

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

**Policy Name:** Program Management and Cognitive Behavioral Programs

**Policy Number:** 107.05

**Effective Date:** 5/12/2022

**Page Number:** 1 of 13

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Inmate Services Division  
(Office of Reentry Services)

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

**I. Introduction and Summary:**

Georgia Department of Corrections' (GDC) Care and Treatment is responsible for organizing, managing, and delivering academic, counseling, cognitive behavioral, reentry, career, and technical higher education, recreational, and chaplaincy services in accordance with program guidelines, requirements, integrity, and fidelity. This policy also serves to ensure that academic and vocational education programs are appropriate to the needs of the offender/juvenile/resident.

**II. Authority:**

A. Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. R. 125-2-1-.01, 125-4-1-.01, 125-4-1-.04, and 125-4-1-.07;

B. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): 107.01 Purpose & Objectives, 107.03 Staff Development, 107.07 Peer Evaluator, 108.01 Education Program Administration, 209.08 Administrative Segregation - TIER II, 210.01 Inmate/Probation Boot Camp - General Policy, 220.03 Classification Committee, 214.02 Performance Incentive Credit Program, 219.01 Case Management -Records Management, 503.02 Reentry Pre and Post-Release Planning, 506.08 Correctional Training Requirements, and 508.08 Staff Development and Training; and

C. ACA Standards: 2-CO-4F-01, 2-CO-5B-01, 5-ACI-5E-01, 5-ACI-5E-02, 5-ACI-5E-04, 5-ACI-5E-06, 5-ACI-5E-07, 5-ACI-5E-09, 5-ACI-7A-01, 5-ACI-7B-10, 5-ACI-7B-11, 5-ACI-7B-12, 5-ACI-7B-13, 4-ACRS-5A-04, 4-ACRS-5A-05, and 4-ALDF-5A-04.

**III. Definitions:**

A. **Responsivity** - The identification of any barriers that might adversely affect an offender's ability to fully benefit from a prescribed program or intervention (e.g., medical, mental health issues, education level, reading level, language, ADA, or cultural concerns). Responsivity is addressed when those barriers are removed or when changes are made to the program/intervention to better accommodate the offender.

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- B. **Performance Incentive Credit (PIC)** - Allows opportunities for offenders to reduce their length of stay in prison through satisfactory progress in certain cognitive behavioral, substance use, educational, and vocational programs as well as work assignments and good behavior.
- C. **Activity Priority Report (APR)** - Report located in SCRIBE that identifies offenders who have an identified need in a program activity. Priority is based on the offender's target completion date.
- D. **Target Completion Date (TCD)** - The dates set for an offender to be complete with all of his/her identified program needs.
- E. **Cognitive Behavioral Programs** - Evidence based programs available to offenders designed to change crime-producing behaviors by changing the way they think. These programs follow the Principles of Effective Intervention.
- F. **Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT)** - A structured, cognitive behavioral approach to facilitating change in an offender's behavior. MRT is designed to promote pro-social behavior incorporating the following elements: Confrontation and self-assessment, assessment of current relationships, reinforcement of positive behavior and habits, positive identity formation, enhancement of self-concept, decreasing hedonism, and developing higher stages of moral reasoning.
- G. **Motivation for Change (M4C)** - A five (5) session pre-treatment program developed by GDC based on the Theory of Change.
- H. **Offenders Under Transition (O.U.T)** - A Cognitive Behavioral Program utilized in the level 5 TIER II non-mental health facilities designed to enhance an offender's motivation to change a problem behavior and learn new skills.
- I. **TIER II Program** - Long Term Administrative Segregation stratification plan that manages the institutional conduct and programmatic need of the offenders assigned to the program.

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- J. **Sex Offender Psycho-Educational Program (SOPP)** - Psycho-educational, cognitive-based curriculum introducing concepts and exercises aimed at confronting sex offenders' thinking and behavioral patterns.
- K. **Facilitator** - A GDC employee who has attended and passed initial program delivery instruction for the assigned Cognitive Behavioral Program.
- L. **Quality Assurance Evaluation (QA)** - QA Evaluation is a process where facilitation practices of a given program are reviewed. Focus is on program integrity to ensure the program is delivered in the manner it was designed. QA Evaluations also address classroom control, organization, sensitivity to group dynamics, completeness of documentation, group participation, and response to offenders' use of the skills.

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

- A. Care and Treatment staff will have specific roles in coordinating the delivery and management of counseling services and programs.
  - 1. Within the first seven (7) working days of an offender's arrival to a facility, the permanent assigned counselor will document a conversation or questions about suicide awareness and prevention.
- B. SCRIBE Data:
  - 1. SCRIBE currently provides the capability of managing and tracking the status of programs assessed or required of offenders.
  - 2. Maintaining accurate statewide information regarding the status of each offender's program case-plan is dependent on staff at each facility following certain procedures for reviewing, updating, and documenting program information.

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3. Under the direction of the on-site counseling supervisor, it shall be the responsibility of the program facilitator and counseling staff at each facility to interview offenders who have been submitted to them for program enrollments. Prospective names for programming will come from the Activity Priority Report in SCRIBE.
4. If there is a conflict with programming, the data entry point of contact will notify the counselor supervisor and the program facilitator of said conflict.
5. The facilitator shall ensure that all class rosters are correct.
6. It is the responsibility of the Counselor, Supervisor, and Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment to monitor the transfer list at a minimum of twice per week to ensure that offenders currently enrolled in programs are not transferred prior to them completing said program.
7. If an offender is on the transfer list, the counselor supervisor should notify Offender Administration of offender's current program status.

**C. Case Plan/Program Plan:**

1. The status and accuracy of SCRIBE should be determined during the development and subsequent reviews of the case/program plan.
2. Counselors should review and update the case/program plan during their quarterly contact to include program enrollment, completions, referrals, and other status changes such as identification of new criminogenic needs.
3. Any modification to the end date of a program needs to be entered before the program end date occurs. If the class is extended but this date is not changed, the class will end automatically, and all participants will show a completion even though they did not complete the program.

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D. Parole Notification:

1. Parole will send offender notifications to GDC electronically via SCRIBE's "To Do List" for GDC staff to distribute to the offender.
2. If he/she is out to court or hospital, the offender will show on the list of their last bed location.
3. When the warden/designee opens the notification document, staff will print the document, and at the time of printing the notification will disappear from the queue.
4. The document will be automatically inserted in the offender's documents in the 'Parole Notifications' folder.

E. Cognitive Behavioral Programs:

1. Cognitive Behavioral Programs are to be delivered as designed by the developer or according to the Office of Reentry Services' (ORS) requirements, to maximize the effectiveness of the group. Facilitators must follow the established lesson plan found in the program manual received during the facilitator initial training. Offenders with special needs will be addressed individually according to their specific need.
  - a. Cognitive Behavioral Programs are to be delivered twice per week, with at least one (1) day between groups. Group size is discussed in each individual program listed in this policy. Offenders are required to complete the program once enrolled.
  - b. Group attendance is mandatory, not voluntary. Absences must be made up for an offender to complete the group. If an offender has more than three (3) absences and has not made up the classes, they must be removed from the class.

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- c. M4C requires no class absences. An excused absence must be made up by the offender prior to attending the next scheduled class or they will have to be removed from the group.
- d. ORS has the authority to stop a program being delivered by any staff not conducting the program as designed to maintain integrity of the programs.

2. Program Delivery:

- a. Facilitators will follow the established curriculum detailed in the Facilitation Material they receive in training.
- b. Facilitators will deliver the programs as taught in initial and booster training.
- c. Groups must start at and maintain capacity as identified in training. MRT is the exception as it can start with four (4) participants but must maintain fifteen (15) participants.
- d. All groups must be conducted at least twice per week (two (2) hours per session) with at least one (1) day in between groups. Offenders will not be allowed to complete more than one (1) step per session.
  - i. MRT is one and one-half (1 ½) hours, but the remaining 30 minutes of the block should be used for homework and helping others.
- e. Sites are responsible for maintaining an adequate number of program materials and supplies (Attachment 3, Workbook Order Request).
- f. Funds to purchase program items can be taken from the Counseling budget. The D/W of Care and Treatment will complete an in-house request for purchase and submit to the Reentry and Cognitive Programs SSPC for approval. Once the SSPC approves the request, it will be forwarded to the

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Director of Reentry and Cognitive Programming for approval. Once approved, Inmate Services Business Management Unit will order the program material and have it shipped to the facility.

- g. Only trained facilitators shall participate in the delivery of ORS programs. No one other than program participants and the facilitator shall attend the groups except for an observing supervisor, an ORS representative, or other previously approved staff.
  - h. Facilitators will conduct an initial interview with participants chosen from the Activity Priority Report prior to the first group meeting. At the interview, all program-related forms should be completed (Attachment 4, MRT Workbook Receipt).
3. Offender Under Transition (O.U.T.):
- a. The O.U.T Program is to be delivered as designed by the developer and according to ORS Counseling and Cognitive Behavioral Programs Unit requirements to maximize the effectiveness of the group. In addition to delivering programs as outlined above, the O.U.T program will be delivered in three (3) phases:
    - i. Phase One: Programming will be delivered in cell. Program progression specified by program schedule. (Example: Week Five an offender receives Lesson 1 and Lesson 2);
    - ii. Phase Two: Programming will be delivered in a combination of in cell and therapeutic module setting; and
    - iii. Phase Three: Programming will be delivered in security chairs every week. Progression through the phases will follow SOP 209.08, Administrative Segregation - Tier II.

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4. Sex Offender Psycho-Educational Program (SOPP):

- a. Pre-Screening: A list of offenders eligible for the SOPP course will be distributed to the Chief Counselors. The Chief Counselor will schedule a pre-screening interview.
- b. During this interview, it must be explained to the offender that the Parole Board and GDC has mandated their participation and successful completion of the SOPP course and that the course is currently given at select institutions. Offenders must be made aware that refusal to participate OR failure to successfully complete the course could negatively impact their consideration for parole (Attachment 6, SOPP Group Contract).
- c. If the offender refuses to participate, a refusal form must be signed and witnessed.
  - i. The form must indicate the offender's reason for refusal to participate.
  - ii. The original should be kept in the offender's institutional file.
  - iii. Document in case notes and the programs module in SCRIBE under the comments section the offender's reason for refusing the program.
  - iv. Do not forward the Refusal form to Central Office. Retain form on the left side of the offender's file (Attachment 7, SOPP Refusal Form).
- d. If the offender agrees to participate, a signed and witnessed SOPP Group Contract form (Attachment 6) must be completed.
  - i. The staff member should read the contract to the offender.
  - ii. The signed and witnessed original should be placed on the left side of the offender's Institutional file.



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- iii. Do not forward the Group Contract to Central Office.
- e. Offenders must be advised that failure to complete SOPP will be documented and provided to the Parole Board for review.
- f. All contact/activity with an offender regarding participation in SOPP must be documented in the SCRIBE case notes.
- g. All documentation of the offender's paperwork in SOPP will be maintained on the left side of the offender's institutional file.
- h. Offenders' completion or failure to complete SOPP must have this information documented in Case Notes using the Program Participation Icon and the Programs Module in SCRIBE under comments section of SOPP.
- i. Offenders' refusal to complete SOPP does not indicate that they do not have a need for the program.
  - i. SOPP should not be removed from the offenders' program plan. It should be cancelled in the scheduler if they have been scheduled for the class. If they have not been scheduled, the counselor should document in SCRIBE case notes.
- j. The Counselor Supervisor or Chief Counselor must ensure that each offender assigned to SOPP has all the signed contracts in the institutional file and that counselors with offenders on their caseload enrolled in SOPP track the involvement and participation of each offender. This should be documented in the offender's institutional file.

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5. Quality Assurance Evaluations:

- a. Each site offering cognitive behavioral programming will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure program integrity and compliance with program implementation.
- b. Increased QA Evaluations may be conducted based upon the recommendation of the SSPC and/or at the request of the site.
- c. The QA Evaluation will be scheduled with the facilitator and their supervisor at least ten (10) working days in advance; If the facilitator will not be available the day of the QA Evaluation, they or their supervisor must give 24-hour notice to the ORS staff who is scheduled to conduct the QA Evaluation.
- d. Supervisors are responsible for working with their care and treatment staff to correct any issues identified during the QA Evaluation process. In some cases, a corrective action plan may be required.

F. Selection Process and Criteria for Program Assignments:

1. Developing a Master Schedule/Calendar for program cycles requires a focused and organized effort on the part of facility managers and staff.
2. The areas for consideration shall include the following and other factors could also be considered:
  - a. The Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment is responsible for ensuring programs are held with minimal cancellations as well as ensuring that the number of programs are forecasted for each fiscal year and overseeing the management of the Master Scheduler/Calendar for their assigned site;

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- b. The Target Completion Dates on the Activity Priority Report (APR) is used to determine how many groups are needed for the fiscal year; and
  - c. This will be done no later than April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.
3. Offenders should be selected for programming based on the following:
- a. The Activity Priority Report (APR) will be utilized to determine who will be placed in programming;
  - b. All offenders should be completed with programming prior to their identified Target Completion Date;
  - c. Prior to assignment to the group, the Facilitator will conduct an initial interview with selected offenders;
  - d. During the interview, the Facilitator will explain the program, and have the offender sign a Participant Expectation Form (Attachment 2);
  - h. The APR will be submitted to the classification chair for review and forwarded to the operations analyst for entry into the scheduler;
  - i. If an offender refuses the group during the time of interview, the facilitator will document in SCRIBE case notes and check the refusal button for the program that was refused; and
  - k. All initial groups will start with the maximum capacity indicated for that group, except for MRT.
5. The offender's assigned counselor shall review the Activity Priority Report (APR) for prospective offenders to be placed in programs based on the targeted completion date. Other criteria to consider are:

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- a. PIC eligible;
  - b. Refusals;
  - c. Responsibility issues; and
  - d. Length of time left on sentence to determine if offender has enough time to complete the group/program.
  - e. Counseling staff should review each offender's current assignment(s) to determine the best day(s) and time-blocks (1st, 2nd, 3rd, or evening sessions) to schedule assessed group/classes.
6. Program Facilitators/counselors will conduct a program initial interview utilizing motivational interviewing skills with the selected offenders prior to assignment to the program.
  7. During the interview, the program Facilitator/counselor will explain the program, administer pre- and post-tests and have the offender sign the participant expectation form.
  8. After the program interview, the program Facilitators/counselors will submit recommendations to the counselor supervisor (classification chairperson).
  9. The counselor supervisor or supervising authority should review all program facilitator's/counselor's recommendations and handle program assignments administratively.
  10. Staff should provide offenders with a new schedule advising of new program assignment.
  11. Each offender should be provided with a Certificate of Completion. A graduation ceremony is recommended for all Office of Reentry Services

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Programs at least annually. All Certificates of Completion should have a copy placed in the offenders TOPPSTEP file and given to them upon their release.

12. After the successful completion of groups, the program Facilitator/counselor will submit the Program Data Form (PDF) (Attachment 1), to the counselor supervisor (classification chairperson) for acknowledgement that the class has ended so a new class can be scheduled if not already on the Master Calendar.

13. After the counselor supervisor has reviewed and initialed, the PDF will be forwarded to the data entry POC so they can enter the final completion status of the offenders in the program.

**V. Attachments:**

Attachment 1: Program Data Form

Attachment 2: Participant Expectation Form

Attachment 3: Workbook Order Request (MRT, SOPP, Active Parenting)

Attachment 4: MRT Workbook Receipt

Attachment 5: Procedure for Ordering SOPP Materials

Attachment 6: SOPP Group Contract

Attachment 7: SOPP Refusal Form

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

Upon completion, Attachment 1 shall be maintained on site for at least one (1) year or upon review by the Social Services Program Consultant (SSPC). Upon completion, Attachments 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 shall be placed in the offender's institutional file and maintained in accordance with the official retention schedule for that file. Attachment 5 shall be utilized in accordance with the SOP until revised or obsolete.