Please help me say thank you and "see you down the road" to Mike Obenland and welcome Don Holbrook to his new position.