



Virginia Department of Corrections

Community, Media, and Other Agency Relations

Operating Procedure 027.3

Community Relations

Authority:

Directive 027, *Citizen Involvement*

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Content Owner/Reviewer:	Marcus Elam Corrections Operations Administrator	<i>Signature Copy on File</i>	6/8/2021
		Signature	Date
Signatory:	A. David Robinson Chief of Corrections Operations	<i>Signature Copy on File</i>	6/10/2021
		Signature	Date

REVIEW

The Content Owner will review this operating procedure annually and re-write it no later than three years after the effective date.

The content owner reviewed this operating procedure in August 2022 and determined that no changes are needed. The content owner reviewed this operating procedure in July 2023 and necessary changes are being drafted.

COMPLIANCE

This operating procedure applies to all units operated by the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC). Practices and procedures must comply with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations, ACA standards, PREA standards, and DOC directives and operating procedures.

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DEFINITIONS

Community Advisory Board - A group of selected representatives from the community, the unit, and the inmate/probationer/parolee population who serve to promote unit programs and enhance community relations.

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) - A written agreement involving financial consideration between DOC and any entity; must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Risk Management or designee before signature.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) - A written collaborative understanding between DOC and another government entity without financial consideration establishing the parameters of the collaboration between DOC and any entity. Must be approved by the Director of Administrative Compliance or designee before signature.

Unit Volunteer Coordinator - The unit representative who is responsible for the management of the unit volunteer program. The Volunteer Coordinator may be a full-time or part-time employee, or the position may be filled by a volunteer or contract person. The selected individual for this position must have or receive appropriate training.

Volunteer - Any citizen of the community who, of their own free will, provides goods or services to the DOC without any financial gain.

PURPOSE

This operating procedure provides for interaction between Department of Corrections (DOC) units and their local communities to build mutually beneficial relationships for both the community and the DOC unit.

PROCEDURE

- I. Community Relationship Building
 - A. Citizen involvement is an essential factor in building a positive relationship between a correctional unit and its surrounding community.
 - B. All units will strive to be good citizens of their community. Each facility actively identifies and implements activities that contribute to the community. (4-ACRS-7F-07)
 - C. With the approval and support of the Regional Operations Chief (ROC), involvement can take many forms depending on the unit's mission, resources, and environment. Examples include:
 1. Volunteers from the community; see Operating Procedure 027.1, *Volunteer and Internship Programs*.
 2. Communication and cooperation with community agencies and other components of the criminal justice system. (4-ACRS-7F-04)
 3. Local governments, fire, emergency, law enforcement, regional jails, and other public agencies participate in policy development, coordinated planning, and interagency consultation such as for emergency response plans and exercises. (5-ACI-1A-06)
 4. Memoranda, grants, and other written agreements
 - a. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), mutual aid agreements, and other such written documents between DOC facilities or P&P Districts and any entity without a financial consideration must be submitted to the ROC for review.
 - i. ROC's will forward all recommended understandings to the Director of Administrative Compliance for final review and approval.
 - ii. After review and approval by the Director of Administrative Compliance, the agreement may be signed by the ROC and/or Unit Head.
 - iii. A finalized, signed copy of the MOU will be kept on file in the Corrections Operations Administrator's office.
 - b. The Chief of Corrections Operations or appropriate Deputy Director, as applicable, will approve all MOU's, mutual aid agreements, and other such written documents for units not under regional supervision.
 - c. Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) and contracts, between the DOC and any entity with a financial consideration must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Risk Management or designee and developed in accordance with Operating Procedure 260.1, *Procurement of Goods and Services*.
 - d. All grants with or without a financial consideration must be submitted to the Grant Administrator for review and approval in accordance with Operating Procedure 270.1, *Grants Operation and Administration*.
 - e. All agreements will cover the allotment of DOC resources and the role and functions of other public or private agencies providing a service to the unit and specify their relation to the authority and responsibility of the Unit Head. (5-ACI-1A-11; 1-CTA-1A-10)
 5. Support of local businesses
 - a. Purchase of goods and services.
 - b. Employers that hire probationers/parolees from Community Corrections Alternative Programs and under probation and parole supervision.
 6. Support of community

- a. Inmate work gangs for public works and community projects (5-ACI-7A-04)
 - b. Employee volunteers
 - c. Angel Tree or other volunteer activities that serve the community
 - d. Donations to needy families
 - e. Participation in parades, festivals, and other community events
 - f. Special Olympics Virginia
 - g. Sponsor or support blood drives
7. Unit participation in local organizations
- a. Chamber of Commerce
 - b. Employees active in civic organizations
 - c. Employee participation and unit support for local public boards and commissions (planning, zoning, library, historical society, etc.)
8. Provide public information that encourages interaction with the public and the media
- a. Provide speakers to civic groups
 - b. Administration attendance at Town Council/Board of Supervisors meetings
 - c. Encourage and educate unit employees to be ambassadors with the public
 - d. News releases to local media such as; see Operating Procedure 022.1, *News Media Relations*:
 - i. Community work projects.
 - ii. Employee accomplishments.
 - iii. Publicize unit support of the community.
 - iv. Recognize volunteers from the community.
 - v. Joint emergency response exercises with local agencies.

II. Community Advisory Board (CAB)

- A. The CAB serves as a liaison for the unit's administration, inmates/probationers/parolees, and the local community to solicit community input in the coordination and implementation of programs, and in promoting optimum and effective use of volunteers within the unit.
- B. The primary purpose of the CAB is to offer advice and assistance to unit employees and inmates/probationers/parolees and to assure that the community is efficiently utilized to enhance the mission of the unit and the DOC. The unit and the CAB will develop an understanding of the role and responsibility for decisions and actions at various levels of planning. Generally, the CAB's focus is advice and advocacy.
- C. CAB functions assist the following:
1. Unit Head, employees, and inmates/probationers/parolees in initiating, reviewing, and developing formal program proposals for implementation at the unit.
 2. Determining the need for new programs and monitoring their operation in an advisory capacity.
 3. Improving public relations through linkages with civic, social, business and other community groups or resources, and act as an advocate for unit needs and programs with the public.
 4. Seeking well qualified volunteers to help employees and inmates/probationers/parolees implement approved program proposals.
- D. Each DOC facility must have an advisory board that meets at least annually and is representative of the community in which the facility located. Meetings that are more frequent are encouraged. (4-ACRS-7F-05)
- E. Minutes for each meeting will be kept on file in the unit.

F. The Unit Head will:

1. Appoint CAB members to include three to seven community members, two to four unit employees, and one to three inmate/probationer/parolee representatives if appropriate to the unit mission and security level.
2. Ensure that appropriate time and space are allotted for CAB meetings.
3. Ensure that CAB members understand the relationship between the CAB and the unit.
4. Attend CAB meetings to provide input and measure the effectiveness of the CAB.

G. The CAB will:

1. Assist in improving public relations through linkages with civic, business, and other community representatives.
2. Provide suggestions for needed inmate/probationer/parolee programs and assist in evaluating the effectiveness of unit programs.
3. Develop long term goals and short term objectives, with input and approval from unit employees.
4. Provide technical assistance on matters outside of the unit's competencies.

H. Individuals considered for selection for the CAB will:

1. Demonstrate an interest in, and concern for, the community as a whole.
2. Demonstrate the ability to effectively serve as a liaison between the DOC and the community.
3. Display commitment and interest in the mission of the DOC and have the time to serve.
4. Have the ability to work collaboratively with others.
5. Be willing to express ideas and defend their convictions.
6. Meet the eligibility requirements for volunteers; see Operating Procedure 027.1, *Volunteer and Internship Programs*.

I. Each CAB member will be appointed to a term of at least two years, with the terms staggered, in order to avoid a complete turnover at any one time. Members may be reappointed to successive terms at the Unit Head's discretion. Vacancies occurring during the term of appointment will be filled by the Unit Head, who may solicit recommendations from the CAB.

J. Community CAB members will be given orientation by the Unit Volunteer Coordinator prior to assuming their duties.

K. The CAB, as a whole, will elect a Chairperson for a term not to exceed one year; terms may be served consecutively. Unit employees and inmates/probationers/parolees are not eligible to serve as a chairperson.

L. The duties of the Chairperson will include, but not be limited to:

1. Managing the decision-making process of the CAB.
2. Working with the CAB to define and refine priorities and establish goals and objectives.
3. Serving as a spokesperson for the CAB and securing approval, if necessary, from the Unit Head or designee.

III. Local Re-entry Councils

A. Local Re-entry Councils provide the DOC critical collaborations with service providers and other agencies that support inmate reintegration and effective coordination of resources.

B. Local Re-entry Councils are formed locally and are not under DOC's operational purview.

1. Facilities and P&P Offices will provide employees to participate as members of their local Re-entry

Council.

2. The Chief P&P Officer will offer to serve as one of the two council conveners if chosen by committee vote.
3. Each local Re-entry Council will establish leadership to facilitate meetings.

IV. Utilization of DOC Resources in Support of the Community

- A. DOC's affiliated organizations, local governments, fire, emergency, law enforcement, regional jails, and other public agencies (must be non-profit) are eligible to use DOC grounds and facilities, borrow DOC owned equipment, and utilize DOC storage areas with approval of the Unit Head.
- B. DOC resources will be available to eligible organizations on a first-come, first-served basis.
- C. The organization using DOC resources will be responsible for returning those resources to the location and condition in which they were found.
- D. Other than incidentals (i.e., paper products in DOC restrooms), any consumables (i.e., propane and other fuels for food preparation equipment) will be the responsibility of the borrower.
- E. Only incidental on-duty employee time or inmate/probationer/parolee labor may be expended in support of community utilization of DOC resources.
- F. Community utilization of DOC resources must not interfere with DOC operations; approvals may be withdrawn at any time if the DOC has an unanticipated need.
- G. DOC grounds and facilities may be made available for meetings, training classes, equipment demonstrations, fund raising events, etc. with the approval of the Unit Head with notification to the next level of supervision.
- H. Loaning of DOC owned equipment:
 1. A *DOC Equipment Loan Agreement 027_F7* must be completed and signed by an authorized representative of the borrowing organization and the DOC Unit Head or designee, with the DOC Organizational Unit retaining the original and providing a copy to the borrowing organization.
 2. The *DOC Equipment Loan Agreement 027_F7* must describe the borrowed equipment, the borrowing organization and authorized representative, specify the time and date the equipment will be used and returned, and require that on return the equipment will be cleaned, repaired if needed, and any consumables replenished.
- I. With approval of the Unit Head and where capacity is available, approved organizations may utilize DOC grounds and facilities for collection and short-term storage of items related to organizational projects.
 1. Examples could include such activities as food drives, Christmas mother/angel tree projects, recycling projects, or food/supplies for fund raising events.
 2. Property stored for community organizations will not be comingled with DOC or inmate/probationer/parolee property.
- J. See Operating Procedure 323.1, *Vehicle Acquisition, Operations, and Maintenance*, regarding loan or use of highway vehicles.

REFERENCES

- Operating Procedure 022.1, *News Media Relations*
Operating Procedure 027.1, *Volunteer and Internship Programs*
Operating Procedure 260.1, *Procurement of Goods and Services*
Operating Procedure 270.1, *Grants Operation and Administration*
Operating Procedure 323.1, *Vehicle Acquisition, Operations, and Maintenance*



ATTACHMENTS

None

FORM CITATIONS

DOC Equipment Loan Agreement 027_F7

