

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Standard Operating Procedures

**Policy Name: Resident Classification**

**Policy Number: 215.18**

**Effective Date:** 00/00/2022

**Page Number:** 1 of 6

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Facilities Division

**Access Listing:**

**I. Introduction and Summary:**

Each Transitional Center shall establish and maintain a Classification Committee. The committee shall be responsible to the Superintendent for the oversight of resident classification and assignment including security level, resident employment and program assignments, job search, transfer requests, administrative segregation hearings, and other aspects of facility operations, as detailed in this SOP.

**II. Authority:**

- A. GDC Rules:125-2-4-.03 Identification and Classification, 125-3-1-.02 Resident Security Classification
- B. GDC SOPs: 215.18 Security Reclassification, 222.01 Inter-Institutional Transfers, 508.32 Access to Services/Programs, 215.17 Treatment/Habilitation Planning
- C. 107.04 Work Activity Performance Report
- D. ACA Standards: 3-4288 Resident Appeal

**III. Definitions:**

None

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

- A. COMMITTEE OPERATES AS A CENTRALIZED COORDINATING FUNCTION: The Committee shall be responsible for all resident initial assignments, reclassification actions, program assignments, employment, and transfer requests. The Committee's decisions are subject to the review and approval of the Superintendent.
- B. The Classification Committee will develop and maintain an Operations Manual, which is to include pertinent information and requirements, as specified in this SOP.
  - 1. Classification Committee Composition: The Classification Committee membership, with appropriate alternates, shall be designated in writing, by the Superintendent. At a minimum, the committee will consist of the following:
    - a. Chairperson: Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent's designee
    - b. **Care and Treatment** Member: Selected based on experience/ability

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- c. Security Member: Chief of Security or designee
- d. Other staff, such as counselors, the Business Manager, or medical personnel, may be assigned to assist the Committee.
- 2. Classification Meetings: The Classification Committee shall meet at least once per week, as scheduled by the Committee Chairperson. The scheduling of Initial and Reclassification meetings has been identified as a best practice. The Appropriate stamp (attachment #1) shall be used to document Committee actions in each resident's institutional file.
- C. CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE OPERATIONS: Each Transitional Center shall implement a Classification and Assignment system that ensures consistency of the classification process:
  - 1. Arrival Briefing: Upon arrival at the Center, residents shall attend an initial security briefing. This briefing will include, but not be limited to, security procedures, emergency procedures, right-to-know, facility tour, etc. At this time all forms will be signed, i.e.; Hazardous Chemical/Right to Know acknowledgement, Acknowledgement of Center Rules and Regulations, PREA, surrender of property in the event of escape, paycheck/escape fee agreement, funds endorsement, GDC interview request form, and Orientation Checklist. In addition, newly assigned residents should be checked/evaluated by medical staff within 24 hours of arrival.
  - 2. File Review: The Superintendent or designee shall appoint a counselor to conduct a review of the newly assigned residents institutional file/SCRIBE case notes. Findings should be noted on the Initial File Review Form (attachment #5). Copies of this completed form should be routed to the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Chief of Security for review with 24 hours of arrival.
  - 3. Orientation Phase: During the orientation phase, staff shall review each resident's history and observe his/her behavior in preparation for making initial recommendations. A counselor(s) shall be designated to complete all necessary paperwork and case management requirements. This Orientation Phase should be at a minimum fourteen 14 days in length.

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4. Initial Classification Committee: The Committee will ensure that a thorough assessment of needs, risks, capabilities, and all intake activities, are completed before residents are scheduled for Initial Classification. Work Release residents are classified at the end of the Orientation Phase and long-term maintenance residents within 30 days of arrival.
  - a. Preparation for Initial Classification: Each newly admitted resident shall be evaluated in terms of security level, behavior history, substance abuse history, medical profile, MH/MR needs, work history and skills, number of adult incarcerations, gang affiliation, and program needs/requirements.
  - ii. Prior to Initial Classification, all phases of intake processing must be completed. The counselor assigned to the resident shall evaluate the resident through a thorough file review. The review will consist of TOPS reports, SCRIBE case notes, program requirements, initial interview and observation of the resident's initial behavior and adjustment to the facility. Any unusual findings relating to the resident's history should be reported to the Superintendent immediately. Counselors shall ensure that all required activities and documents are completed, prior to submitting the resident to the Classification Committee. This includes the completion of the Classification Form (see Attachment 2), and any other documentation required by facility management.
- b. Initial Classification Committee Responsibilities: The Classification Committee shall conduct an initial review and classification of each resident, with assignments made as appropriate. This should occur at the end of the 30-day orientation phase.
  - i. The Classification Form (attachment #2) shall be used to structure the Committee's review and interview. It is the responsibility of the Committee to include on the form any additional information or clarifications brought forward during their interview and questioning of the resident. Areas or issues requiring follow-up by the counselor and/or resident should be addressed and documented in the resident's facility administrative file/SCRIBE case notes.

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- ii. The Committee will review the status of programming. In instances where residents are received from other permanent facilities, the Committee will determine if program information is being tracked accurately. Also, in cases where it can be confirmed that a resident was participating in a group(s) at the sending facility, the Committee should immediately re-enroll the resident, if appropriate.
- c. The Committee shall inform the resident his/her program requirements, reinforcing the resident's responsibility in addressing identified needs, as opportunities are made available to them.
- d. Resident Classification Attendance: All residents shall be REQUIRED to attend Initial Classification.
- e. Program Waiver: Residents will be advised, during the initial classification meeting, that program assignments are equivalent to work assignments and cannot be waived.
- f. Work Activity Performance Report (WAPR): Requests to remove residents from a permanent maintenance detail or an OJT (On Job Training) program assignment, must be supported by a completed Work Activity Performance Report (WAPR). In instances where the reason for requesting an assignment change is unsatisfactory performance, the Committee should verify that other appropriate action has been taken.
  - i. WAPR's will also be used for the following reasons:
    - (a) When supervisors want to communicate exceptionally good or poor performance to a resident's counselor. This should be the first intervention, prior to requesting removal from an assignment.
    - (b) Counselors should request WAPR's to gather current information necessary for completing Early Release Considerations.
  - ii. WAPR's shall be placed in the resident facility administrative files, along with any documentation of counselor intervention.
  - iii. Residents who display poor performance during the orientation phase may be re-cycled for any portion or all of the 30-day orientation phase.

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- g. Early Release Consideration: In the event that a resident has displayed exemplary conduct for an extended period of time, the Superintendent may recommend an Early Release Consideration to be conducted. The assigned counselor shall be responsible for gathering pertinent documentation concerning the exemplary conduct. This recommendation, (attachment #4) once approved by the Superintendent, will be forwarded to the Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles for an early release consideration. This recommendation will only take place when and if certain preliminary criteria are met. Those criteria include:
    - i. This type of recommendation cannot be made on the behalf of a resident who (a) was convicted of a “Serious Violent Felony” as defined in OCGA 17-10-6.1 and (b), has a sentence of less than life.
    - ii. A resident must be assigned to the work release program a minimum of 90 days.
    - iii. A resident who has not committed a sex offense or a crime against children.
  - h. Documentation of Classification Committee Actions: All Classification Committee actions shall be documented in a written report maintained on file. After each Classification meeting, the report shall be forwarded, for review and signature to the Chairperson, Chief of Security, Care and Treatment and Superintendent.
5. Reclassification: Special circumstances may require the committee to conduct a “Reclassification of a Resident”. These circumstances include but are not limited to:
- a. Poor Job Performance
  - b. Addition sentence received from Court Appearance
  - c. Change in Medical Profile
  - d. Behavioral Issues

NOTE: In the event of a Reclassification, the Classification Committee Form (attachment #1) will be used to document the classification action.

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**VI. Attachments:**

Attachment 1 - Classification Committee Stamp

Attachment 2 - Classification Committee Form

Attachment 3 - Classification Appeal Form

Attachment 4 –Special Parole Review Recommendation Form

Attachment 5 –Initial File Review Form

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

Upon completion, attachments 1,2, 3 and 4 will be placed in the resident institutional file and retained according to the official retention schedule for that file.