

STATE OF OHIO



DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
AND CORRECTION

SUBJECT: Family and Visitor Orientation	PAGE <u> 1 </u> OF <u> 4 </u> .
	NUMBER: 76-VIS-05
RULE/CODE REFERENCE:	SUPERSEDES: None
RELATED ACA STANDARDS:	EFFECTIVE DATE: April 21, 2007
RELATED AUDIT STANDARDS:	APPROVED: 

I. AUTHORITY

This policy is issued in compliance with Ohio Revised Code 5120.01 which delegates to the Director of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction the authority to manage and direct the total operations of the Department and to establish such rules and regulations as the Director prescribes.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures within the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), which govern an orientation program for offender family members. This program shall establish positive communication while providing family members with a clear understanding of what is expected of the offender during their incarceration, and how family members can best assist their loved ones in reaching their rehabilitative goals.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy and procedure applies to all inmates and staff of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. Community Resources: Information and/or linkages to community-based agencies that can provide assistance to an offender in making a successful return to the community. Such resources may include information in the areas of medical, mental health, substance abuse, employment, training and transition issues.
- B. Family Member: An individual identified by the offender as being a relative or primary support person.
- C. Family Orientation Program: An institution program that provides an exchange of information between offender family members and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. This orientation program will describe institution services, programs, and procedures, as well as, give information about community

support services available to the family members. The program will also permit family members to ask questions.

V. POLICY

It is the policy of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to facilitate family involvement in the rehabilitative process to include a program that offers communication on the role of the family and the offender during the offender's incarceration.

VI. PROCEDURES

- A. Each institution shall develop and implement an orientation program for offender families and/or other visitors. The goal of the orientation shall be to help the family understand and navigate the system, assure them that they are not alone, and remind them of how they contribute to the offender's quality of life in the institution.
- B. This orientation shall be made available as close as possible to the time of their initial visit. This orientation shall be scheduled at times that allow for maximum involvement of family, friends and staff. Visitors may choose not to participate in the orientation program. If they participate, this should be recorded in the DOTS VSNOT screen.
- C. Information provided during the Reception Process through the Family Orientation Program shall consist, at a minimum, of the following:
1. Explanation of the Department's mission statement
 2. Explanation of applicable Department Policies and Administrative Regulations and procedures to include at a minimum the visiting policy, the property policy, the grievance procedure policy, and the mail and printed materials policy.
 3. Explanation of the various staff roles in the institution.
 4. Explanation of the Reentry process.
 5. Description of the various inmate programs offered at the Reception Center including specialized programming (i.e. RTU, Community Service).
 6. Explanation of the Disciplinary process and the appeal process.
 7. Explanation of the Reception and Orientation process, and the differences between a parent institution and the Reception Center.
 8. Explanation of the Classification process and transfer procedures.
 9. Explanation of the Release process.
 10. Explanation of the Serious Inmate Illness and Death Procedure.
 11. Explanation of A.R. 5120-05-02, Inmate Funds.
 12. Explanation of confidentiality rules.
 13. Explanation of the requirements and process for family serious illnesses and death visits.
- D. Parent institutions shall implement a family orientation program specific to their institution. This program shall include, at a minimum, the following:
1. Explanation of the Institution's mission

2. Explanation of applicable institution policies. This should include at a minimum the visiting policy and rules, property policy, grievance procedures, and the inmate mail and phone procedures.
3. Explanation of various staff roles in the institution. This should include at a minimum Unit Management, Inspector, Investigator, Warden's Assistant, Chaplains, Medical and Mental Health staff.
4. Review of the Reentry process. Information regarding the importance of the role of the family in the rehabilitation process should also be presented at this time.
5. Description of the various social service programming offered in the institution.
6. Review of the disciplinary and appeal processes.
7. Review of the classification/reclassification and transfer process.
8. Review of the Serious Inmate Illness and Death Policy.
9. Explanation of services provided by medical and mental health.
10. Description of community resources available for use by family members.
11. Explanation of confidentiality rules.
12. Explanation of the requirements and processes for family serious illness and death visits.
13. Explanation of the institution's transfer process.

E. In addition to the above, information should be conveyed to the family members that offenders are more likely to succeed after release if they have a strong family support system. Therefore, they should be encouraged to write and visit on a consistent basis, and to keep the institution informed of additional information that could be helpful to the safety of the inmate and the security of the institution. Some examples of information that should be shared by family and friends are as follows:

1. Suicidal thoughts by the inmate
2. Threats to the inmate by other inmates
3. Threats received by family members from another inmate
4. Death of family members or close friends
5. Information that the inmate conveys that could be construed as possible criminal activity (i.e. escape plans, drug conveyance, etc.)
6. Information the inmate conveys regarding medical symptoms

F. Institutions are encouraged to utilize a combination of the following resources when presenting the orientation program. Institutions are also encouraged to provide an opportunity for personal interaction with the family and friends.

1. Multimedia Presentation used in combination with other resources. The strict use of video does not offer interaction and lacks a personal touch.
2. Speaker/Lecture Presentation
3. Handouts
4. Question and Answer Session
5. Inmate Testimonials
6. Presentations from Community Agencies should be utilized to effectively make the family/friends aware of available resources in the area.
7. Faith-Based Entities may be utilized to assist in hosting a family orientation program.

- G. The family orientation program should be able to be presented in Spanish as well as English for those offenders or family members who experience language barriers.