



Virginia Department of Corrections

Offender Management and Programs

Operating Procedure 841.6

Recreation Programs

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Incarcerated Offender

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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. 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 Corrections Facility - A residential facility operated by the Department of Corrections to provide Community Corrections Alternative Programs

Individual Activities - Activities such as weight lifting, jogging, etc., which can be performed on an individual basis

Institution - A prison facility operated by the Department of Corrections; includes major institutions, field units, and work centers

Leisure Activities - Activities that require minimal levels of physical exertion; examples include, but are not limited to table games, musical activities, leisure reading, walking, etc.

Recreation Program Aide - Offenders selected and trained to provide recreational services support under the supervision of recreation staff

PURPOSE

This operating procedure establishes guidelines and protocols for recreation and leisure programs for offenders at facilities operated by the Department of Corrections (DOC).

PROCEDURE

- I. Recreation in Community Corrections Facilities
 - A. Each Community Corrections facility will make recreation and leisure time activities available to meet the needs of offenders within the facility program mission. (4-ACRS-5A-21 [C]; 2-CO-5C-01)
 - B. Adequate and appropriate areas are provided for recreation and leisure time activities within the resources available to the facility. (4-ACRS-5A-23 [C])
 - C. The offender orientation program should identify the general recreation resources available including indoor and outdoor recreation areas, sports equipment, and leisure games and equipment. Provisions for access to recreation areas and equipment should be identified.
- II. Institutions Recreation and Leisure Activities
 - A. Each institution will provide for a comprehensive recreational program that include both leisure time activities and indoor/outdoor exercise activities appropriate to the institution's mission and offender population. (5-ACI-7C-01; 4-ACRS-5A-21 [I]; 2-CO-5C-01)
 - B. At institutions with more than 100 offenders, the recreational program is supervised by a qualified full-time person, and at institutions with less than 100 offenders, a staff member will be designated on a part-time basis as a recreation officer. (5-ACI-7C-02)
 1. The education and experience of the Recreation Program Supervisor are taken into consideration by the appointing authority in determining appointment to the position.
 2. These include education, correctional experience, training in recreation and/or leisure activities and the ability to supervise the program.
 - C. Adequate facilities and equipment for the planned recreation or exercise activities are available in proportion to the offender population and are maintained in good condition. (5-ACI-7C-04; 4-ACRS-5A-23 [I])
 - D. Both outdoor and covered/enclosed exercise areas for general population offenders are provided in sufficient number to ensure that each offender is offered at least one hour of access daily. (5-ACI-2E-01; 4-ACRS-5A-23 [I])
 1. Use of outdoor areas is preferred, but covered/enclosed areas must be available for use in inclement weather.
 2. Covered/enclosed areas can be designed for multiple uses as long as the design and furnishings do not interfere with scheduled exercise activities.
 3. The minimum size for exercise areas are as follows:
 - a. Outdoor exercise areas in institutions where 100 or more offenders utilize one recreation area will provide 15 square feet per offender for the maximum number of offenders expected to use the space at one time, but not less than 1,500 square feet of unencumbered space.
 - b. Outdoor exercise areas in institutions where less than 100 offenders have unlimited access to an individual recreation area will provide 15 square feet per offender for the maximum number of offenders expected to use the space at one time, but not less than 750 square feet of unencumbered space.
 - c. Covered/enclosed exercise areas in institutions where 100 or more offenders utilize one recreation area will provide 15 square feet per offender for the minimum ceiling height of 18 feet, but not less than 1,000 square feet of unencumbered space.

d. Covered/enclosed exercise areas in institutions where less than 100 offenders utilize one recreation area will have 15 square feet per offender for the maximum number of offenders expected to use the space at one time, with a minimum ceiling height of 18 feet, but not less than 500 square feet of unencumbered space.

E. Where appropriate to the institution mission, offenders should be:

1. Selected and trained to serve as recreation program aides. (5-ACI-7C-03)
2. Allowed to initiate recreational and leisure activities that are carried out under staff supervision. (5-ACI-7C-06)
3. Provided the opportunity for interaction with the community through various activities. (5-ACI-7C-05; 4-ACRS-5A-16 [I])
4. Provided both organized, team and individual competitions and tournaments, and individual activities

F. Staff will not excuse offenders from educational, program, or work assignments for participation in recreation activities.

G. The offender orientation program should identify the general recreation resources that are available at the institution including indoor and outdoor recreation areas, sports equipment, leisure games and equipment, and art, craft, and hobby activities, if applicable.

1. Provisions for access to recreation areas and equipment should be identified.
2. Rotating or varying recreation schedules should be posted for offender access.

H. Offenders may participate in outdoor recreation without any heat index restrictions.

I. An offender may be suspended from using recreational or leisure activity areas, equipment, or supplies for misuse or abuse of recreational or leisure activity privileges.

1. Suspensions must be for definite, finite periods and may apply to specific activities while allowing participation in other recreational or leisure activities.
2. If a suspension exceeds 60 days, staff should make provisions for the offender to receive some form of alternate outdoor exercise.
3. Where appropriate, offender disciplinary actions and subsequent penalties should be documented in accordance with Operating Procedure 861.1, *Offender Discipline, Institutions*.

J. The Facility Unit Head or Administrative Duty Officer may temporarily suspend or restrict recreation and leisure time activities for institutional emergencies and the need to search for contraband.

III. Hobby, Craft, and Art Activities

A. This operating procedure does not apply to hobby, craft and art projects constructed as part of an institution approved community service activity and not for offender possession.

B. Offenders are allowed to construct hobby, craft, and art projects using only items available for purchase from the institution commissary as authorized on Attachment 1, *Approved Arts and Crafts Items*.

1. The construction of hobby, craft, and art projects using non-consumable personal property items listed on the applicable *Institutional Property Matrix* is prohibited; see Operating Procedure 802.1, *Offender Property*.
2. Offender requests for additional items to be sold in the commissary must be submitted to the Facility Unit Head or designee who will forward the request to the *Commissary Review Committee* for review and a decision on approval or disapproval for all institutions. Approved items will be added to the *Approved Arts and Crafts Items* list.

C. The Facility Unit Head will establish size and quantity limitations for items authorized on the *Approved Arts and Crafts Items*, unless otherwise designated on the applicable *Institutional Property Matrix*.

1. Arts and crafts supplies, materials, and projects must be stored in the offender's secured locker(s) or other containers(s) assigned to that offender.
 2. Property that exceeds the capacity of the designated container(s) must be disposed of in accordance with Operating Procedure 802.1, *Offender Property*.
- D. Hobby, craft, and art projects must comply with DOC safety and security requirements, e.g., the concealment of contraband, modification of state property and buildings, altering personal appearance, etc. are prohibited, and the guidelines established in the *Specific Criteria for Publication Disapproval* must be followed, Operating Procedure 803.2, *Incoming Publications*.
- E. At the discretion of the Facility Unit Head, Security Level W through Security Level 3 institutions may allow offenders to participate in organized hobby, craft, and art programs using materials purchased from the institution commissary. Information regarding the program's operation should be made available to the offender population and should include information on:
1. Eligibility requirements for participation and the approval process
 2. Approved areas for storage of supplies, materials, and projects
 3. Approved areas and times for offenders to work on projects
 4. Types of projects that offenders may construct
 5. Requirements for disposition of completed projects
- F. Completed projects, not otherwise approved for offender possession, must be removed from the institution and properly disposed of in accordance with the voluntary disposition and disposal of personal property requirements of Operating Procedure 802.1, *Offender Property*.
1. Staff may confiscate projects not approved for offender possession or removed from the institution within 30 days of completion as contraband.
 2. Offenders must not give, sell, or trade projects to institution staff, volunteers, or other offenders or the family members of institution staff and volunteers.
 3. Staff will seize as contraband, process for confiscation, and properly disposed of any project that violates the *Specific Criteria for Publication Disapproval*.
- G. Items purchased with state funds may not be used in hobby and craft projects, even after the item has served its useful purpose. Alteration of state-issued or state-owned property is prohibited.
- H. If an offender transfers to an institution that does not allow the same hobby, craft, and art items as the previous institution, these items must be disposed of in accordance with Operating Procedure 802.1, *Offender Property*. If the offender later transfers to an institution that allows the same hobby and craft items, the offender must purchase new items, if desired, items cannot be returned to the institution after disposal.

REFERENCES

Operating Procedure 802.1, *Offender Property*
Operating Procedure 803.2, *Incoming Publications*
Operating Procedure 861.1, *Offender Discipline, Institutions*

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1, *Approved Arts and Crafts Items*

FORM CITATIONS

None