

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Risk and Needs Assessment

Policy Number: 107.04

Effective Date: 03/02/2022

Page Number: 1 of 5

Authority:
Commissioner

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

Access Listing:
Level I: All Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

The Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) will provide standardized risk and needs assessments, to include individualized Program Plans that target Criminogenic Needs, agency directives, and legal mandates.

II. Authority:

- A. O.C.G.A. §§ 42-1-1, 42-2-11, and 42-3-2;
- B. Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. R. 125-4-1-.05, 125-4-1-.06, and 125-3-1-.02;
- C. GDC Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): 107.01 Purpose and Objectives – Access to Counseling Services and Programs; and
- D. ACA Standards: 2 CO-1A-14, 2-CO-1E-07, 5-ACI-1E-05, 5-ACI-6A-23, 5-ACI-5E-13, 4-ACRS-2A-07, 4-ACRS-5A-01, 4-ACRS-5A-02, 4-ACRS-5A-03, 4-ACRS-5A-05, 4-ACRS-5A-08, 4-ALDF-7D-21, and 4-ALDF-5A-04.

III. Definitions:

- A. **Next Generation Assessment (NGA)** - An automated, actuarial assessment of risks and needs created for and used on the Georgia correctional population (offenders and high-risk probationers) that produces risks, needs, and responsivity scores.
- B. **Program Plan** - List of Programs in the SCRIBE Programs Module that identify Current Program Plans and Program Completions.
- C. **Criminogenic Needs** - Major risk factors for recidivism, which include substance use history, lack of education, lack of work skills, poor employment history, anti-social attitudes, peer interactions, as well as other factors identified by research that create criminogenic (crime-producing) behavior that must be addressed in the Program Plan.

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IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

A. Overview:

GDC will utilize standardized risk and needs assessments to determine the most appropriate plan for each offender under its supervision. The following procedure applies to those evidence-based assessments that have been sanctioned by the Department. If the site is a designated substance use disorder program, the program will provide an appropriate range of primary treatment services for alcohol and other drug abusing offenders that include, at a minimum, the following:

1. Offender diagnosis;
2. Identified problem areas;
3. Individual treatment objectives;
4. Treatment goals;
5. Counseling needs;
6. Drug education plan;
7. Relapse prevention and management;
8. Culturally sensitive treatment objectives, as appropriate;
9. Self-help groups as an adjunct to treatment;
10. Prerelease and transitional service needs; and
11. Coordination with community supervision and treatment staff during the prerelease phase to ensure a continuum of supervision and treatment.

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B. Assessment Process:

1. Upon entry of sentence data into SCRIBE, all offenders sentenced to supervision by the GDC will receive an automated NGA.
2. The NGA results are updated automatically in SCRIBE each night based upon information entered into SCRIBE daily.

C. Program Plan:

1. The Program Plan is automatically developed by the NGA and in the SCRIBE programs module. The plan will address the needs identified by the NGA and will include recommendations for programming. The NGA and Program Plan are made available through SCRIBE and can also be seen by the Department of Community Supervision and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles.
2. The Program Plan is to be reviewed by the assigned counselor and documented in SCRIBE. Reviews will take place:
 - a. Quarterly, with progress toward established goals/tasks, or lack thereof, appropriately noted; and
 - b. Upon receipt of a new assignment to the caseload, with existing goals/tasks reviewed and necessary placements and/or referrals made.
3. The Program Plan is to be manually modified:
 - a. When an offender is transferred to a new facility or community-based supervision, which offers needed programs and interventions not available at the previous assignment;
 - b. When information is received that would substantially change the needs established in the existing case plan (e.g., newly disclosed substance abuse history, change in medical or mental health status);

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- c. When requests for an override of the NGA results are required to meet non-automated identified needs, mandates, or court orders. These are to be sent via SCRIBE through chain of supervision (i.e., Chief Counselor, Asst. Superintendent, Central Office program override committee); or
 - d. When override approval/disapproval requests are documented in SCRIBE notes.
4. All standard counseling/case management contacts (i.e., regularly scheduled contacts, monthly report contacts, quarterly contacts, and/or non-crisis contacts) with the offender will address the needs identified in the Program Plan, progress toward meeting the goals of the plan, and progress in related programs/interventions.
5. Family members will be encouraged to become involved in the offender's treatment, which includes being informed of the offender's risks, needs, and prescribed programs/interventions. Upon written approval from the offender, using the Release of Information Form (Attachment 1), staff are directed to share the NGA results and the Program Plan with the family. The Release of Information Form complies with applicable federal and state regulations. Unless the release of information is required by state or federal law, the offender will sign the consent form prior to the release of information and a copy of the form will be maintained in the offender's case record. The confidentiality of information regarding offenders is protected by law. The consent form may include the following items:
- a. Name of person and agency or organization requesting information;
 - b. Name of institution releasing information;
 - c. Specific information to be disclosed and purpose of disclosure;
 - d. Signature of offender and date of signature; and

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- e. Signature of employee witnessing the offender's signature. Where statutes direct, consent forms should not be required for release of information to judicial, law enforcement, correctional, and social service authorities involved with the individual case.

V. Attachments:

Attachment 1: Release of Information Form

VI. Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:

Upon completion, the original copy with all signatures shall be placed in the offender's (detainee and inmate) institutional case file.