
Division of Institutions
Policy and Procedure

I. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of the Field Minister Program (FMP) is to select, educate, train, and deploy eligible offenders to North Carolina Department of Adult Correction (DAC), Division of Institutions facility locations to support current programs, activities, and services provided to the offender population and to work with a multidisciplinary team of staff to foster positive interactions amongst the offender population. The goal of the FMP is to encourage positive cultural change at prison facilities in order to reduce violence inside of each deployment location.
- B. In no way is the FMP to replace any staff duties and/or responsibilities or to circumvent applicable DAC policies and procedures or interfere with the orderly operation of any facility.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Admissions Committee

A multidisciplinary committee comprised of three Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary representatives and two DAC representatives designated by the Deputy Secretary of Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee to include the Education Services Superintendent or designee and the Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee. This committee is tasked with ensuring the completion of all procedures and associated tasks regarding FMP academic education and training admissions.

B. Deployment Committee

A multidisciplinary committee comprised of one or more SEBTS representatives, one or more Game Plan for Life representatives, and one or more DAC representatives designated by the Deputy Secretary of Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee to include the Director of Rehabilitation Services. This committee is tasked with ensuring the completion of all procedures and associated tasks regarding FMP deployment.

C. Deployment locations

Authorized prison facilities which house assigned Field Ministers.

D. Designated Staff Coordinator

The person designated by the Warden at each authorized deployment location to be the main point of contact for the FMP at that location for all parties involved with the FMP to include internal staff and external stakeholders.

E. Field Minister(s)

Offender(s) who have successfully completed the four-year degree program from the College at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary receiving the Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Ministry with emphasis on counseling who are approved to serve in this capacity within Institutions.

F. Game Plan for Life (GPFL)

A partnering organization of DAC and SEBTS which assists in training and supporting Field Ministers.

G. Mentors

Community volunteers or other individuals affiliated with or in partnership with SEBTS and/or GPFL staff who are trained and approved to provide ongoing volunteer support to Field Ministers at their deployment locations.

H. Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS)

The approved post-secondary college chosen to educate and train Field Ministers and provide continuing education for deployed Field Ministers.

III. POLICY

A. This policy serves as the authority on the Field Minister Program and its operations within Institutions. This program comprises two distinct components:

1. Academic education and training
2. Field deployment

B. Consistent with the elements of this policy, the North Carolina Department of Adult Correction and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary shall maintain a current approved Memorandum of Understanding detailing the purpose and terms of the Field Minister Program.

C. Field Minister Academic Education and Training

1. Eligible Offenders

- a) Eligibility criteria for admittance into the academic education and training component include the following:
 - i. Approved for housing at the academic education and training Institutions facility, including appropriate custody level.
 - ii. No A or B infractions in the past 12 months.
 - iii. Minimum of 10 years remaining to minimum release date.
 - iv. Possess a High School Diploma or equivalent credential(s).
 - v. Successful completion of application and interview process.
 - vi. No Amy J Sex Offender status.
 - vii. No validated Security Risk Group affiliation.
- b) Beyond the above-described eligibility criteria for FMP academic education and training, additional criteria may be included in the interview process as detailed below.
- c) At no point shall an offender's stated or expressed religious or faith preference, including their identified Faith Group, be utilized as an exclusion criterion for FMP academic education and training participation.
- d) Exceptions to the stated eligibility criteria for individual consideration shall be approved by the Deputy Secretary of Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee and the Superintendent of Education Services or designee.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- a) An Admissions Committee shall be established and meet regularly to support necessary ongoing operations in consultation with SEBTS and GPFL to ensure the continuity of the FMP education and training component.
- b) The Superintendent of Education Services shall have oversight on behalf of the DAC of the education and training component of the Field Minister Program.
- c) Nash Correctional Institution (NCI) and North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women (NCCIW) shall be the approved locations for the academic education and training component of the FMP. The Wardens or designees of NCI and NCCIW shall ensure facility operations and staffing support approved academic components of the FMP. Both facilities shall designate the Associate Warden for Programs (AWP) as the authority over the FMP at the facility. In their absence, a back-up staff person may be named in case any situations arise that should be handled. The AWP will be the liaison between all parties involved: assigned offenders, SEBTS, GPFL and the Admissions Committee. The AWP is responsible for ensuring offenders and instructors sign all required orientations and rules and regulations. The AWP assists SEBTS with setting appropriate schedules and by reviewing visitors (e.g., speakers, presenters, etc.) to the program as per Institutions policy [E .3400, Community Volunteer & Community Leave Program](#).

- d) Representatives, faculty, and staff of SEBTS, as determined by the Director of Prison Programs or designee of SEBTS, shall provide and ensure the fidelity of all academic portions of the FMP program. All such individuals must be approved volunteers as per Institutions policy E .3400. Any instructor not in compliance with Institutions Policy and Procedure may be subject to immediate removal from the facility.
- e) The Warden or designee at all Institutions facilities shall ensure necessary operations at their respective facility to support screening processes for eligible offenders as provided by the Admissions Committee, including distribution of recruitment announcements, facilitation of transfer for interviews if warranted, and facilitation of transfer if accepted into the FMP academic education and training component.
- f) Admitted offenders/students must agree to abide by all facility rules and regulations, all Policy and Procedure of the Institutions, and with code of ethics and requirements of SEBTS (i.e., Student Handbook). Students must complete the entire curriculum in order to obtain their degree. Any enrolled students may be temporarily or permanently removed from the program at any given time based on applicable Institutions policy and/or the SEBTS FMP Student Handbook. Admitted offenders/students shall agree to the goal of becoming a deployed Field Minister as a standing assignment following completion of their education.

3. Procedures

- a) Eligible offenders will be identified by the Admissions Committee and notified in writing of their eligibility for the FMP. Interest sessions will be held annually at each prison where interested candidates are housed to provide details about the program. Interest sessions must, among other topics, include discussion of the required elements of the academic portion of the program as well as expectations and requirements for deployment and Prison Field Minister assignment.
- b) Interested candidates must, following interest sessions, submit a completed application for consideration to the program. This application form is provided by SEBTS and a returned, completed application shall include two required letters of support for admission to the program, each endorsed by a DAC staff person.
- c) SEBTS representatives shall screen applications and receive appropriate guidance and support from the Admissions Committee such that a list of offenders is generated to interview directly.
- d) All interviews will be conducted by the Admissions Committee. Considerations for further screening and selection during the interview process will be determined and discussed by the Admissions Committee and shall include indicators of academic readiness and motivations for program completion. Unless otherwise necessary for operational reasons, DAC will make every effort to transfer interviewing offender back to their previous location and assignment following interviews.

- e) Final recommendations of the interview panel shall be admitted to the FMP unless disapproved by the Deputy Secretary of Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee and Superintendent of Education Services or designee. Any deviation from such admissions shall be made with the approval of the Deputy Secretary of Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee and the Superintendent of Education Services or designee. The Admissions Committee and the Wardens or designees of NCI and NCCIW, respectively, shall facilitate the timely transfer of all admitted offenders to NCI or NCCIW prior to the start of the academic term. No more than 30 offenders shall be admitted per academic year, per facility.
- f) While assigned to the FMP academic education and training component, offenders must actively participate in all required academic activities and complete all required assignments. Assigned offenders must abide by all applicable DAC policies and all facility rules and regulations. Assignment to the FMP academic education and training component is a full-time education activity. Failure to comply with program rules may result in removal from the program
- g) Unless otherwise authorized by the Deputy Secretary for Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee or the Deputy Secretary of Institutions or designee, all students in the FMP shall waive promotional consideration for the duration of their assignment to the academic education and training component.
- h) Designated class areas are to be maintained within the facility and facility staff shall ensure approved offender participants are available for class. Appropriate supervision shall be in place to prevent misuse of equipment or authorized class items as well as to ensure safety and security in class areas.
- i) The Warden or designee and the Admissions Committee shall communicate regularly and meet when necessary to ensure ongoing support for the operations of the FMP academic education and training component.
- j) SEBTS staff shall follow all prison facility rules and regulations while at NCI, NCCIW, or any other Institutions facility. Any instructor not in compliance with Institutions rules and policies may be subject to immediate removal from the facility. Instructors shall not bring anything into or take anything out of facilities without the permission of the AWP or designee.
- k) Offenders assigned to FMP academic education and training may be temporarily removed from their assignment at the discretion of the NCI or NCCIW Warden or designee, the Superintendent of Education Services or designee, and/or the Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee. Furthermore, SEBTS representatives may temporarily remove any offender participating in the FMP academic education and training component if the rules or guidelines of SEBTS have been compromised, to include the rules and Honor Code of Ethics in the Student Handbook. Any temporary removal shall be documented in offender case notes. Determinations for permanent removal from the academic education and training component shall be made in consultation with the Admissions Committee and the Director of Prison Programs of SEBTS, with the approval of the Deputy Secretary of

Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee.

- l) At the outset of each new admitted class, each facility may hold a convocation event to initiate the start of the program. At the conclusion of the academic program, each facility may hold a graduation event to recognize the accomplishments of the graduating students. Facilities shall coordinate with SEBTS to hold these events. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure these events take place.

D. Field Minister Deployment

1. Eligible Offenders

- a) Eligibility criteria to be deployed as a Field Minister include the following:
 - i. Successful completion of all academic requirements as set forth by SEBTS for the academic education and training component of the FMP.
 - ii. Consensus recommendation by the Deployment Committee for active deployment assignment.
 - iii. Agreement by the offender to a standing assignment as a Field Minister, with periodic review for continued assignment by the Deployment Committee.
- b) At no point shall an offender's stated or expressed religious or faith preference, including their identified Faith Group, be utilized as an exclusion criterion for FMP deployment.
- c) Any exceptions to the stated eligibility criteria for individual consideration shall be approved by the Deputy Secretary of Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- a) A Deployment Committee shall be established and meet regularly to support necessary ongoing operations in consultation with SEBTS and GPFL to ensure initial deployment determinations are made, as well as to ensure any significant deviations to deployment processes are reviewed.
- b) The Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee shall consult with the Deployment Committee and relevant DAC representatives to determine deployment locations, including selection of additional facilities or any adjustments to current facilities. The Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee shall further consult with necessary facility, region, SEBTS and/or GPFL representatives regarding circumstances under which deployment assignment adjustments are being considered, including facility transfer or termination of assignment.
- c) The Wardens or designees of NCI and NCCIW shall ensure support for final preparations and transfer of deploying offenders in consultation with the Deployment Committee.

- d) Representatives, faculty, instructors, and staff of SEBTS, as directed by the Director of Prison Programs or designee of SEBTS, shall provide feedback regarding the deployment of individual FMP students to the designated SEBTS member(s) of the Deployment Committee.
- e) The Warden or designee at all Institutions facilities having been identified as a deployment location shall task a Designated Staff Coordinator for the facility's assigned Field Ministers. The Designated Staff Coordinator at each deployment location should monitor the FMP and ensure the Field Ministers are supervised on a daily basis. Any problems that arise should be addressed through the chain of command with the Warden of the facility. The designated coordinator may temporarily suspend a Field Minister from engaging in their assigned duties until the necessary situation can be addressed. In such cases wherein a Field Minister is temporarily suspended, the Director of Rehabilitation Services or their designee is to be notified as soon as possible.
- f) Deployed Field Ministers shall have the responsibility of being role models for other offenders at their deployment location. Field Ministers shall exhibit the skills learned during their education and abide by all rules and regulations and encourage others to do so.

3. Procedures

- a) In the final year of academic education and training, each offender/student shall be considered by the Deployment Committee for appropriateness and readiness for deployment. All offenders determined eligible for deployment shall be assigned to deployment teams, typically of 4-6 offenders, and notified of such teams during their final year of training. Deployment teams may be amended as deemed necessary by the Deployment Committee and/or the Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee.
- b) Deployment teams shall be assigned to deployment locations and all relevant Institutions representatives shall be notified prior to deployment. The Deployment Committee and NCI/NCCIW facility staff shall coordinate transfer of all Field Ministers to their deployment locations following graduation of the academic education and training component.
- c) Deployment may be scheduled at such a time as to allow additional training for Field Ministers to become approved facilitators of specified Rehabilitation Services programs, with approval of the Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee, including but not limited to:
 - i. Thinking for a Change
 - ii. Father Accountability
- d) Once deployed, Field Ministers shall be assigned responsibilities as approved by the Warden or designee at their deployment location. Such responsibilities shall be directed as opportunities for the Field Ministers to be cultural assets at their assigned facility, demonstrating and supporting positive community development among their peers.

Approved responsibilities may include:

- i. Providing mentorship to individual offenders in need of assistance, at times and in locations approved by the Warden or designee. This shall include encouraging offenders to seek staff assistance when appropriate (e.g., medical or behavioral health services, Chaplaincy, case management, custody, etc.).
- ii. Conducting approved study opportunities (e.g., book studies/clubs, writing assistance, appropriate academic tutoring).
- iii. Assisting with facility orientation for incoming offenders, providing guidance to or answering questions of such offenders with referral to appropriate staff.
- iv. Supporting the facilitation of or co-facilitating Rehabilitation Services programming along with an approved DAC staff facilitator.
- v. Approved religious activity support or facilitation, as outlined in III. D. 3. e) ii.
- vi. Graduate assistant roles at NCI or NCCIW, with the approval of the Warden, to assist SEBTS in training future cohorts.

e) Additional guidelines for assigned Field Minister responsibilities include:

- i. At no time shall any assigned Field Minister responsibilities violate or conflict with any facility rules and regulations, nor any DAC Policy and Procedure. All times, locations, and specific activities of assigned Field Minister responsibilities shall be approved by the Warden or designee and overseen by appropriate staff. At no time shall Field Ministers engage in any Field Minister activities without the expressed knowledge and approval of the Warden or designee and Designated Staff Coordinator.
- ii. Any and all religious practices activities engaged in by a Field Minister shall be conducted in accordance with the Religious Practices Operational Manual and under the guidance of the Director of Chaplaincy Services. This may include:
 - a. Under the oversight and direction of Chaplaincy Services or the designated facility Religious Coordinator, Field Ministers may lead sacred text studies, in their declared faith group. Such events must be in accordance with existing protocols for calendaring, scheduling, and documenting religious activities.
 - b. Field Ministers shall be eligible to apply for and, in accordance with existing selection and assignment practices, be assigned as a Faith Helper. Any and all activities as a Faith Helper shall be independent of those conducted as a Field Minister. As such, any Field Minister also serving as a Faith Helper shall not be paid an incentive wage for Faith Helper activities.

- c. Upon the request of the Clinical Chaplain, Religious Coordinator, or community volunteer leading a religious worship service, a Field Minister may assist in the facilitation of such services. Assistance by a Field Minister in such services requires DAC staff approval, is optional, and applies to the overall offender population; as such, Field Ministers are neither expected to do so nor excluded from doing so.
- iii. Field Ministers' provision or facilitation of Rehabilitation Services programming (e.g., Thinking for a Change, Father Accountability) shall be conducted under the direct supervision of and as a supporting role/co-facilitator of a properly trained DAC program facilitator. At no time shall Field Ministers provide such services independently or unsupervised.
- iv. Field Ministers shall regularly and promptly report any safety/security concerns to designated facility staff as soon as possible, as well as be available when directed to discuss specified concerns with the Designated Staff Coordinator and/or multidisciplinary team.
- v. Field Ministers shall provide a monthly report of their activities to the Designated Staff Coordinator, including dates and times of specific tasks completed and any notable issues, concerns, or needs.
- vi. Aside from completing their assigned responsibilities, Field Ministers shall neither gather a large number of offenders nor meet with other offenders for the purposes of providing services outside of an assigned and approved location.
- vii. Field Ministers shall not contact another offender's family member on behalf of the offender.
- viii. Field Ministers shall abide by direct orders given by Institutions staff and shall comply with supervision from the Designated Staff Coordinator at all times.
- ix. Field Ministers have no authority over any other offender(s) at any time.
- x. Field Ministers may suggest or propose additional assigned responsibilities to their Designated Staff Coordinator for consideration. No such proposed additional assigned responsibilities that conflict with any DAC policy, rules and regulations, or associated operational manual (e.g., Religious Practices Operational Manual) will be approved. The Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee may be used as a consultation resource by the Designated Staff Coordinator or facility leadership as appropriate to consider such proposals.
- f) Any questions or concerns from facility staff regarding Field Minister responsibilities, roles, limitations, etc. shall be directed to the appropriate DAC chain of command, beginning within the facility. The Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee may be used as a consultation resource to field any such questions as necessary.

- g) Field Minister deployment shall be a full-time job assignment. Refer to Institutions policies [E .3100, Offender Assignment](#), and [C .3000, Sentence Credits](#) for assignment procedure, sentence credits, incentive wages, time-keeping, and other Institutions requirements.
- h) In accordance with applicable security Policy and Procedure and at the discretion of the Warden or designee, Field Ministers may be considered critical workers by institution standard operating procedure. Thus, Field Ministers may be allowed to continue to work in emergency circumstances wherein the institution is otherwise under restricted movement.
- i) Where feasible, Field Ministers shall be housed together to ensure support of one another, consistency in planning and completion of assigned responsibilities, and necessary debriefing on activities. Exceptions to housing shall be at the discretion of the Warden or designee, with appropriate consultation with the Deployment Committee.
- j) As facilitated by the Designated Staff Coordinator, Field Ministers shall have appropriate access to appropriate resources to complete their assigned responsibilities, which may include workbooks, paper and writing materials, sign-in sheets, etc. Each facility shall provide a designated space for Field Ministers to store materials, prepare for and complete assigned tasks, hold team meetings, meet with mentors, or engage in continuing education. This space may be multi-purpose but shall be available at adequate times for Field Ministers according to their assigned responsibilities. At all times, this space and resources within it shall be available to facility staff for appropriate supervision and/or inspection.
- k) SEBTS shall be responsible for providing necessary books or other publications for use by Field Ministers, with the approval of the Warden or designee and in conjunction with facility rules and regulations and applicable DAC policy. SEBTS shall bear the responsibility of having books/publications made available for such review prior to distribution to Field Ministers as well as having books/publications shipped directly from the approved publishing company/vendor to the facility Designated Staff Coordinator or other facility staff as designated by the Warden. The frequency of delivery of such materials shall be determined by the Deployment Committee.
- l) Field Ministers have no inherent right to remain so assigned once deployed. Any concerns arising during active deployment regarding a Field Minister's ability to perform or appropriateness for their assignment shall be noted and directed to the appropriate DAC chain of command, beginning within the facility. The Warden or designee or Designated Staff Coordinator may temporarily suspend a Field Minister from engaging in their assigned duties when deemed necessary; however, no offender shall be removed from assignment as a Field Minister without direct consultation with and support of the Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee.
- m) Field Ministers shall be eligible for all appropriate custody reviews as per Institutions policy [C .0100, Offender Custody Classification](#). Field Ministers shall be consulted directly

by the Designated Staff Coordinator should their custody review yield a promotion in custody level that would necessitate transfer away from the deployment location. Field Ministers may elect to forego such a promotion to remain in their current assignment. Any such decision to forego promotion shall be documented accordingly and shall remain intact until the next completed custody review. Should any Field Minister be promoted in custody level and subsequently become eligible for transfer to another facility, the Field Minister has no inherent right to remain so assigned.

- n) Field Ministers shall have the ongoing support of mentors during deployment. Mentors shall be recruited and/or identified by SEBTS and approved by both SEBTS and the Deputy Secretary of Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee. Mentors shall provide reasonable and appropriate support to Field Ministers to aid in successfully completing their assigned responsibilities, maintaining role model behaviors, and revisiting education and training elements when necessary. All mentors shall be reviewed as per Institutions policy [E .3400, Community Volunteer & Community Leave Program](#) and if approved, issued a “blue card.” Mentors shall not bring in or take out any materials to or from Field Ministers without the expressed permission of the facility Warden or designee. Frequency of mentorship visits shall be determined by the deployment location Warden or designee.
- o) Field Ministers shall have the opportunity for periodic continuing education, provided by SEBTS representatives at the direction of the SEBTS Director of Prison Programs. Coordination of any such continuing education shall be in consultation with the Deployment Committee and deployment location Warden or designee. Any continuing education activity requiring transfer of Field Ministers shall require the approval of the Deputy Secretary of Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee.
- p) Following a minimum of two consecutive years of successful deployment and assignment as a Field Minister, any Field Minister may request a transfer to a different authorized deployment location. This request shall be made in writing to the Warden at their current assigned facility and shall include a rationale. Transfer requests will be reviewed by the Deployment Committee. Final approval of any transfer request to a different authorized deployment location for continued assignment as a Field Minister shall be at the discretion of and communicated by the Director of Rehabilitation Services or designee.
- q) The Designated Staff Coordinator shall review the assigned responsibilities of each Field Minister at least annually and submit the responsibilities to the Deployment Committee. Changes in individual responsibilities consistent with this policy may be made as appropriate.
- r) At all times throughout the deployment component of the FMP, all applicable DAC Policy and Procedure not otherwise specified in this policy shall be followed.

IV. EXCEPTIONS

Any exceptions to the existing policy shall be issued by the Deputy Secretary of Rehabilitation and Reentry or designee and the Superintendent of Education Services or designee in conjunction with the Deputy Secretary of Institutions or designee.

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