



Charleston County Sheriff's Office Policy and Procedures Manual

Sheriff Carl Ritchie

9-25 Inmate Classification

- ☐ NEW
- ☒ REVISED
- ☒ REVIEWED

ACA Standards Reference:	2A-21, 23, 28, 29, 31,33; 4C-27; 4D-24; 6B-04, 05; 7D-29
CALEA Standards Reference:	
NCCHC Standards Reference:	
SCLEA Standards Reference:	
SC Minimum Standards:	1081; 1082a, b; 1094a; 2014-3; J1095a; 1024m; 2017-5C; 1092; 1083
DOJ PREA Standards:	PREA 115.67c, d; PREA 115.14; PREA 115.41a,b,c,e,f

This policy dated 1/28/2025 replaces prior policies cited above and supersedes all previously issued directives.

I. Purpose:

To provide the Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center (SACDC) with an objective classification system based on demographics and history, which is used to assign inmates to housing units, security levels, PREA factors, facility programs and services. Utilizing this classification system, inmates will be placed in the least restrictive housing unit for their safety and security of the facility.

(SC Min. 1081; 5-ALDF-2A-28, 31)

II. Policy:

It is the policy of the SACDC, in accordance with the standards promulgated by the American Correctional Association, Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities in South Carolina, and the South Carolina Department of Corrections, that all inmates shall be classified within seventy-two hours of the initial classification screening conducted during intake and reviewed as necessary.

III. Definitions:

- A. For purposes of this procedure, the word "deputy" applies to all agency employees with a certification classification of Class I, Class II, Class III, or Reserve Deputy, as defined by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy.

The following terms are used interchangeably; however, they carry guidance to specific employees based on usage of the term:

1. Deputy, deputy sheriff, detention deputy, sworn employee, uniformed sworn employee, sworn administrative employee, reserve deputy.
 2. civilian, non-sworn employee.
- B. *Employee*: When used without further clarification, the term employee is inclusive of all agency members (sworn and non-sworn).
- C. *Classification Category*: The inmate's assigned security designation of maximum, medium, or minimum.
- D. *Classification Level*: The inmate's assigned numerical security designation. The levels are number one through nine. The numerical designation is a more detailed explanation for the inmate's classification category.
- E. *Classification Review*: The process of reviewing the inmate's security/custody level periodically, or as a result of disciplinary action, sentencing, new offense, other new pertinent information, a change in mental health, program or work record, or by staff request.

- F. *Initial Classification:* The initial custody assessment/screening process at intake/booking to determine immediate temporary cell assignment, level of supervision and emergency medical or mental health needs.
- G. *Primary Classification:* The process of providing fair and consistent guidelines in determining inmate security designations, housing assignments, or programs.
- H. *Inmate Classification:* The process of assigning an inmate to a level of security and identifying their housing assignments.

IV. Procedure:

A. Overview:

- 1. Classification procedures will be administered objectively. This will be done without regard to race, color, creed, disability or national origin.
(SC Min. 1082a; 5-ALDF-6B-05)
- 2. A classification record is maintained for each inmate. The record will include all available information concerning current offenses, past and present institutional records, the inmate's complete disciplinary history and any history of medical or mental health conditions requiring special housing considerations.
(SC Min. 1082b; 5-ALDF-2A-28)
- 3. The classification process begins immediately upon the arrestee's incarceration into the facility. This process is constantly monitored, evaluated, and reviewed by a classification deputy. (5-ALDF-2A-28)

B. Staffing:

- 1. The Classification Unit will consist of one (1) lieutenant, two (2) sergeants and four classification deputies. The Classification Deputy will have the authority to:
 - a. Assign inmates to security/custody categories.
 - b. Hold classification reviews to ensure the inmates' appropriate classification and treatment considerations.
 - c. Make housing arrangements.

2. The Processing Captain will review the Inmate Classification Plan with the Detention Director, at least annually.
3. The Classification Lieutenant will be responsible for and coordinate all classification functions within the facility.
4. The Classification Deputy will have specialized training in classification methods and theory.
5. All detention staff will have training on classification policies and procedures during pre-service and during policy issuance.
6. Classification is responsible for the primary classification of all inmates entering into the SACDC.
7. The Processing Captain will ensure the decisions made by the Classification Deputy concerning the level of custodial management and program participation of an inmate is consistent with the Classification Plan.
8. The Classification Deputy will be responsible for making inmate housing assignments consistent with the inmate's security level.

C. Classification Categories:

1. In accordance with the Detention Classification Plan, inmates will be assigned to one of the following classification levels:
 - a. Minimum Security (green uniform)
 - b. Medium Security (blue uniform)
 - c. Maximum Security (red uniform)
2. Classification will review and qualify inmates in program participation to in-house or community-based programs consistent with the inmate's assigned classification category.
3. Minimum Security: Inmates with custody levels of 6 minimum; 7 low; or 8-9 very low. Inmates assigned to a minimum-security level may be sentenced misdemeanors or selected sentenced felonies, except those convicted of assaultive felony crimes. Inmates so assigned must have no "holds" or other pending charges against them. Minimum security inmates must display a cooperative attitude towards staff and

the rules and regulations of the facility. Such inmates will be eligible for inmate worker status.

4. Medium Security: Inmates designated as custody levels 4 medium; or 5 medium pre-sentence. Inmates assigned to the medium security level will include those sentenced to misdemeanors and felonies who do not qualify for minimum security and also who do not require a higher level of security. In addition, inmates awaiting trial or sentencing and who do not require a higher level of security will be placed in medium security.
 - a. Medium security inmates should be treated as an escape risk and may prove to be slightly uncooperative or resistant to SACDC rules, even though they may not display a significant disciplinary problem. These inmates will require a normal amount of staff supervision. Medium security inmates will require direct supervision; however, they will be allowed to participate in most in-house programs.
 - b. Medium Security Pre-Sentence inmates, custody level 5, are those who have no other factors which warrant a medium security level other than the fact that they are awaiting conviction and sentence. These inmates are temporarily assigned a medium security status and may be reclassified to minimum security upon sentencing.
5. Maximum Security: Inmates designated as custody level 1 high; 2 close custody; or 3 high medium assaultive/escape risk. Such inmates may be individuals who have displayed a significant disciplinary problem within the facility and/or display a need for a maximum amount of supervision.
 - a. Maximum security inmates may be allowed a very limited amount of out-of-room recreation time and such time will be under direct detention deputy supervision. Their program participation will be limited to those programs which are conducted within the security of the facility.
 - b. These inmates will be housed in a selected area of the facility.
6. Special Management: Special needs inmates or those on administrative segregation and/or disciplinary detention, all requiring housing separate from the general population. Inmates so identified will be allowed only limited out-of-room movement and any

movement outside the housing unit day area will be under continuous direct supervision. Their program participation will be limited to one-on-one situation within a secure area of the facility.

Note: Any inmates who are sentenced to a state institution for ninety-one days or more will be housed in Administrative Segregation.
(SC Min. 1082a)

Note: Inmates housed in the Behavioral Management Unit will be assigned to wear the black and white uniforms.

7. High Risk: Inmates who are identified as high risk will be those who may have demonstrated any of the following: extremely high escape risks, assaultive behavior toward staff and/or other inmates, severe emotional or mental problems presenting security concerns, extremely violent crimes to include sexually assaultive behavior and/or continuous and severe disciplinary problems. This may also include those who have had their life threatened by other inmates within the facility and those identified as suicidal.
(5-ALDF-4D-24)
8. Special Conditions: Inmates having a need or condition which requires special attention such as a physical or mental handicap, diet restrictions, and/or alcohol or drug withdrawal. Inmates identified as having a special condition may not require modified living quarters. A special condition or high-risk designation may or may not require an override to the classification decision tree. Such inmates will be treated in accordance with the requirement of the special condition, (e.g., special dietary restrictions). The amount of out-of-cell movement, as well as participation in programs, will be determined on an individual basis.
(5-ALDF-6B-04)
9. Overrides: If it is determined that circumstances require a deviation from the primary classification decision tree resulting in a security designation other than what would routinely occur by following the decision tree, it will be designated an override. If Classification finds it necessary to override the tree, they must note the reason in the designated area.
10. Classification of female inmates and youthful offenders: The same classification policies and procedures will be applied to female inmates and youthful offenders, with the exception of the following separation requirements:

- a. Females will be housed separately from males.
(SC Min. 1094a, 2014-3)
 - b. Youthful offenders will be housed in a unit which is sight and sound separate from the adult inmates.
(SC Min. J1095a, 2014-3; PREA 115.14)
11. Program Services may include, but is not limited to:
- a. program orientation;
 - b. educational;
 - c. religion;
 - d. alcohol/substance abuse;
 - e. employment skills/employment; and
 - f. community service work.

D. Initial Classification:

Initial classification procedures begin during processing. The detention deputy will identify and make decisions regarding an inmate for the purpose of providing safe and secure temporary housing and identify any emergency medical and/or mental health needs. (SC Min. 1081; 5-ALDF-4C-27)

- 1. Upon receipt of an inmate, booking deputies will complete the "initial/medical classification" step as well as other additional booking steps as required.
- 2. Temporary housing assignments for all adult male inmates will generally be limited to the Holding/Classification/Processing Area.
- 3. Inmates showing severe mental illness at Intake will be automatically housed in the special management units until screened by a mental health professional and cleared for general population.
(5-ALDF-2A-21)
- 4. In determining initial housing assignments, consideration will be given to any and all special needs of the inmate in an effort to avoid undue hardships or allow situations where the inmate may harm themselves or others.

5. The Processing Deputy will be responsible for determining the immediate needs or any necessary emergency treatment of a new inmate and will notify the Processing Sergeant, the Processing Lieutenant, and the appropriate medical authority as necessary.
 6. The initial screening information will be routed to both the medical staff and Classification Deputy immediately after completion. Classification will begin the primary classification process. All inmates will be classified within seventy-two hours after initial processing information is recorded.
- E. Primary Classification:
1. Primary classification of an inmate will occur prior to an inmate being moved to the general housing areas of the facility. This classification will be the lowest security level necessary while ensuring community, staff, and inmate safety. (SC Min. 1042m; 5-ALDF-2A-23)
 2. The Classification Deputy will review the inmate roster daily to determine those inmates awaiting primary classification and create a new classification file for all inmates needing primary classification.
 3. Classification files are kept digitally and will contain the following minimum information:
 - a. current charge(s);
 - b. summary of criminal history;
 - c. institutional behavior records, even from other institutions;
 - d. all identifying information available;
 - e. classification interview;
 - f. PREA Profile for Possible Victim Factors
 - g. PREA Profile for Possible Predatory Factors
 - h. primary classification;
 - i. review classification documentation;
 - j. orientation notification documentation;

- k. mental and emotional stability;
 - l. escape history; history of assaultive behavior;
 - m. medical status;
 - n. age;
 - o. need to keep separate; and
 - p. any other factual information that would affect the classification, housing, or program eligibility of the inmate.
(SC Min. 1081, 2017-5C; 5-ALDF-2A-28, 4D-24, 7D-29)
- 4. The primary classification interview will be conducted by a classification detention deputy to determine the security level and housing assignment for each inmate. This will be done by completing the classification assessment in JMS and in Compas. Once the JMS classification assessment is completed the inmate will sign and the detention deputy will publish the assessment in the inmate's multimedia.
(SC Min. 1081; 5-ALDF-2A-23)
- 5. In completing the primary classification interview, the Classification Deputy is expected to:
 - a. explain the reason for the classification process;
 - b. conduct an inmate interview and be willing to answer questions concerning rules and regulations of the SACDC;
 - c. explain how to access the Inmate Orientation Handbook and the Inmates Guide Against Sexual Misconduct;
 - d. explain the "ZERO TOLERANCE" for sexual abuse and the different ways an inmate can report an incident;
 - e. process inmate personal information with confidentiality;
 - f. treat all inmates in a fair and consistent manner; and
 - g. thoroughly and accurately complete the primary classification.

F. PREA Assessments:

- 1. The Classification Deputy will complete the initial PREA assessment

in JMS. Once the assessment is completed the inmate will sign and the Deputy will publish the assessment in multi-media.

(PREA 115.41a,b,c,d)

2. The Classification Deputy will complete the PREA Profile Checklist in Compas. This checklist includes questions from possible victim or predatory factors. Once the questions are asked and saved into Compas the system documents the inmate's vulnerability or predator status. (PREA 115.41e)
3. Within thirty (30) days of this initial PREA assessment, the Classification Deputy will reassess the inmate's risk of victimization or abusiveness based upon any additional relevant information received by the facility since the intake screening. (PREA 115.41f)
4. Classification will complete the PREA reassessment in JMS and publish the finding in Multi-Media.
5. All information provided to the Classification Deputy is considered sensitive information and is not to be used to exploit the inmate. (PREA 115.41f)

G. Housing Assignments:

1. The objective of determining an appropriate housing assignment for each inmate will be to place the inmate in the least restrictive housing area which appears best suited for the individual's security category, program participation, and personal and medical/mental health needs. (SC Min. 1081, 1092, 1093, 5-ALDF-2A-31)
2. Security levels may be mixed routinely when inmates are housed in a direct supervision dorm and under the constant supervision of a detention deputy, provided maximum security inmates are not housed with minimum security inmates.
3. Designations for each security level will be reassessed and assigned to meet the needs of the facility population.
4. Inmates participating in work detail will be housed separately from other inmates. (4-ALDF-2A-33)
5. The Activity Tracker in the Housing Dashboard of JMS will be used to notify housing supervisors and Housing detention deputies of pending inmate housing assignments.

- a. Classification will schedule the inmate for movement into a housing unit.
- b. The Housing Unit detention deputy will be notified via the Activity Tracker in the Housing Dashboard of the pending inmate movement.
- c. Once an inmate is cell changed into the new unit, the information is automatically removed from the Activity Tracker. If the inmate is not cell changed or cleared from pending status, it will remain in the Activity Tracker for six hours.
- d. Housing supervisors and Housing detention deputies will be responsible for monitoring the Activity Tracker periodically throughout the day. Housing supervisors will need to ensure the moves are completed in a timely manner.

H. Classification Review:

1. Any inmate may appeal their classification through the kiosk to the Classification Department. The appeal can be regarding their security level, housing assignment or programs. The appeal must be submitted within ten days of the primary classification. All inmates may request re-classification through the kiosk to the Classification Department sixty (60) days after arrival.

(SC Min. 1083; 5-ALDF-2A-29)
2. All appeals or requests for re-classification shall be resolved within five business days and the inmates are notified of the outcome within ten business days.