

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

**Policy Name:** Offender Orientation

**Policy Number:** 220.04

**Effective Date:** 8/19/2020

**Page Number:** 1 of 6

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Inmate Services Division

**Access Listing:**  
Level I: All Access

**I. Introduction and Summary:** All offenders will be provided a formal orientation upon intake and admission to all Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) facilities. All offenders will undergo a thorough screening and assessment at the time of admission or transfer and receive a thorough orientation to the facility's procedures, rules, programs and services.

**II. Authority:**

A. Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 125-3-2-.02;

B. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): 210.04 Inmate-Probation Boot Camp Rights and Standards, and 212.01 Pre-Admission Orientation, 213.04 Detainee Orientation and Handbook, and 215.18 Resident Classification; and

C. ACA Standards: 2-CO-3C-01, 5-ACI-5A-04 (ref. 4-4288), 5-ACI-5A-05 (ref. 4-4290), 5-ACI-5A-06 (Ref. 4-4292), 5-ACI-5B-05 Ref. 4-4299), 5-ACI-3C-03 (ref. 4-4228), 5-ACI-3D-09 (ref. 4-4281-1), 5-ACI-7D-15 (Ref. 4-4499), 5-ACI-1E-01 (Ref. 4-4095),

**III. Definitions:**

**Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)** - An Act established to support the prevention and elimination of sexual assault in U.S. correctional agencies. PREA addresses both offender to offender sexual assault and staff to offender sexual assault. This federal law applies to all public and private institutions that house adult and juvenile offenders and is also relevant to community-based agencies.

**IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:**

Each permanent facility will develop an Admissions and Orientation (A&O) process to ensure that, upon assignment, all offenders receive formal orientation to the facility in accordance with the following guidelines:

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**A. Staff Responsibilities:**

1. The Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment/Assistant Superintendent will be responsible for the development and oversight of the A&O process and will assign a member of the counseling staff to the day-to-day operation.
2. The A&O Counselor will screen the institutional file and SCRIBE for each assigned offender within seventy-two (72) hours of arrival to identify any special need(s) that require the attention of staff. Referrals will be made to appropriate staff/departments upon discovery of such need(s).
3. Offenders will be given information via the offender handbook upon arrival or within twenty-four (24) hours of arrival. The handbook will include the following information:
  - a. Facility address/phone number;
  - b. Directions to the facility and information about local transportation;
  - c. Days and hours of visitation;
  - d. Approved dress code and identification requirements for visitors;
  - e. Items authorized in visitation;
  - f. Special rules for children; and
  - g. Authorized items that visitors may bring to give to the offender (for example funds, pictures) and special visitation procedure.
4. The A&O Counselor will provide case management and other counseling services, as needed, to all A&O offenders until assignment is made to a "permanent" counselor. It is the responsibility of the Classification

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Committee to ensure that all offenders are assigned to a permanent counselor within the seven (7) days of arrival to their permanent facility.

5. All detainees at a Probation Detention Center will complete a formal orientation as outlined in SOP 213.04. Each PDC will also develop and prepare a detainee handbook as outlined in SOP 213.04.
6. All residents at a Transitional Center will complete a formal orientation as outlined in SOP 215.18. Each Center will develop an orientation program and handbook as outlined in SOP 215.18.

**B. Offender Orientation Guidelines:**

1. Orientation sessions will include:
  - a. GDC Rules and Regulations;
  - b. Facility Rules and Regulations/Procedures;
  - c. Facility Departments - staff responsibilities;
  - d. Access to programs and services;
  - e. Classification, Disciplinary, and Grievance Procedures;
  - f. Offender Rights:
    - i) Right to Know;
    - ii) PREA; and
    - iii) Legal Library;

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- g. Offender Privileges;
  - h. Assistance with social security and birth certificate applications;
  - i. A medical, dental, and mental health screening (if applicable);
  - j. Personal hygiene - Offenders are required to:
    - i) Trim and maintain head and facial hair in a clean and neat manner to help maintain facility safety or security;
    - ii) Ensure hair length meets safety, health, and OSHA guidelines related to specific job assignments (e.g., industries and food services);
    - iii) Ensure fingernails are kept at a length that does not present safety or security concerns; and
    - iv) Offenders must shower and are afforded the opportunity at least three times per week or daily; Offenders with specific job assignments (e.g., food, medical, or industrial services) shall adhere to a daily showering schedule.
  - k. Assistance to offenders on how to notify their next of kin and families of admission to facility;
  - l. Program and Treatment Completion Certificate; and
  - m. All other items on Orientation Checklist.
2. Staff representatives from each Department in the facility will participate in the development of the Offender Orientation to ensure that a complete overview of the facility's operation is included.

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3. New offenders will receive new orientation materials and/or translations in their own language, and disabled offenders will be offered appropriate accommodations, such as sign language interpreters and copies of materials in larger fonts, as provided in SOP 103.63. Facility management will review and update the handbook annually for accuracy and completeness.
4. The A&O Counselor will provide offenders who have limited literacy skills the assistance needed to help them understand the documents.
5. Each offender shall be given a Program and Treatment Completion brochure.
6. Offenders that are newly assigned to segregation within the time frame of the orientation process will be provided with the information in written format.
7. Each offender will sign Attachment 1, Offender Orientation Checklist, at the conclusion of the orientation session. The checklist will be filed in the offender's institutional file and retained in accordance with the retention schedule for the file.
8. The facility must complete an intake information form for each newly admitted offender that includes the basic data necessary to facilitate a continuous program for the offender. The information on the form is preliminary and can be expanded to meet the needs of individual facilities. The form should include at minimum:
  - a. Name;
  - b. Address;
  - c. Social Security Number;
  - d. Date of Birth;

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- e. Sex;
- f. Race or ethnic origin;
- g. Whom to notify in case of emergency;
- h. Date information gathered;
- i. Name of referring agency or committing authority;
- j. Social history where available;
- k. Special medical, dental and mental health problems or needs;
- l. Personal physician, if applicable;
- m. Legal status, including jurisdiction, length and conditions of placement;  
and
- n. Signature of both interviewee and employee gathering information.

**V. Attachments:**

Attachment 1: Offender Orientation Checklist

**VI. Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:**

Upon completion, Attachment 1 shall be placed in the offender's institutional file and maintained per the official retention schedule for that file.