

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Communion Wine

Policy Number: 106.10

Effective Date: 03/01/2022

Page Number: 1 of 3

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Inmate Services Division
(Chaplaincy)

Access Listing:
Level II: Required Offender
Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

It is the policy of the Georgia Department of Corrections to allow communion services to be held in the facility setting. For specific denominations and faiths i.e., Roman Catholic, Episcopal and Lutheran Churches, wine may be required for the communion service. Since alcohol is generally a controlled substance and not allowed in the facility setting, procedures provide guidance to Chaplaincy Services and other facility staff regarding the control of alcohol/Communion Wine.

II. Authority:

- A. United States Constitution, First and Fourteenth Amendments;
- B. Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), 42 U.S.C. 2000cc-1(a); and
- C. Americans with Disabilities Act.

III. Definitions:

- A. **Communion Wine** - Wine obtained from grapes and intended for use in celebration of the Eucharist (also referred to as the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion, among other names). It is usually consumed after sacramental bread.
- B. **Intinction Method** - The action of dipping the bread in the wine at a Eucharist so that a communicant receives both together.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

- A. Communion Wine is to be treated as a controlled substance. In the facility setting, discretion and caution should be exercised regarding the use of alcohol in the communion service.
- B. To minimize substance abuse, i.e., those offenders who have problems with alcohol, wine given to the offender should be minimal. Therefore, if wine is

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required doctrinally by the faith group, then the Intinction Method will be observed.

- C. In the event that the Chaplain has been unable to negotiate a variance (the substitution of a nonalcoholic alternative, e.g., grape juice), the facility Chaplain may purchase wine and transport it into the facility, with the advance approval of the warden of the facility. Supply funds may be used for these purchases with prior approval.
- D. Records of receipts and disbursements will be signed and controlled as with any other drug.
- E. One ounce, and not more than two ounces, are needed for the communion service.
- F. The following procedures will be utilized for Communion Wine:
 - 1. The facility Chaplain will coordinate for the entry of any Communion Wine into the facility.
 - 2. The Priest/Minister will be responsible for coordinating communion services with the facility Chaplain and the mixing of one third (1/3) water with the wine.
 - 3. The Roman Catholic Priest is to consume or properly dispose of all excess wine and leave no wine available for offenders.
 - 4. The Episcopal, Lutheran, and other Ministers will use the Intinction Method, i.e., the wafer will be dipped in the wine and given to the offender. The remaining wine is to be consumed or properly disposed by the Minister/Chaplain and not be available to the offenders.

V. Attachments: None.

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