I. PURPOSE

This operating procedure provides for the organization and administration of Mental Health Services within the Department of Corrections.

II. COMPLIANCE

This operating procedure applies to all units operated by the 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.

III. DEFINITIONS

**Offender with Serious Mental Illness (SMI)** - Offender diagnosed with a Psychotic Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Major Depressive Disorder, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Anxiety Disorder, or any diagnosed mental disorder (excluding substance abuse disorders) currently associated with serious impairment in psychological, cognitive, or behavioral functioning that substantially interferes with the person’s ability to meet the ordinary demands of living.

**Psychology Associate** - An individual employed in a designated mental health services position as a Psychologist or Psychology Associate, Psychiatric Provider, Social Worker (Masters level), District Mental Health Clinician, or Registered Nurse, or an individual with at least a Master’s degree in psychology, social work, or relevant human services field with knowledge, training, and skills in the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders.

**Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP)-Adult** - An individual employed in a designated mental health services position who meets Department of Health Professions (DHP) Board of Counseling regulatory standards including at least a bachelor’s degree in human services or a related field, supervised experience, registration with DHP as a QMHP, and ongoing education in Mental Health topics.

**Secure Diversionary Treatment Program (SDTP)** - Bed assignments designated for offenders who are classified as SMI; operates with structured security regulations and procedures, and provides programming and treatment services conducive with evidence based treatment protocols and individualized treatment plans.

**Shared Allied Management (SAM) Unit** - A residential programming unit operated at designated DOC institutions to deliver intensive services in a safe environment to specific offender populations that typically require a high level of services from security, mental health, and/ or medical staff.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

A. Mission, Philosophy of Service, and Resources

1. The mission of the Mental Health Services program within the Department of Corrections is to enhance public and facility safety by providing quality assessment and treatment services to offenders as well as consultation and training to correctional staff in accordance with professional and ethical standards of practice.
2. The mental health program is approved by the Chief of Mental Health Services and includes at a minimum the following: (5-6A-4368; 4-4368)
   a. Screening on intake
   b. Outpatient services for the detection, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illness, to include medication management and/or counseling, as appropriate
   c. Crisis intervention and the management of acute psychiatric episodes
   d. Stabilization of the mentally ill and the minimization of psychiatric deterioration in the correctional setting
   e. Elective therapy services and preventive treatment where resources permit
   f. Provision for referral and admission to mental health facilities and specialty units for offenders whose psychiatric needs exceed the treatment capability of the facility
   g. Follow up with offenders who return from an inpatient psychiatric facility
   h. Procedures for obtaining and documenting informed consent.
   i. In community settings, serve as consultants and liaisons to available sources

3. Offenders are assessed and classified regarding their mental health services needs upon intake into the DOC.
   a. The classification is updated based on periodic and need-based screenings and assessments throughout the offender’s incarceration.
   b. Additional information may be found in Operating Procedure 720.2, Medical Screening, Classification, and Levels of Care, and Operating Procedure 730.2, Mental Health Services: Screening, Assessment, and Classification.

4. A significant percentage of the offender population requires some level of mental health services. A continuum of services has been implemented within the DOC, both to meet the needs of offenders while incarcerated, and to assist in planning for their release from the Department and successful transition to the community. All mental health care is provided by or under the clinical supervision of licensed professionals.

5. All of the DOC mental health units and the Sex Offender Residential Treatment (SORT) Program are licensed by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services. In addition, the acute care and residential treatment units at Marion Correctional Treatment Center are accredited by the Joint Commission for the Accreditation of HealthCare Organizations.

6. Emergency mental health services are available at each facility on a 24-hour basis either by an on-call Psychology Associate assigned to that facility, the assigned Mental Health Clinical Supervisor, or the Psychology Associate(s) at another designated facility if the facility does not have Psychology Associate(s) on staff (See Operating Procedure 730.2, Mental Health Services: Screening, Assessment, and Classification).

7. There is consultation between the Facility Unit Head or designee and the responsible Psychology Associate or designee prior to taking action regarding seriously mentally ill or intellectually disabled offenders in the following areas: (When immediate action is required, consultation to review the appropriateness of the action occurs as soon as possible, but no later than 72 hours after action is taken.) (5-6C-4399; 4-4399)
   • Housing assignments
   • Program assignments
   • Disciplinary measures
   • Transfers to other facilities

8. The Mental Health Services Program includes training provided by Psychology Associates to corrections officers and other staff in recognizing signs and symptoms of mental illness, intellectual disabilities, suicide intervention and prevention, and other related topics. (4-ACRS-4C-04)
9. Mental Health Services is responsible for coordinating with the Policy Initiatives Unit to maintain accurate, current operating procedures.

B. Organizational Structure of the Mental Health Services Program

1. The Health Services Director oversees Mental Health Services.

2. Mental Health Services is headed by the Chief of Mental Health Services who supervises and is responsible for performance evaluations of the Mental Health Clinical Supervisors (MHCSs) and the Sex Offender Program Director (SOPD).

3. The Sex Offender Program Director directly supervises the Sex Offender Residential Treatment (SORT) Program and provides clinical supervision to other sex offender treatment providers in the DOC.

4. Institutions (4-ACRS-4C-15 [I])
   a. Each Mental Health Clinical Supervisor (MHCS), in consultation with the Facility Unit Head and Assistant Facility Unit Head of each institution, is responsible for the provision of mental health services to a designated group of institutions.
      i. The MHCS and SOPD supervise and are responsible for performance evaluations of senior Psychology Associates within their assigned institutions.
      ii. Senior Psychology Associates will include designated staff (typically supervisory staff) in psychology and social work positions.
   b. The senior Psychology Associates supervise and are responsible for performance evaluations of line Psychology Associates at their institution.
   c. The MHCSs and SOPD are responsible for the clinical supervision of designated Psychology Associates. The Facility Unit Head, Assistant Facility Unit Head, or designee will be responsible for operational issues including the monitoring and tracking of time and attendance, and accurate reporting and documentation of leave according to applicable operating procedures.
   d. Unlicensed persons providing mental health services within the DOC will be under the clinical supervision of a licensed clinician.
   e. QMHP’s may serve as group Mental Health Technicians under the supervision of a Psychology Associate or above.

5. Community Corrections (4-ACRS-4C-15 [CC])
   a. The Community Corrections Mental Health Clinical Supervisor (MHCS), in consultation with the Facility Unit Head of each facility and the Chief of each P&P District, is responsible for overseeing the provision of mental health services to include meeting, assessing, making supervision recommendations, and referrals to the community for treatment needs for offenders on probation and/or parole in the community who have been referred by facility Psychology Associates and District P&P Officers.
   b. The direct provision of mental health services for the District offices is delegated to the Regional Mental Health Clinicians (RMHCs) and District Mental Health Clinicians (DMHCs).
   c. The Health Services Unit has made videoconference equipment available in designated P&P Districts and Community Corrections facilities to provide an additional means for mentally ill offenders to connect with community treatment providers. Videoconferencing may occur prior to discharge (i.e. re-entry planning) and/or following discharge (i.e. Community Service Board (CSB) case and medication management).
   d. The Community Corrections MHCS supervises the Regional Mental Health Clinicians and is responsible for the performance evaluations with input from the affected senior management staff, the monitoring and tracking of time and attendance, and the accurate reporting and documentation of leave for Regional Mental Health Clinicians.
   e. Community Corrections Regional Mental Health Clinicians supervise District Mental Health Clinicians in their respective regions and are responsible for the performance evaluations with input...
from the affected senior management and staff of the P&P District, the monitoring and tracking of
time and attendance, and the accurate reporting and documentation of leave for District Mental
Health Clinicians.

6. Contract mental health service providers will provide clinical supervision for their staff. The MHCS
or SOPD assigned to that unit will provide general oversight to monitor services rendered by the
contract mental health services provider.

7. Psychiatric services are managed and supervised by the Chief Psychiatrist in accordance with
Operating Procedure 730.7, Psychiatric Services.

C. Employment Process

1. The unit will notify the MHCS, SOPD and/or the Chief of Mental Health Services of mental health
services vacancies. Supervisors will offer departing staff an exit interview or the opportunity to
complete the information requested in an exit interview on their own (See Mental Health Services Exit
Interview, Attachment 1) to solicit suggestions that may improve the operation of the Mental Health
Services Program and improve provision of services.

2. The MHCS or SOPD, in consultation with the Chief of Mental Health Services, will decide when and
how a position is to be advertised and will notify the appropriate Human Resources Officer (HRO).
   a. Approved advertisements for mental health positions will be provided to the HRO, who will be
      responsible for advertising the position.
   b. Applications received will be screened by the MHCS, SOPD or designee, and candidates for
      interviews will be selected.
   c. The HRO will be responsible for notifying candidates, scheduling interviews, and for follow up
      contact with all candidates who were interviewed but not selected for the position.

3. Interviews for senior mental health positions should be conducted by the MHCS, SOPD, or Chief of
Mental Health Services.
   a. Another senior Psychology Associate and a representative of the unit’s administration will typically
      assist in the interview process.
   b. The MHCS, SOPD, or Chief of Mental Health Services will serve as the appointing authority or
designate the Facility Unit Head as the appointing authority.

4. Interviews for line mental health staff positions should be conducted by the MHCS, SOPD, or Chief
of Mental Health Services.
   a. A representative of the unit’s administration and the supervising senior Psychology Associate will
typically assist in the interview process.
   b. The MHCS or SOPD will serve as the appointing authority or designate the Facility Unit Head as
the appointing authority.

5. The National Practitioner Data Bank Query 701_F7 will be completed by the MHCS or SOPD for all
final candidates for any licensed or credentialed position prior to hiring.

6. Unless licensed or under licensure supervision, all QMHP’s and Psychology Associates will be
required to maintain Department of Health Professions (DHP) registration status to be paid for by the
DOC.

D. Discipline

1. Institutions
   a. Disciplinary actions for senior Psychology Associates will be administered by the MHCS or SOPD
in consultation with the Chief of Mental Health Services, Facility Unit Head, Assistant Facility
Unit Head, HRO, or designee at the institution.
   b. Disciplinary actions for the line QMHPs will be administered by the senior Psychology Associates,
in consultation with the MHCS, SOPD, or Chief of Mental Health Services, Facility Unit Head,
Assistant Facility Unit Head, HRO, or designee at the institution.

c. At the discretion of the Chief of Mental Health Services, SOPD and MHCS, the Facility Unit Head or designee may administer disciplinary actions that are not related to clinical issues.

2. Community Corrections

a. Disciplinary actions for Regional Mental Health Clinicians will be administered by the MHCS in consultation with the Chief of Mental Health Services, Facility Unit Head, Chief P&P Officer, or Regional Administrator.

b. Disciplinary actions for District Mental Health Clinicians will be administered by the Regional Mental Health Clinician in consultation with the Chief of Mental Health Services, MHCS, Facility Unit Head, Chief P&P Officer, or Regional Administrator.

3. Disciplinary action, including termination, is to be carried out utilizing the appropriate Human Resources Office.

E. Leave Requests

1. Routine Leave Requests for Senior Psychology Associates

a. Senior Psychology Associates will obtain approval for leave from the MHCS (covering MHCS or Chief of Mental Health Services if the MHCS position is vacant) and Facility Unit Head or Assistant Facility Unit Head or designee at their institution.

b. Requests are to be made in writing via email.

c. After leave has been completed, the senior Psychology Associates will submit a “Leave Activity Reporting Form” (P8) to the Facility Unit Head or Assistant Facility Unit Head or designee at their institution for ‘supervisor’s signature’.

d. The form will then be forwarded to the Human Resources Officer at the institution per institutional practice.

e. Senior Psychology Associates will submit a copy of their “Leave Activity Reporting Form” (P8) to the MHCS (covering MHCS or Chief of Mental Health Services if the MHCS position is vacant).

f. SORT Program - The senior Psychology Associate will obtain approval for leave from the SOPD and will submit the “Leave Activity Reporting Form” to the SOPD for signature and processing.

g. Community Corrections

i. The Regional Mental Health Clinicians will obtain approval for leave from the MHCS and will submit the “Leave Activity Reporting Form” to the MHCS for signature and processing.

ii. District Mental Health Clinicians will obtain approval for leave from the Regional Mental Health Clinician and will submit the “Leave Activity Reporting Form” to the Regional Mental Health Clinician for signature and processing.

2. Unscheduled Leave Requests for Senior Psychology Associates

a. In cases of unscheduled personal or medical leave, the senior Psychology Associate will notify the MHCS or SOPD (covering MHCS or Chief of Mental Health Services if position is vacant) and Facility Unit Head or Assistant Facility Unit Head or designee at their institution via email and/or voice mail as soon as possible.

b. A “Leave Activity Reporting Form” (P8) will be submitted to the Facility Unit Head or Assistant Facility Unit Head or designee for ‘supervisor’s signature’ and forwarded to the appropriate Human Resources Officer upon return to work.

c. Senior Psychology Associates will submit a copy of their “Leave Activity Reporting Form” (P8) to the MHCS (covering MHCS or Chief of Mental Health Services if the MHCS position is vacant).

d. SORT Program - The senior Psychology Associate will submit the “Leave Activity Reporting Form” to the SOPD for signature and processing.

e. Community Corrections

i. The Regional Mental Health Clinicians will notify the MHCS and the Facility Unit Head or
Chief P&P Officer if they were scheduled to be at the facility or office for the day.

ii. The District Mental Health Clinicians will notify the Regional Mental Health Clinician and the Superintendent or Chief P&P Officer if they were scheduled to be at the facility or office for the day.

3. Leave Requests for Line Psychology Associates
   a. Requests for scheduled or unscheduled leave for line Psychology Associates will be approved by the appropriate senior Psychology Associate at the facility. If time does not permit the submission of a leave request by a line Psychology Associate to the senior Psychology Associate, the Psychology Associate will contact the senior staff by telephone.
   b. Once signed by the senior mental health staff, all Leave Activity Reporting Forms (P8’s) will be forwarded to the appropriate Human Resources Officer.

F. Orientation and Training
   1. Orientation and training for Mental Health Services staff must be completed and documented in accordance with Operating Procedure 102.6, Staff Orientation, Operating Procedure 350.2, Training and Development, and the Training Matrix developed by the Academy for Staff Development.
   2. The Mental Health Clinical Supervisor, Senior Psychology Associate, or Chief of Mental Health Services is responsible for the orientation of newly hired Psychology Associates. This orientation will be documented on the Qualified Mental Health Professional–Psychology Associate–Orientation Checklist 730_F19.
      
      All requests from the senior Psychology Associate for off-site training will be reviewed and approved by the MHCS, SOPD, or the covering MHCS prior to seeking additional required approvals.
   3. Requests for off-site training from line Psychology Associates will be reviewed and approved by the senior Psychology Associate prior to seeking additional required approvals.

G. Audits
   The mental health staff at the facility, under the direction of the SOPD or MHCS (or covering MHCS or Chief of Mental Health Services if the MHCS position is vacant), are responsible for compliance with audit standards and providing required documentation. The development and implementation of action plans, etc., are also the mental health staff’s responsibility, under the direction of the SOPD or MHCS (or covering MHCS or Chief of Mental Health Services if the MHCS position is vacant).

H. Outside Employment
   Requests for outside employment by mental health staff will be handled per Operating Procedure 135.3, Standards of Ethics and Conflict of Interest, and approved by the MHCS, SOPD, or the Chief of Mental Health Services if the request is made by the MHCS or SOPD or when the MHCS or SOPD position is vacant.

V. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
   A. Levels of Care - Additional information on the levels of care available and on accessing mental health services may be found in Operating Procedure 730.3, Mental Health Services: Levels of Service.
      
      1. Acute Care mental health services are provided to male and female offenders at designated DOC institutions.
      
      2. Residential Treatment Mental Health Units are available to male and female offenders at designated institutions.
         a. These units provide services in a structured treatment setting to offenders who have mental disorders but who do not require an acute care setting.
         b. The units offer a sheltered environment, apart from the general population.
         c. Services for offenders with co-occurring disorders (i.e., offenders who have a mental disorder and...
Operating Procedure: 730.1
November 1, 2018

a. Crisis intervention
b. Screening
c. Assessment
d. Monitoring
e. Emergency services to units with no Psychology Associates on site
f. Individual services
g. Group services
h. Psychiatric services
i. Referral to other institutions as needed for mental health services
j. Release planning and coordination of aftercare services

6. Psychology Associates also provide the following services
a. Consultation
b. Training
c. Program development, implementation, and evaluation
d. Follow-up when notified of offender non-compliance with psychotropic medications

7. Crisis intervention and assessment services are provided as needed to offenders assigned to field units and Community Corrections facilities. (4-ACRS-4C-15)

B. Access to Mental Health Services

1. The Senior Psychology Associate or Regional Mental Health Clinician has primary responsibility for ensuring that the unit has appropriate mental health services coverage due to leave, schedule adjustments, or illness. Secondarily, the MHCS is responsible for allocating resources to provide temporary mental health services staff coverage for a facility.

2. Information on access to mental health services should be communicated to offenders at the time of reception and each time an offender is moved to a new facility.

3. Offenders have access to mental health services and to a system for processing complaints regarding mental health care. Offenders may process complaints through the Offender Grievance Procedure at institutions or appeal to the Facility Unit Head at Community Corrections facilities.

4. Interaction between Psychology Associates and offenders should be conducted in a setting that protects
the offenders' privacy to the greatest extent possible within security requirements.  (5-6C-4403; 4-4403)

5. Incarcerated offenders, including those on work release and in Community Corrections programs, may not choose their own Psychology Associate.

C. Mental Health Records and Documentation of Services Provided

1. Section IV of the offender's Health Record is designated for documentation related to mental health services.
   a. Each facility with a Psychology Associate is responsible for implementing a means to ensure that such information is provided and filed in a timely manner.
   b. It is the responsibility of the Psychology Associate(s) to document the provision of services or other contacts with offenders.

2. Section IV may include the following: (See Mental Health Records Organization, Attachment 2)
   a. Psychological Screenings
   b. Psychological Evaluations, including raw test data
   c. Psychiatric Evaluations
   d. 'Limits of Confidentiality' form
   e. Progress Notes
   f. Transfer/Treatment and Discharge Summaries
   g. Informed Consent for Medication

3. Other, separate mental health records or working files will not be maintained unless approved by the Chief of Mental Health Services.

4. Progress Notes are the primary means by which clinicians document their interactions and interventions with the offender and serve as an objective record, of the offender's status and responses to interventions. The SOAP format is the standard means by which individual contacts with offenders are documented.

   S - Subjective Data
   What the offender states about the problem; what the offender says they think or feel; usually placed in quotation marks.

   O - Objective Data
   What the Psychology Associate observes or determines upon assessment of the offender, or factual data. This is documentation of factual information; what the offender does or was doing without interpretations or opinions. A description of any interventions or staff actions is included here.

   A - Assessment
   The Psychology Associate’s assessment or interpretation of the offender's current mental status and response to stressors or interventions based upon the subjective and objective data. Specific diagnostic and clinical management issues are addressed here.

   P - Plan
   What the Psychology Associate plans to do about the offender's problem or condition; outlining mental health interventions now and in the future.

   a. Progress Notes should be written in clear, concise, professional language, utilizing the Mental Health Services Progress Notes 730_F30 or the Health Services Complaint and Treatment Form 720_F17 with approval of the senior Psychology Associate, with the exception of the SORT Program.

   b. The use of abbreviations and symbols should be minimized unless they are easily understood by all who might use the record, including the offender, the Court, non-treatment staff, et al.

   c. Progress Notes are considered part of a legal record and should be treated as such. Entries must be
typed or written legibly in black ink, dated, and signed each time with the writer's name, highest
degree, and title.

d. Errors should not be erased or covered with e.g., correction fluid. A single line should be drawn
through the error and the writer should write the word "error" above the line and initial and date
the error.

e. Individual Progress Notes should be completed:
   i. By the end of the work day of an offender being seen by a Psychology Associate or member of
      the Treatment Team
   ii. More often as required by an operating procedure, or when the offender's clinical condition and
       situation warrant additional documentation
   iii. Immediately following a contact that warrants such documentation (i.e., suicide attempt and/or
        threat, attempt and/or threat to escape, etc.)

f. Group Progress Notes - A Treatment Group Participation Note 730_F20 will be utilized to
document an offender's involvement and progress in therapeutic groups. Program specific Group
Notes may be substituted with the approval of the Chief of Mental Health Services.

g. A group note should be completed for each offender as soon as possible after the conclusion of the
   group and prior to the end of the workday.

h. A note should be completed whether or not the individual attends the group.

i. If other participants are referenced in an offender's group note, only initials should be used.

j. Observations may include comments regarding the offender's mental status, affect, behavior,
   interactions with others, etc.

5. Refer to Operating Procedure 701.3, Health Records, and Operating Procedure 730.6, Mental Health
   Services: Confidentiality, for information related to release of mental health services information from
offender records.

D. Additional information related to mental health services may be found in the following operating
procedures:
   1. Operating Procedure 730.2, Mental Health Services: Screening, Assessment, and Classification
   2. Operating Procedure 730.3, Mental Health Services: Levels of Care
   3. Operating Procedure 730.5, Mental Health Services: Behavior Management
   4. Operating Procedure 730.6, Mental Health Services: Confidentiality
   5. Operating Procedure 730.7, Psychiatric Services

VI. REFERENCES
Operating Procedure 102.6, Staff Orientation
Operating Procedure 135.3, Standards of Ethics and Conflict of Interest
Operating Procedure 350.2, Training and Development
Operating Procedure 701.3, Health Records
Operating Procedure 720.2, Medical Screening, Classification, and Levels of Care
Operating Procedure 730.2, Mental Health Services: Screening, Assessment, and Classification
Operating Procedure 730.3, Mental Health Services: Levels of Service
Operating Procedure 730.5, Mental Health Services: Behavior Management
Operating Procedure 730.6, Mental Health Services: Confidentiality
Operating Procedure 730.7, Psychiatric Services
Operating Procedure 735.2, Sex Offender Treatment Services (Institutions)
Training Matrix
VII. FORM CITATIONS

National Practitioner Data Bank Query 701_F7
Health Services Complaint and Treatment Form 720_F17
Psychology Associate Orientation Checklist 730_F19
Treatment Group Participation Note 730_F20
Mental Health Services Progress Notes 730_F30

VIII. REVIEW DATE

The office of primary responsibility shall review this operating procedure annually and re-write it no later than three years after the effective date.

The office of primary responsibility reviewed this operating procedure in November 2019 and no changes are needed at this time.

Signature Copy on File 10/4/18
Joseph W. Walters, Deputy Director for Administration Date