



# NEWS RELEASE



## **For Immediate Release**

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### **(12/18/25) Southern Seven Health Department and Head Start Announces New Executive Director**

Southern Seven Health Department and Head Start is pleased to announce the appointment of Jennifer Parks as its new Executive Director.

Jennifer Parks has been a dedicated leader within Southern Seven for many years, serving most recently as the Early Childhood Administrator and Interim Co-Executive Director. Her leadership has guided the agency through critical transitions, strengthened community partnerships, and supported the continued delivery of high-quality health and early childhood services across the seven southernmost counties of Illinois.

In her new role as Executive Director, Parks will oversee all public health, WIC, environmental health, health education, and Head Start/Early Head Start operations. She will lead the agency's long-term strategic initiatives focused on expanding access to family services, enhancing early childhood outcomes, and maintaining excellence in public health programming throughout the region.

"I am honored to serve the communities of Southern Illinois in this capacity," said Parks. "Southern Seven has a long history of supporting children, families, and public health. I am committed to strengthening our programs, supporting our dedicated staff, and ensuring our agency continues to be a trusted resource for the people we serve."

The Southern Seven Health Department Board expressed confidence in Parks' vision, professionalism, and commitment to the agency's mission of promoting health, safety, and school readiness for all families in the region.

Southern Seven Health Department is a public health department that serves communities of the seven southernmost counties in Illinois focusing on disease prevention, promoting healthy lifestyles, ensuring access to healthcare services, and serves as the Head Start Grantee for the region.

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