



# 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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4-ACRS-7F-05, 4-ACRS-7F-07; 1-CTA-1A-10

<b>Content</b>	Marcus Elam	<i>Signature Copy on File</i>	5/28/2024
<b>Owner/Reviewer:</b>	Corrections Operations Administrator	Signature	Date
<b>Signatory:</b>	A. David Robinson	<i>Signature Copy on File</i>	5/31/2024
	Chief of Corrections Operations	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.

## 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, American Correctional Association (ACA) standards, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards, and DOC directives and operating procedures.

**Table of Contents**

DEFINITIONS ..... 3

PURPOSE ..... 4

PROCEDURE..... 4

    I.    Community Relationship Building ..... 4

    II.   Community Advisory Board (CAB) ..... 5

    III.  Local Re-entry Councils ..... 7

    IV.  Utilization of DOC Resources in Support of the Community..... 7

REFERENCES..... 8

ATTACHMENTS ..... 8

FORM CITATIONS ..... 8

## 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 outside 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 DOC facilities/offices and the surrounding community.
- B. All units will strive to be good citizens of their community. Each facility/office 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)
    - a. Wardens, Superintendents, and Chiefs of Probation and Parole are expected to meet with local law enforcement agencies (County Sheriff and Town Police Chief) as well as the Commonwealth's Attorney twice per calendar year.
    - b. Wardens, Superintendents, and Chiefs of Probation and Parole are expected to notify their Regional Operations Chief and Regional Administrator of when the meeting is scheduled as well as the outcome of the scheduled meeting.
  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. ROCs will forward all recommended understandings to the Director of Administrative Compliance for final review and approval in consultation with the Corrections Operations Administrator.
      - ii. After review and approval by the Director of Administrative Compliance, the agreement will be forwarded to the approved signatory authority.
      - iii. A finalized, signed copy of the MOU will be kept on file in the Administrative Compliance Unit office.
    - b. The Director of Administrative Compliance will review and approve all MOUs, mutual aid agreements, and other such written documents for units not under regional supervision and present those agreements to the Chief of Corrections Operations, appropriate Deputy Director, or their designee for signature.
      - i. A copy of the signed agreement will be forwarded to the requesting unit.
      - ii. A finalized, signed copy of the MOU will be kept on file in the Administrative Compliance Unit office.
    - 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. Staff 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. Staff active in civic organizations
  - c. Staff 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 staff 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. Staff 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 staff 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, staff, 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 staff 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 staff, 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 staff.
  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, 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, will elect a Chairperson for a term not to exceed one year; terms may be served consecutively. Unit staff 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 staff to participate as members of their local Re-entry Council.
  - 2. The Chief P&P Officer or designee will serve as one of the two council conveners.
  - 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 staff 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, Operation, 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, Operation, and Maintenance*

## **ATTACHMENTS**

None

## **FORM CITATIONS**

*DOC Equipment Loan Agreement 027\_F7*