

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS Standard Operating Procedures		
Policy Name: R.I.S.E. - The Statewide Offender Mentoring Program		
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Authority: Commissioner	Originating Division: Inmate Services Division	Access Listing: Level II: Required Offender Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

Reinforcing, Instructing, Supporting, and Encouraging (R.I.S.E.) offenders through mentorship is a voluntary statewide offender mentoring program designed to accurately identify appropriate offenders to serve as Mentors within the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC). This policy will provide guidance to all staff when selecting, training, placing, and monitoring offenders who are R.I.S.E. Mentors. R.I.S.E. mentoring program is intended to positively affect social, behavioral, and programmatic outcomes for all GDC offenders while maintaining safe and secure facilities.

II. Authority:

- A. GDC Board Rules: 125-2-4-.03, 125-2-4-.05, 125-3-2-.04, 125-3-2-.08, and 125-3-5-.01 through .07;
- B. GDC Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs): 103.63, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - Title II Provisions; 207.04 Offender Work Details; 221.02, Count Procedures; and 220.03, Classification Committee; and
- C. ACA Standards: 4-4337, 4-4449, 4-4451, 4-4104, and 4-4187.

III. Definitions:

- A. **R.I.S.E. Mentoring Program** - Reinforcing, Instructing, Supporting, and Encouraging offenders through mentorship.
- B. **Mentor** - An offender who is trained to assist, guide, educate, and support the offender population under staff supervision.
- C. **Pathfinders Program** - A course designed to introduce offenders to the skills and knowledge that will prepare them to become productive and effective Mentors.
- D. **Interview Committee** - A committee developed to interview all potential Mentors. The committee must consist of a staff member from care and treatment, security, and the supervisor of the assigned work location.
- E. **Classification Committee** - A committee that is responsible for all offender initial assignments, reclassification actions, and movements with regard to work details,

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program assignments, security levels, transfer requests, housing assignments, and administrative segregation hearings.

- F. **Specialized Training** - Additional training completed by the offender, as determined by their Mentor work assignment.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

This policy outlines the selection, training, placement, documentation, and monitoring of offenders in the R.I.S.E. mentoring program. Mentors are not compensated, and their participation is completely voluntary. Program participation is a privilege and not a guarantee, therefore, program participation is not a grievable issue.

- A. **Eligibility Criteria:** Offenders who meet the criteria listed below will be interviewed by the Interview Committee and reviewed by the Classification Committee for placement in the mentoring program. The offender should be provided information regarding the mentoring program during the orientation process (Attachment 6). The offender must meet the following criteria:

1. Have a High School Diploma or GED (discretion may be applied based on Mentor assignment);
2. Be enrolled in or have completed the Pathfinders Program;
3. No high disciplinary report for at least three (3) years prior to application;
4. No moderate disciplinary report for at least one (1) year prior to application;
5. No documented gang activity for at least five (5) years prior to application; and
6. Be actively engaged in completing, or has completed, their case plan.

- B. **Identification of a Mentor:**

1. **Selection Process** - The selection process is done on an on-going basis. Identification and selection for the program shall follow the following outline:
 - a. Complete the Application Process:

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- i. An offender must request an application (Attachment 1) from his or her assigned counselor;
- ii. On the application the offender may elect to identify up to three (3) Mentor placements in which they are interested;
- iii. The offender must receive a recommendation for the R.I.S.E. mentoring program from the supervisor(s) of his or her desired work assignment. The offender's assigned counselor should assist the offender in identifying and reaching out to the work assignment supervisor(s) for the recommendation if assistance is needed;
- iv. Additional recommendations may be provided by any staff member familiar with the offender and/or an offender currently in the R.I.S.E. mentoring program;
- v. An offender must return a completed application to his or her assigned counselor for program consideration. An application is not considered complete without the recommendation of the desired work assignment's supervisor as referenced in Paragraph (iii) above;
- vi. Once a completed application has been received, the offender's counselor will obtain approval from the Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment (DWCT) or designee for the offender to move forward in the selection process;
- vii. If the offender is not approved, he or she will be notified by the counselor, informed of the reason for the disapproval, and actions he or she may take to reapply if applicable;
- viii. Approved applications must be scanned into Scribe; and
- ix. Approved offenders will be given an approval letter (Attachment 7) and assigned an offender profile of one of the following: "R.I.S.E. Mentor – Peer" or "R.I.S.E. Mentor – Program". When a position becomes available in which the offender is interested, the offender will move forward to the interview process;

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2. Complete the Interview Process:

- i. Once a position in a work assignment becomes available, the Interview Committee will pull the R.I.S.E. profile list to identify any potential offenders to be scheduled for an interview;
- ii. The Interview Committee shall conduct the interviews at the facility;
- iii. The Interview Committee is responsible for drafting interview questions that are specific to the work assignment;
- iv. If the offender is not selected, the offender will be notified in person by the assigned counselor within 5-7 business days after the interview;
- v. If the offender is selected, the offender's counselor will be notified, and the counselor will submit the offender's name and application to the Classification Committee within 5-7 business days;
- vi. The Classification Committee will review the application within 5-7 business days after receipt;
- vii. If the offender is approved by the Classification Committee, the offender will receive an acceptance letter within 5-7 business days, which will outline the next steps in the process; and

NOTE: (For outside details) After the Classification Committee's approval, final approval for the outside detail must come from the Warden or designee.

- viii. If the offender is not approved by the Classification Committee, the offender will not receive an acceptance letter and will be notified within 5-7 business days by his or her assigned counselor.

NOTE: An offender's skill level, work history, medical/mental health status, and physical limitations will be taken into consideration when approving Mentor work assignments.

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However, an offender will not be deprived of an opportunity to become a Mentor based on any disabilities or accommodations needed. See SOP 103.63, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - Title II Provisions.

- C. Training Requirements: An approved offender for the R.I.S.E. Mentoring Program is required to complete any applicable training as outlined in this policy.
1. All program participants must complete the Pathfinders Program.
 2. Offenders can request to be enrolled in the Pathfinders Program prior to placement on a Mentor work assignment.
 3. An offender can also begin their Mentor work assignment prior to completing the Pathfinders Program, however the offender will need to complete the program within 60 days of placement.
 4. The Pathfinders Program will be offered on a continuous basis, based on the needs of the facility.
 5. If an immediate opening for the training is not available, the offender will be placed on a referral list for the Pathfinders Program.
 6. The facility will schedule the offenders that are on the referral list for a Mentor placement for the Pathfinders Program as soon as the facility schedule permits.
 7. Specialized Training may be required as outlined in the job description for the Mentor's area of assignment.
 8. The Mentor's supervisor shall be responsible for making sure the Mentor has completed the Mentor Orientation Checklist (Attachment 5) and reviewed all required documents upon work assignment which includes:
 - a. The Mentor's Contract (Attachment 2), and
 - b. Program rules.

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D. Mentor Assignments: There are a variety of mentoring assignments that are available at a facility. The type of assignments vary based on the needs of the facility. Mentor placement opportunities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Program Mentors:
 - a. Academic and Vocational Education;
 - b. Creative Workshops/Art;
 - c. Recreation; and
 - d. Group Facilitators.
2. Peer Mentors:
 - a. Counseling Services;
 - b. Substance Abuse;
 - c. Chaplaincy;
 - d. Crisis Intervention; and
 - e. Medical/Mental Health Support.

NOTE: Offenders may be reassigned as necessary within their abilities and facility needs.

E. Continued Eligibility: All offenders, whether currently an active Mentor or waiting for placement, must maintain eligibility for the program as outlined in Section (IV)(A).

1. Mentors are required to complete additional training throughout the year as specified by their work assignment coordinator;

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2. All active Mentors must complete an annual 8-hour in-service training to sustain eligibility for R.I.S.E; and
3. Additionally, some Mentor programs may require mandatory weekly or monthly meetings.

F. Annual/Periodic Evaluations for Mentors:

1. All active Mentors must be evaluated annually by their work assignment supervisor. Attachment 3 is to be utilized when completing an evaluation on the offender.
2. Mentors may also be evaluated periodically as determined by their work assignment supervisor.
3. “Mentees” can also submit an anonymous Mentor evaluation when requested and/or at the end of the Mentor’s work assignment.

G. Removal/Reassignment: All Mentors involved in the R.I.S.E. Mentoring Program can be removed or reassigned by the Warden/designee. Offenders can request a reassignment, however, they will need to complete the application process again.

1. The Warden/designee has the authority to remove or reassign an offender based upon the following:
 - a. Not following the rules of the institution and/or those given by the mentors’ supervisor;
 - b. Failing to complete the required trainings;
 - c. No longer eligible for the program;
 - d. Inadequate job performance;
 - e. Lack of effort as a Mentor; and
 - f. Any reason deemed necessary by the Warden/designee.

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2. The work assignment supervisor can make a written recommendation to remove or reassign a Mentor. The recommendation will be given to the DWCT/designee for review. The DWCT/designee will review the request and submit the recommendation to the Warden for final action. The offender's counselor will be notified of the final action and the final action will be documented in Scribe.
 3. A Mentor can also ask to be removed from the program voluntarily with no disciplinary consequence.
 4. Once a Mentor is removed from the program, that offender cannot be considered for the R.I.S.E. Mentoring Program for at least thirty-six (36) months after removal.
- H. Scribe Documentation: Any information associated with the R.I.S.E. Mentoring Program will be placed in Scribe for statewide access.
1. All program data will be documented in the appropriate area in Scribe including:
 - a. Enrollments;
 - b. Completions; and
 - c. Terminations.
 2. All paperwork, i.e., application, contract, and evaluations will be scanned into the Offender Docs section in Scribe. Staff must have scanning capabilities in order to scan and upload the documents. Documents shall be scanned and uploaded into the Reentry Documents Folder in the Offender Docs section.
 3. To view the R.I.S.E. Mentoring Program paperwork in Scribe, staff will utilize the following steps:
 - i. Click Offender Documents;
 - ii. Select Reentry Documents Folder;

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- iii. Select Statewide Offender Mentoring Documents (R.I.S.E.) Folder;
and
- iv. Click on the PDF links to view the various documents within the Folder.

V. Attachments:

Attachment 1: Mentor Application
Attachment 2: Mentor Contract
Attachment 3: Mentor Evaluation
Attachment 4: Mentor Interview Checklist
Attachment 5: Mentor Orientation Checklist
Attachment 6: Trifold Brochure
Attachment 7: RISE Program Acceptance Letter

VI. Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:

Upon completion, Attachments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 shall be kept in the offender's record in SCRIBE and a hard copy shall be placed in the offender's institutional file. Attachment 6 shall be utilized as required and destroyed when revised or obsolete.