

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Offender Workers

Policy Number: 507.03.06

Effective Date: 1/19/2022

Page Number: 1 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level I: All Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

Offenders will not be utilized to provide direct health care services to other offenders. Offenders may be utilized for janitorial duties, limited assistance of other offenders with ADLs (Activities of Daily Living) in regular housing units and in other limited capacities, under appropriate supervision. This procedure is applicable to all facilities that house Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) offenders to include private and county prisons.

II. Authority:

- A. NCCHC 2018 Adult Standard: P-C-06; and
- B. ACA Standards: 5-ACI-6B-12 and 4-ALDF-4D-11.

III. Definitions: None.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

- A. Job duties offenders may perform in the health care unit:
 - 1. Offenders assigned to a health care unit will work under a written job description that assures strict compliance with the above procedure. Accordingly, the Responsible Health Authority or designee in concert with the Warden/Superintendent will develop and approve all job descriptions for offender workers.
 - 2. Offenders may be utilized to assemble blank health care records.
 - 3. Offenders working in the medical unit may perform janitorial services under direct supervision of security or health services personnel. This may include the handling of biohazard wastes (e.g., cleaning up spills, dirty linens, utensils, or the removal of waste for appropriate disposal). In these instances, offenders will receive appropriate training and materials, in keeping with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines. These offenders will also be screened for Hepatitis B and vaccinated if necessary. The content of

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lesson plans and training will be developed and approved by the Office of Health Services in concert with the Facilities Division and will be presented by qualified personnel. The Health Services Administrator (HSA) or designee will make arrangements for offender workers to be trained. These workers will be removed from the unit immediately after duties are completed.

4. Offenders may be used in a laboratory that makes prosthetic devices such as dentures or orthotics. A coding system will be used to protect the names of offenders receiving the prostheses.
5. The supervision of offender workers is primarily a security responsibility and will be accomplished by the appropriate assignment of correctional officers to the medical section. Health care personnel may supervise offender workers only to the extent that doing so does not interfere with the primary duties of the health care provider.

B. Job duties offenders will not perform in the health care unit:

1. The Responsible Health Authority will ensure that offenders working in the health care unit are prohibited from providing direct health care services to other offenders. This includes:
 - a. Performing direct patient care including but not limited to bathing, feeding, changing clothes, taking vital signs or the administration of any treatment;
 - b. Scheduling health care appointments or determining offender access to health care services;
 - c. Handling or reading health records;
 - d. Having access to medications other than medications approved for their own self-administration;

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- e. Handling or having access to surgical instruments, syringes, and needles (except diabetics self-administering injectable insulin under direct supervision); or
 - f. Performing any support functions e.g., transport of offenders in wheelchairs) or operating medical equipment.
2. Offender workers will not be used in the medical section at times or in locations that will compromise patient confidentiality (e.g., able to overhear patient/provider conversations).
- C. Job duties offenders may perform in regular housing units:
1. Offenders may provide limited assistance to other offenders with ADLs in regular housing units, provided such offenders are appropriately trained and under direct staff supervision. Specific duties are limited to assistance with mobility (pushing another offender in a wheelchair), carrying food trays and assistance with changing bed linen.
 2. Nothing in this policy should be construed to give any offender control or authority over another offender.
- D. Selection of offender workers:
1. The Warden/Superintendent and Responsible Health Authority shall select the offender workers to be assigned. The final selection shall be at the sole discretion of the Warden/Superintendent who may change this work assignment at any time to maintain the security and safety of the facility.
 2. Care should be taken in the selection process due to the time and expense associated with training and the administration of the Hepatitis B vaccine. The HSA or designee will work with the Warden/Superintendent to provide stability in assignments of offender workers in the medical/dental units to decrease the frequency for which training must be provided.

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Note: The Responsible Health Authority will be responsible for retaining offender training documents.

V. **Attachments:** None.

VI. **Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:** None.