

## **Clarence Carter, Commissioner of the Dept of Human Services, Tennessee**



Clarence H. Carter was appointed to serve as a member of Governor Bill Lee's Cabinet as the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) in January 2021. Mr. Carter leads the state's second-largest agency with an operating budget of more than \$3 billion and nearly 4,000 employees working in offices in all 95 counties. Through more than 17 programs and services, the Department partners with Tennesseans to facilitate nutrition programs, employment assistance, vocational training, and protective services to enhance their well-being.

Mr. Carter serves as chair of the State's Families First Community Advisory Board and Child Care Task Force, and as a member of the State's Coordinating Task Force; each dedicated to innovation in determining collaborative solutions to better serve Tennesseans. Mr. Carter is a National Academy of Public Administration Fellow and 2022 recipient of the Spirit of Fatherhood Judge David Gray Ross Award from the National Partnership for Community Leadership. Mr. Carter also serves as a thought leader on issues in human services; presenting at national conferences and testifying before Congress.

Mr. Carter has more than 30 years of experience in the public safety net space, including serving four governors, a mayor and in the administrations of President George W. Bush and President Donald Trump. Mr. Carter served as Director of the Arizona Department of Economic Security and Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Social Services. He also managed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and served as the Director of the Office of Community Services. On the local level, Mr. Carter served as Director of the Washington, D.C., Department of Human Services, where he led an initiative to transform the District's shelter-based homeless system to one that assisted those served to finding permanent residency.

In 2015, Mr. Carter founded the Institute for the Improvement of the Human Condition. At that organization, he worked with state and local safety net agencies to meet the emergency needs of socially and economically vulnerable citizens.

Prior to serving as TDHS Commissioner, Mr. Carter served on the federal level as Director of the Office of Family Assistance and Acting Director of the Office of Community Services at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. While there, Mr. Carter led the administration of seven federal programs including the \$16.5 billion Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

Mr. Carter earned his bachelor's degree at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania in Indiana, Pennsylvania. Mr. Carter has an enduring commitment to transform the safety net by connecting economically, socially, and developmentally vulnerable individuals and families to services that expand beyond their short-term needs, but also position them for long-lasting success.