



Commonwealth of Kentucky Justice & Public Safety Cabinet

Matthew G. Bevin, Governor

John C. Tilley, Secretary

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Accomplished Federal Prisons Executive to Lead Kentucky Department of Corrections

Kathleen Kenney appointed as interim commissioner after decades of federal experience

FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 31, 2019) – Kentucky Justice Secretary John Tilley announced today that Kathleen Kenney, the former assistant director and general counsel for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, will serve as interim commissioner for the state Department of Corrections.

Kenney is joining the department with more than 25 years of experience in criminal justice, particularly in the federal prison system, which oversees 122 prisons and 39,000 employees. From 2004 to 2017, she held the assistant director and general counsel position in Washington D.C., managing the bureau's legal operations and 300 staff members.

During that time, Kenney supervised offices on internal affairs, inmate grievances, ethics and the Freedom of Information Act. She also oversaw the development and implementation of federal regulations and agency policy in multiple areas, including civil commitment of sexually dangerous offenders, terrorist communications and officer safety.

"Commissioner Kenney brings an impressive complement of leadership and expertise at a time when corrections is undergoing pivotal reforms," Secretary Tilley said. "I have no doubt that her service to the Commonwealth will prove transformative, and I'm excited to have her join our team."

Since her time in Washington, Kenney has worked for the nationally-recognized consulting firm, The Moss Group, where her efforts focused on improving correctional cultures across the country, particularly in the areas of sexual harassment, professional boundaries, and women's leadership.

She earned a bachelor's degree in politics from the Catholic University of America and a juris doctorate from the University of Notre Dame Law School.

"I would like to thank Governor Bevin and Secretary Tilley for this wonderful opportunity to serve with the staff at the Kentucky Department of Corrections," Kenney said. "I am excited to embrace the challenges associated with protecting public safety and helping offenders successfully return to law-abiding lives."

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