

APD > News & Reports > Media Advisory

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Governor Crist Appoints DeBeaugrine as Director of Agency for Persons with Disabilities

TALLAHASSEE, FL - Governor Charlie Crist today announced the appointment of James DeBeaugrine of Tallahassee to serve as executive director of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. DeBeaugrine has served as the agency's interim director since May and previously as the agency's deputy director for budget and planning since August 2007.

"While serving as an analyst and staff director for the Florida House of Representatives, Jim gained considerable experience with Florida's programs that serve persons with disabilities," Governor Crist said. "I am confident the expertise Jim gained both there and during his 12 months at the agency will prove helpful in continuing to provide quality services to persons with disabilities and their families and caregivers."

Before coming to the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, DeBeaugrine, 49, served the Legislature as the staff director for the House of Representatives Justice Appropriations Committee since 1997. After a one-year internship with the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations, he became an analyst for the House Health and Human Services Appropriations Committee in 1989. He earned a bachelor's degree in social services and a master's degree in public administration from Florida State University.

"I am honored that Governor Crist has expressed confidence in my ability to ensure the health and safety of the people our agency serves and to assist them in receiving the critical services and support they need to reach their full potential both at home and in the community," said DeBeaugrine. "I will work diligently to ensure that the agency fulfills this mission, and I look forward to continuing to work with stakeholders and service providers throughout the state to improve the lives of people with disabilities."

The Agency for Persons with Disabilities is responsible for working in partnership with local communities to support persons with developmental disabilities in living, learning and working, in all aspects of community life. Developmental disabilities encompass a variety of conditions that interfere with a person's ability to function in everyday activities, including spina bifida, autism, cerebral palsy, Prader-Willi syndrome and mental retardation.

"The Arc of Florida believes Mr. DeBeaugrine will have the best interests of persons with developmental disabilities in mind as he accepts the director's position at the Agency for Persons With Disabilities," said Deborah Linton, executive director of The Arc of Florida. "We look forward to working with him to improve the quality of life for the persons we all serve."

"Family Care Council Florida applauds Governor Crist on his selection of Jim DeBeaugrine as Director of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities," said Betty Kay Clements, FCCF Chairperson. "As interim director he has shown strong leadership and fiscal responsibility, while responding to and understanding the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. We look forward to working with him during these unsettled times to ensure the welfare of individuals with developmental disabilities."

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