

# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



## Standard Operating Procedures

<b>Policy Name:</b> Discharge Planning		
<b>Policy Number:</b> 507.04.18	<b>Effective Date:</b> 2/1/2022	<b>Page Number:</b> 1 of 8
<b>Authority:</b> Commissioner	<b>Originating Division:</b> Health Services Division (Physical Health)	<b>Access Listing:</b> Level I: All Access

### I. Introduction and Summary:

Continuity of Health Care Services will be provided to offenders through Discharge Planning prior to release from the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC). This policy is applicable to all facilities that house GDC offenders to include private and county prisons.

### II. Authority:

- A. O.C.G.A. §42-5-52.2;
- B. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): 212.03 Determining Release Date, 507.02.01 Health Record Management (Format and Contents), 507.02.02 Confidentiality of Health Record and Release of Information, 507.02.03 Transfer and Retention of Health Records 507.04.01 State Offenders in County Correctional Institutions, 507.04.02 Transitional Center Health Services, 507.04.10 Consultations and Procedures, 507.04.11 Referrals for Outside Health Care Services, 507.04.15 ASMP Inpatient Admission and Discharge Process, 507.04.16 Utilization Management, 507.04.28 Chronic Care, 507.04.61 HIV Antibody Testing, and 507.04.66 Medical Reprieves;
- C. NCCHC Adult Standard: P-E-10;
- D. ACA Standards: 5-ACI-6A-04, 5-ACI-5F-05, 4-ALDF-4C-04, and 4-ALDF-5B-18; and
- E. GDC COVID-19 Pre-Release Education Attestation.

### III. Definitions:

- A. **Discharge Planning** - The completion of tasks by medical staff necessary for the preparation of an offender's release from GDC.
- B. **Problem List** - List of any significant medical condition(s) that the offender had or has including the date of diagnosis.

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

**Policy Name:** Discharge Planning

**Policy Number:** 507.04.18

**Effective Date:** 2/1/2022

**Page Number:** 2 of 8

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Health Services Division  
(Physical Health)

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

- C. **Responsible Health Authority** - A licensed physician or another qualified health care professional or health administrator tasked with ensuring the organization and delivery of all health care in the facility, with all matters of medical judgment resting with a designated licensed physician or statewide medical director.

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

The following outlines the procedures followed by health services in preparation for release of any offender from GDC:

A. Notification of Offenders to be Released from the GDC:

1. Upon receiving notification of an offender's upcoming release from the GDC, the Warden/Superintendent or designee will notify the Responsible Health Authority. The 180-day list from SCRIBE might be referenced, pending an offender's release.
2. Advance notice by the facility will enable the facility health care staff to provide the highest level of Discharge Planning possible.

B. Health Record Review:

1. The health record is to be reviewed by a licensed health care professional for acute or chronic illness that will require follow-up care once the offender is released. Examples of conditions for follow-up are:
  - a. Hypertension;
  - b. Diabetes;
  - c. Seizure disorders;
  - d. Cancer;

# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



## Standard Operating Procedures

**Policy Name:** Discharge Planning

**Policy Number:** 507.04.18

**Effective Date:** 2/1/2022

**Page Number:** 3 of 8

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
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- e. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection;
- f. Latent Tuberculosis (TB);
- g. Mental health disorders;
- h. Pulmonary disorder; and
- i. Other medical conditions as clinically indicated.

1. Pending consultations will be noted, and if the offender is to be released prior to the appointment date, the consultant will be notified, and the appointment canceled. The consultation will be canceled in SCRIBE.
2. Offenders with mental health disorders will have referrals made by the mental health staff.

### C. Health Care Release Process:

1. All offenders will be escorted to medical before release for a visit with a licensed nurse. The nurse will provide the offender discharge instructions as noted on the discharge plan. A copy of the discharge plan will be provided to the offender.
2. For offenders who have health conditions requiring follow-up care, the licensed nurse will review the offender's current health status and determine if the offender has identified a health care provider in the community who will be providing ongoing follow-up care. This will be documented on the discharge plan.
3. A written discharge plan with pertinent clinical information (diagnosis, medications, lab results, etc.) will be provided to offenders who have identified a health care provider in the community who will provide follow-up care. The

# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



## Standard Operating Procedures

**Policy Name:** Discharge Planning

**Policy Number:** 507.04.18

**Effective Date:** 2/1/2022

**Page Number:** 4 of 8

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Health Services Division  
(Physical Health)

**Access Listing:**  
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offender will be provided with a copy of his/her most recent labs, CXR, appropriate diagnostic tests, last CIC visit/or pertinent medical encounter to enable follow-up with an outside provider. A consent to release medical information will be obtained from the offender in all cases before health record information is forwarded to the community provider.

4. Offenders requiring follow-up care who have not identified a provider will be counseled regarding resources available. Community Resources may be: County Public Health Departments, Community Hospitals, Health Care Clinics (family practice, mental health), and HIV Clinics (Ryan White, ADAP) near where the offender intends to reside.
5. Particular attention will be focused on Discharge Planning for offenders with HIV, Hepatitis C (HCV), Cancer and Latent TB. Every reasonable effort will be made to provide a follow-up appointment at a community site for the offender.
6. The discharge nurse will review and complete Attachment 1, GDC COVID-19 Pre-Release Education and Attestation. A copy of Attachment 1 will be given to the offender.

### D. HIV Infection:

1. As required by O.C.G.A. §42-5-52.2, HIV exit testing will be completed on all state offenders prior to release. This applies to offenders who have been in custody for one (1) year or longer and have not tested positive. HIV exit testing must occur within thirty (30) days prior to release. If an offender refuses to comply with the HIV exit testing, refer to SOP 507.04.61 HIV Antibody Testing. The Pre-Release Planning Coordinator will follow the steps indicated for the exit interview/discharge for HIV offenders. In the absence of the Pre-Release Planning Coordinator, these responsibilities fall on the facility medical staff.

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

**Policy Name:** Discharge Planning

**Policy Number:** 507.04.18

**Effective Date:** 2/1/2022

**Page Number:** 5 of 8

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Health Services Division  
(Physical Health)

**Access Listing:**  
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- a. Identify the upcoming releases list from the 180-day Release Report to indicate those offenders within sixty (60) days of their “earliest release date;”
- b. Verify release address for the offender;
- c. A consent to release medical information must be obtained;
- d. Contact Community Medical Clinic (Ryan White Clinic, Health Department, etc.) for the offender’s release area and obtain a “discharge appointment date;”
- e. Complete the HIV Discharge Plan for Community Referral form (P30-0004.21) or other approved form. A copy of this form will be distributed to:
  - i. The offender as part of the exit interview/discharge packet;
  - ii. The Community Medical Clinic; and
  - iii. The medical record on top of the Problem List.
- f. Copy and send pertinent medical records to Community Medical Clinic for the releasing offender. These need to be sent to the clinic **PRIOR** to the offender’s actual discharge. The packet will include:
  - i. HIV confirmatory test;
  - ii. Most recent lab work indication CD4 and viral loads;
  - iii. Last physical examination/chronic care visit;
  - iv. List of current medications; and

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

**Policy Name:** Discharge Planning

**Policy Number:** 507.04.18

**Effective Date:** 2/1/2022

**Page Number:** 6 of 8

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Health Services Division  
(Physical Health)

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

v. Other records deemed important/critical for the clinic to be aware of.

g. Set up an appointment to meet with releasing offender within 60 days of projected release to discuss discharge:

- i. A copy of the HIV Discharge Plan for Community Referral form (P30-0004.21) or other approved form will be completed for each HIV positive offender leaving a GDC facility. A copy of the HIV Confirmatory Test and a copy of the discharge plan will be placed in a sealed envelope, marked confidential, and given to the offender ONLY when discharged from GDC custody; and
- ii. Originals of both forms will be placed in the offender's health record on top of the Problem List.

**E. HCV Infection:**

1. For unanticipated circumstances where the offender will be released prior to completion of therapy, discharge plans will be made. Patients should be provided a copy of their initial lab tests which confirmed their diagnosis.
2. Pharmacy staff will assist the offender who is under treatment for Hepatitis C to enroll in applicable patient assistance programs.
3. Offenders receiving medications for Hepatitis C will be provided a child- proof retail prescription vial containing a 14-day supply of medication. Providers may supply a written prescription for up to thirty (30) days for outside retail purchase by the offender.

**F. Release Medications:**

1. Offenders receiving any currently prescribed medication(s) will be provided a

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

**Policy Name:** Discharge Planning

**Policy Number:** 507.04.18

**Effective Date:** 2/1/2022

**Page Number:** 7 of 8

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Health Services Division  
(Physical Health)

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

child- proof retail prescription vial containing a 14-day supply of medication and syringes, if applicable.

2. Offenders on the mental health caseload who are receiving psychotropic medications will receive a minimum 30-day supply of medication upon discharge from the GDC.
3. A licensed health care provider will provide education and counseling regarding the importance of continuing the medications.
4. As part of the GDC HIV Aftercare Program, the Pre-Release Planning Coordinator will assist HIV positive offenders on Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) to enroll in community medical clinics and will provide them with a 14-day supply of antiretroviral medications and may provide up to a 30-day supply based on offender's community HIV clinic appointment date. In the absence of Pre-Release Planning Coordinator, these responsibilities fall on the facility medical staff.

**G. Discharge from GDC:**

1. If an offender is discharged from a state facility or county correctional institution, the health record will be forwarded within thirty (30) days upon receipt of shipping labels to:

State Records Center  
7815 Third Flag Parkway  
Suite 400  
Austell, GA 30168

2. If an offender is discharged from a detention center, the record will remain in the inactive file at the facility for a year. After one complete calendar year, the health record will be forwarded to the State Records Center.

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

**Policy Name:** Discharge Planning

**Policy Number:** 507.04.18

**Effective Date:** 2/1/2022

**Page Number:** 8 of 8

**Authority:**  
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**Originating Division:**  
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**Access Listing:**  
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H. Forms associated with this SOP may be found on the GDC Intranet at the following link: [http://captiva.gdc.ga.gov/Health\\_Services.html](http://captiva.gdc.ga.gov/Health_Services.html) or by navigating to Captiva/Resources/ Health Services Documents/02 Physical Health/Health Record Manual/04 Chronic Illness Forms.

**V. Attachments:**

Attachment 1: GDC COVID-19 Pre-Release Education and Attestation

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

Upon completion, Attachment 1, and form P30-0004.21 shall be retained in the offender's medical record and a copy of Attachment 1 will be given to the offender.