

PS-10.14, "Inmate Reentry Program, " June 1, 2004

SCDC POLICY/PROCEDURE

NUMBER: PS-10.14

TITLE: INMATE REENTRY PROGRAM

ISSUE DATE: JUNE 1, 2004

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: Division Director of Programs and Services

OPERATIONS MANUAL:PROGRAMS

SUPERSEDES: None

RELEVANT SCDC FORMS/SUPPLIES: None

ACA/CAC STANDARDS: None

STATE/FEDERAL STATUTES: None

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for the South Carolina Department of Corrections reentry initiative.

POLICY STATEMENT: The South Carolina Department of Corrections will provide programming, support, and services to prepare inmates who are selected for the reentry initiative program for release from confinement and transition into the community. The goals of the initiative are to prepare the offender for employment; prevent re-offending; assist the offender to avoid crime; engage in pro-social community activities; and meet family responsibilities.

SPECIFIC PROCEDURES:

1. RESPONSIBILITIES:

1.1 The Division Director of Programs and Services will ensure that a Coordinator of Reentry Programs is selected.

1.2 The Coordinator of Reentry Programs will:

1.2.1 Ensure that Transition Coordinators are selected and employed at each reentry program site.

1.2.2 Supervise Transition Coordinators.

1.2.3 Act as the Agency's contact to all other state and community agencies participating in the program.

1.2.4 Ensure progress reports and other information are prepared and submitted as requested by the grant funding agency.

1.2.5 Ensure that the Reentry Program Advisory Task Force, comprised of individuals from the Agency, other government agencies, and the private sector, meets regularly to coordinate efforts and share information.

1.3 Transition Coordinators will:

1.3.1 Interview newly assigned inmates to confirm employment history, social history, family background, criminal history, vocational and educational needs, substance abuse and mental health history, and other related information.

1.3.2 Assess individual inmate needs, develop program recommendations, enroll the inmate in the reentry program, and assist the inmate to develop a comprehensive reentry plan. The reentry plan will be specific with measurable goals and objectives and a time schedule for achieving these goals.

1.3.3 Maintain case records on each inmate to include: Initial intake form, individual reentry plan, evaluation and progress reports, signed release of information form, referrals to other agencies, and other appropriate documentation.

1.3.4 Conduct individual and group counseling and education sessions on: use of available social, employment, psychological, educational, and vocational services available in the community; financial and budget management; employer's expectations; anger/feelings management; goal setting and decision making; communication skills; parenting skills; and leisure time activities, etc.

1.3.5 Organize and chair meetings and maintain ongoing contact with representatives from government agencies and community organizations that provide reentry/transitional services in the geographic area.

1.3.6 Compile and submit documentation required by the Coordinator of Reentry Programs.

1.3.7 Publish a monthly calendar of classes and other activities for the Reentry Program.

1.4 The Division of Resource Information Management will identify eligible inmates and produce a list of eligible inmates on a quarterly basis.

1.5 The Division of Classification and Inmate Records will ensure inmates selected for the program are appropriately assigned.

2. SELECTION FOR THE PROGRAM:

2.1 Inmates should have at least one year to serve at the time of selection for the program. Referrals from R&E can be made directly to the program if the inmates have 12 to 18 months to serve. The program is designed to serve inmates from 17 to 35 (excluding offenders sentenced under the Youthful Offender Act) with a prior criminal history and a requirement for community supervision in the State of South Carolina following a period of at least one year of incarceration. (Note: Sex Offenders will be considered for the program at any age and with any prior criminal history provided they are otherwise eligible for the program.) Offenders incarcerated as a result of technical violations and considered to be high risk to return to incarceration will be included in this target population.

2.2 The Division of Resource Information Management will identify eligible inmates and produce a list of eligible inmates on a quarterly basis. This list will be forwarded to the Coordinator of Reentry Programs, and to the Transition Coordinator and Classification Caseworker at each grant site.

2.3 If space is limited, inmates closer to release will be placed in the program first, with others being moved into the program, as places become vacant. A waiting list will be maintained by the Transition Coordinator at each site.

2.4 A reentry eligible (yes/no) designation will also be included on a screen currently utilized by the Division of Classification and Inmate Records in order to alert classification staff that the inmate is involved in the reentry program and should not be moved without the approval of the Division Director of Classification and Inmate Records and the Coordinator of Reentry Programs.

2.5 To the extent possible, inmates should stay in the assigned reentry facility throughout the program. However, because of custody or security level changes, transfers may need to be made. When an inmate is placed in close custody, or experiences a reduction in security or custody level, every reasonable effort will be made to continue that inmate in the reentry program. If possible, he/she will be placed in the reentry program that is available at his/her current location. If a transfer is necessary, every effort will be made to make the transfer to another facility at which a reentry grant program is available. (If someone must be moved from a Level II to a Level III facility, Lee Correctional Institution should be used because it is the only Level III reentry site.)

3. PROGRAM CAPACITY:

3.1 The ideal capacity for each program site will be approximately 40 inmates; however, capacity may fluctuate due to issues such as the numbers of eligible inmates, their time to release, and the extent of each inmate's reentry needs.

3.2 No inmates should be moved on a large-scale basis for the purposes of participating in this program. Inmates will be selected for the program from populations currently residing in the reentry grant sites. On a case by case basis, where numbers of eligible inmates are low or there is a specific need (hardship cases,

post release resource issues, etc.), the Coordinator of Reentry Programs and the Division Director of Classification and Inmate Records will assess the need and coordinate movement, if indicated.

3.3 Inmates may not necessarily be placed in a facility near the location to which they plan to be released. However, eligible inmates may be moved if his/her reentry needs can be better met at a reentry site in closer proximity to his/her home community. A request for such a move should be made by the Transition Coordinator and will be sent to the Coordinator of Reentry Programs and the Division Director of Classification and Inmate Records.

4. LABOR CREW/WORK RELEASE:

4.1 Since employment is a crucial factor in reentry success, inmates in the program may continue to be eligible for work release programs. The nearest Transition Coordinator will maintain contact with the inmate once he/she enters a work release program and will continue to work on reentry issues with the individual.

4.2 Inmates participating in the reentry initiative who are subsequently approved for the Labor Crew/Work Release program will be required to complete a minimal Labor Crew assignment (preferably 60 days) prior to Work Release assignment. Inmates who are participating in the reentry initiative may waive participation in the Labor Crew/Work Release program.

4.3 Inmates in the reentry program will not be moved to a thirty-day pre-release program.

5. TRANSITION COORDINATORS/CLASSIFICATION CASEWORKERS:

5.1 Transition Coordinators and Classification Caseworkers will work closely together and maintain open communication. There will often be a need for them to discuss needs of inmates in the program on a case-by-case basis. Issues such as hardship transfers and other placement issues will be discussed and coordinated between these employees.

5.2 Transition Coordinators will participate in Classification Boards to provide input for inmates involved in the reentry program.

6. INMATE'S RESPONSIBILITIES: Each inmate selected for the reentry program will be required to:

- abide by all SCDC policies and procedures;
- attend assigned classes and participate in group and individual meetings;
- participate in the development of an individual reentry plan;
- meet with representatives from outside agencies and community groups as assigned;
- attend scheduled after care appointments; and
- follow the release plan.

7. REENTRY PLANS:

Each inmate's reentry plan will be documented in the Offender Management System and in files maintained by the Transition Coordinator. This plan will include information on work plans, housing plans, finances, family, etc., as well as information on the inmate's scheduled individual and group counseling and other activities as required.

8. COORDINATION WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS:

A Reentry Program Advisory Task Force comprised of individuals from the Agency, other government agencies, and the private sector will meet regularly to coordinate efforts and share information.

SIGNATURE ON FILE

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Jon E. Ozmint, Director

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