

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Recreation Services

Policy Number: 502.01

Effective Date: 4/7/2022

Page Number: 1 of 12

Authority:
Commissioner

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

Access Listing:
Level II: Required Offender
Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

All Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) facilities shall provide a comprehensive Recreation Program that includes leisure time activities and outside exercise. It is the policy of GDC to provide written procedures governing the implementation and operation of a Recreation Program for offenders assigned to all facilities that GDC oversees. GDC facilities will provide recreation activities appropriate to the needs of the offenders, juveniles, and residents of all custody levels.

II. Authority:

- A. Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 125-4-6-.01 and 125-4-6.02; and
- B. ACA Standards: 2CO-5C-01, 5ACI-4A-2, 5ACI-2E-01, 5ACI-4A-27, 5ACI-7C-02, 5ACI-7C-01, 5ACI-7C-04, 5ACI-7C-03, 5ACI-7C-05, 5ACI-7C-06, 4-ALDF-5A-01, 4-ALDF-5C-02, 4-ALDF-7F-03, and 4-ACRS-5A-21.

III. Definitions:

- A. **Recreation Director** - Full-time employee who oversees and operates institutional Recreation Programs.
- B. **Recreation Supervisor** - A full-time employee who works under the leadership of a Recreation Director.
- C. **Recreation Program** - A program designed to meet the physical, emotional, leisure, and therapeutic needs of the offender population. These programs will also be designed to decrease idleness and promote pro-social behaviors through activities which are organized year-round.
- D. **At-Risk Offender** - An offender who has been referred by institutional staff because he or she is reluctant to participate in the Recreational Program activities because he or she is overweight, has a negative attitude towards physical fitness or exercise programs, or who is mentally, physically, or emotionally disabled.

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Recreation Aide - Selected offenders who are permitted to assist GDC staff in the delivery of the Recreation Programs.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

A. Recreation Program:

1. The Recreation Program will include athletic, leisure, and cultural activities. The program will stimulate a wide range of interests for the athletic, non-athletic, and special needs population through such activities as music, drama, art, writing, handcrafts, movies, and sports.
2. Any facility or center that houses disabled offenders will offer equal access to programs for these offenders. Reasonable accommodation must be made to include them in all recreational opportunities. Examples of modifications that might need to be made to accomplish equal opportunity are:
 - a. Providing a sign language interpreter for the hearing impaired;
 - b. Providing accessible paths to recreation yards;
 - c. Installing ramps where steps or elevations must be negotiated;
 - d. Installing off-set hinges to widen doorways; and
 - e. Repositioning shelves, etc.

Accommodations requiring physical modifications to facilities should be coordinated through the Engineering and Construction Services (ECS) and Statewide ADA Coordinator.

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3. Recreation must be conducted throughout the week and on weekends. A minimum of seven (7) hours per week, one (1) hour per day, will be programmed for the general offender population for exercise, preferably outdoors. Indoor activities may be substituted during periods of inclement weather.
4. The Recreation Director will ensure that a plan is in place to include activities initiated by offenders in the Recreation Program. (i.e., leisure interest survey, offender advisory council).
5. Examples of Recreation Program activities are:
 - a. Facility-sponsored exercise, weight-loss competitions;
 - b. Educational seminars, tobacco-cessation programs, health screenings;
 - c. Individual/ team sports, tournaments;
 - d. Art classes, reading, puzzles;
 - e. Softball, soccer, basketball;
 - f. Ping pong;
 - g. Movies; and
 - h. Card games and table games, etc.
6. Activities will be designed to attract offender participation regardless of culture, race, gender or disability.

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7. The Recreation Program and equipment will be suitable for all activities that the Recreation Program implements for the population it serves and be maintained in good working condition.
8. Sports are played in season, with emphasis on abiding by the rules of various organizations, slightly modified for purposes of offender safety and prison security. Flag football is an approved football activity for the offender population.
9. The Recreation Program will encourage community interaction through various activities. Community leaders, athletes, etc. are invited to speak and participate in various activities. The appropriate waiver of liability (Attachment 9) will be obtained prior to a community team participating in a sport with GDC offenders.
10. Recreation Program activities will be scheduled to allow maximum offender participation.
11. The Recreation Program schedule of current activities and events will be posted in the recreation office, kitchen, library and on offender bulletin boards in each housing unit.
12. Hours will be extended if possible, during daylight savings time. The Recreation Director will notify the offender population of changes in hours during off duty hours, weekends, and holidays.
13. Offenders will be required to provide their offender ID badge to the Recreation Director or designee to use recreation equipment.
14. The minimum space requirements for exercise areas are as follows:
 - a. Outdoor exercise areas in facilities where 100 or more offenders utilize one recreation area: 15 square feet per offender for the maximum number of

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offenders expected to use the space at one time, but not less than 1,500 square feet of unencumbered space;

- b. Outdoor exercise areas in facilities where less than 100 offenders utilize one recreation area: 15 square feet per offender for the maximum number of offenders expected to use the space at one time, but not less than 750 square feet of unencumbered space;
- c. Covered/enclosed exercise areas in facilities where 100 or more offenders utilize one recreation area: 15 square feet per offender for the maximum number of offenders expected to use the space at one time, with a minimum ceiling height of 18 feet, but not less than 1,000 square feet of unencumbered space; and
- d. Covered/enclosed exercise areas in facilities where less than 100 offenders utilize one recreation area: 15 square feet per offender for the maximum number of offenders expected to use the space at one time, with a minimum ceiling height of 18 feet, but not less than 500 square feet of unencumbered space.

B. Recreation Director Duties are outlined as follows:

- 1. The Recreation Director is a full-time employee who is responsible for overall supervision of the Recreation Program.
- 2. Each state facility, excluding TCs, ITFs and PDCs will employ a full-time, qualified Recreation Director to supervise the Recreation Program and will assign enough offender Recreation Aides to implement a comprehensive Recreation Program. Recreation Aides will sign Attachment 4, Recreation Aide Sign-In Sheet anytime they assist with the recreation program.
- 3. The Recreation Director will make appropriate offender recreational supply and equipment requests, create start-up supply and equipment requests for new

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facilities, process requests, and manage expenditures by completing and submitting the offender benefit request form through their chain of command.

4. The Recreation Director will be responsible for developing and updating a recreation schedule; to include recreation for juvenile offenders and offenders of all custody levels. The schedule will be approved by the Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment (DWCT) and the Warden.
5. The Recreation Director will maintain regular contact with the offender population to assess their interests and changing recreational needs, in response to which he/she shall formulate or revise the Recreational Program.
 - a. Proposals for program changes or development shall be submitted to the DWCT who is responsible for review, evaluation, and recommendation.
 - b. Prior to implementation, recommendations from the DWCT must be sent to the Warden for final approval.
6. The Recreation Director will maximize appropriate offender involvement in the following Recreation Programs:
 - a. Team or Individual Sports and Activities;
 - b. Quiet games; and
 - c. Spectator Opportunities.
7. The Recreation Director will ensure that equipment used in the Recreation Program is suitable and available in proportion to the offender population and maintained in good condition. He or she also will maintain Attachment 1, Equipment Inventory Sheet to document the inspection of recreation equipment, jogging areas, and hobby-craft equipment (grinders, saws, lathes, etc.). Such forms will include:

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- a. A list of equipment;
 - b. Date inspected;
 - c. Findings; and
 - d. Any corrective action taken.
8. The Recreation Director will provide appropriate activities for all offender custody levels.
 9. Along with medical personnel, the Recreation Director will ensure offenders have proper medical clearance to participate in the recreational programs.
 10. Along with existing Admission and Orientation program and classification chair, the Recreation Director will coordinate the Recreation Program portion of orientation (Attachment 5, Orientation Presentation Template).
 - a. The orientation will outline the Recreation Program, to include program offerings, times and locations, and directions on how to access the services.
 - b. The Recreation Director will develop and provide a presentation for the Admission and Orientation program that encourages participation in physical and/or leisure activities and explains consequences such as suspensions from programs that can result from offender behavior that violates established rules.
 - c. Staff will ensure offenders are aware of program rules before beginning the program.
 - d. When applicable, suspensions will be made in progressive increments for repeated violations.

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11. The Recreation Director will recruit, select, train, and utilize offenders as Recreation Aides in the capacity of assistant coaches, administrative clerks, equipment clerks, equipment maintenance and grounds maintenance personnel, and as officials in games and contests. Written job descriptions for Recreation Aides are to be on file and available to offenders assigned to these positions. (Attachment 2, Recreation Aide Job Description and Responsibilities)
12. The Recreation Director will conduct a survey of the offender population on an annual basis to assess interest level for various sports activities (Attachment 6, Leisure Activity Survey).
13. The Recreation Director will provide for activities that are initiated by offenders and carried out under staff supervision. Whenever possible, this survey will be utilized to develop the program for the following year.
14. The Recreation Director will create and maintain the following program records:
 - a. Post a monthly Recreation Program activity schedule in recreation departments and housing units. The Recreation Director is to retain these activity schedules for three years. This is to include activities for juvenile offenders and residents of all custody levels (Attachment 3, Monthly Recreation Report).
 - b. Complete a quarterly narrative report to include:
 - i. Summary of any innovative programs;
 - ii. An explanation of any deviations from the monthly activity schedule; and
 - iii. Any areas of concern.

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- c. The narrative report will be completed by the tenth (10th) of the month following the previous quarter and copies will be sent to the following:
 - i. Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment; and
 - ii. Warden;
- d. The Recreation Director will ensure that the Recreational Program activities are entered into SCRIBE data system accurately. Fiscal Year totals and other relevant information are to be included in the annual programs report. Recreation Program activities must include the following and be entered in SCRIBE:
 - i. The program or course curriculum;
 - ii. Attendance records must be maintained;
 - iii. The program or course must have completion criteria; and
 - iv. The program is instructional in nature.
- 15. The Recreation Director will participate in monthly staff meetings with Counseling and Care and Treatment staff to provide updates and concerns that arise in the Recreation Program.
- 16. The Recreation Director will coordinate housing unit Recreation Program activities with Unit Managers.
- 17. The Recreation Director will develop a written plan for meeting the needs of At-Risk Offenders to ensure that all those who are referred to recreation are interviewed, counseled, and recommended to participate in the appropriate structured or unstructured Recreation Program.

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18. The Recreation Director will assign staff members to inspect recreation equipment and jogging areas weekly, and hobby-craft equipment daily and complete Attachment 7, Weekly Safety & Sanitation Inspection Form. Refer to the Occupational Safety and Environmental Health Manual for safety requirements concerning recreation. The manual will be maintained in the Recreation Director and/or Supervisor office for reference.
 20. The Recreation Director shall supervise all activities staff, contract staff, and volunteers assigned to assist with the recreational program. This will include meeting regularly with the staff and volunteers to review and discuss any procedures, needs, or problems that may arise.
 21. The Recreation Director will assist in the maintenance of recreational areas and repairs needed to improve the condition of equipment related to recreational areas.
 22. The Recreation Director will provide adequate facilities for training and for storage of equipment.
 23. If adequate facilities and storage room is not available, it is their responsibility to let site leadership know through their chain of command.
 24. The Recreation Director will maintain cleanliness of recreation areas.
 25. The Recreation Director will work with Classification Committee to screen offender participants for events, considering security issues, etc.
 26. The Recreation Director will explain the program, training requirements and expectations required for involvement in the athletic program to the offenders.
- C. The Recreation Supervisor's responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:
1. Supervise recreational program activities in the yard areas, gymnasium, and

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designated activity areas;

2. Supervise recreation when no structured activities are available;
3. Oversee the storage, inventory, and maintenance of all athletic equipment;
4. Maintain a list of all offenders in their recreational program;
5. Provide necessary maintenance of equipment. This includes repairs and setting up and dismantling of equipment as needed;
6. Supervise offenders to maintain cleanliness of recreation areas. Plan, organize, and conduct a variety of offender activities appropriate to the designated program;
7. Provide leadership for groups of offenders in recreational programs provided at the facility;
9. Provide individual and group instruction, coaching, and direction for offenders;
10. Repair and maintain athletic facilities with cooperation of the facility administration and maintenance personnel utilizing Attachment 8, Maintenance Work Request for Recreation;
11. Conduct annual assessment of programming needs and interests of the offender population by surveys and committee input;
12. Evaluate activities programs annually to assess effectiveness in achieving the goals and objectives;
13. Conduct weekly inventory of equipment and all essential areas of the Recreation Program operations;

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14. Conduct skill classes and instruction in officiating, health, physical education, community resource knowledge, etc. and perform related duties as required; and

15. Maintain administrative records, requesting supplies and equipment.

D. Exercise for Offenders in Special Management Unit and Administrative Segregation:

1. Offenders housed in the Special Management Unit (SMU) and Administrative Segregation will receive a minimum of one (1) hour of exercise outside their cells, five (5) days per week, unless security or safety considerations dictate otherwise.

2. Some examples of exercise utilized can include stretching, squats, pull-ups, pushups, running in place, sit ups, lunges, walking in place, etc.

V: Attachments:

Attachment 1: Equipment Inventory Sheet

Attachment 2: Recreation Aide Job Description and Responsibilities

Attachment 3: Monthly Recreation Report

Attachment 4: Recreation Aide Work Sign-In Sheet

Attachment 5: Orientation Presentation Template

Attachment 6: Leisure Activity Survey

Attachment 7: Weekly Safety & Sanitation Inspection Form

Attachment 8: Maintenance Work Request (Recreation)

Attachment 9: Waiver of Liability

VI. Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:

Upon completion, Attachments 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 shall be maintained for three (3) years and then destroyed. Attachment 2 shall be maintained until revised and replaced.