

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedure**

**Policy Name:** Local Management of Volunteer Services

**Policy Number:** 109.01

**Effective Date:** 6/30/2020

**Page Number:** 1 of 11

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Inmate Services Division  
(Chaplaincy)

**Access Listing:**  
Level I: All Access

- I. Introduction and Summary:** This policy establishes the operation of citizen involvement and volunteer programs, including responsibility for screening and training.
- II. Authority:**
- A. Ga. Comp. R. & Regs.: 125-1-2-.06, 125-3-4-.08, 125-4-1-06, 125-4-2-.08, and 125-4-7-.01;
  - B. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): 104.18 Obtaining and Using Records for Criminal Justice Employment, 104.54 GDC Identification Cards, 205.17 State Employees-Free Speech and Public Access Rights, 208.06 Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)-Sexually Abusive Behavior Prevention and Intervention Program, and 227.05 Visitation of Offenders; and
  - C. ACA Standards: 2-CO-1G-01, 2-CO-1G-02, 2-CO-1G-03, 2-CO-1G-04, 2-CO-1G-05, 2-CO-1G-06, 2-CO-1G-07, 2-CO-1G-08, 2-CO-1G-09, 2-CO-1G-10, 4-4120, 5-ACI-1C-14 (ref. 4-4061), 5-ACI-1G-01(ref. 4-4115), 5-ACI-1G-02 (ref. 4-4116), 5-ACI-1G-03 (ref. 4-4117), 5-ACI-1G-04 (ref. 4-4118), 5-ACI-1G-05 (ref. 4-4119), 5-ACI-1G-06 (ref. 4-4121), 5-ACI-1G-07 (ref. 4-4122), 5-ACI-6B-10 (ref.4-4391), 4-ALDF-7B-03, 4-ALDF-7F-04, 4-ALDF-7F-05, 4-ALDF-7F-06, 4-ALDF-7F-07, 4-ACRS-7B-03, 4-ACRS-7D-04, 4-ACRS-7B-05, 4-ACRS-7F-08, 4-ACRS-7F-09, and 4-ACRS-7F-10.
- III. Definitions:**
- A. **Community Resources Coordinator** - An employee or a Certified Volunteer who has been appointed in writing by the Warden/Superintendent to direct the facility citizen involvement and volunteer program.
  - B. **Certified Volunteer** - A volunteer who has been approved and trained by the Statewide Volunteer Services Coordinator to assist in the delivery of programs and services.

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C. **Visiting Volunteer** - A volunteer who is authorized by a warden or superintendent to enter the facility for one day to provide assistance or services, is not anticipated to provide the assistance or services on a recurring basis, and who has executed Attachment 5, Visiting Volunteer Waiver of Liability.

**IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:**

A. Statewide Volunteer Services Coordinator. The Statewide Volunteer Services Coordinator, under the direction of the Director of Chaplaincy Services, is the senior staff member responsible for coordinating the agency volunteer service program. Their responsibilities are statewide and shall include the following:

1. Annual review and evaluation of volunteer services and programs;
2. Identification and registration of all volunteers;
3. Appointment of Certified Volunteers;
4. Removal of Certified Volunteers from service in coordination with Wardens/Superintendents and/or the Director of Chaplaincy Services;
5. Coordination of periodic, but not less than quarterly, certification training sessions for Certified Volunteers at Department headquarters and regionally as required;
6. Completion of initial processing and background checks for all prospective Certified Volunteers who have been approved at the facility level and who have submitted an application using the Georgia Department of Corrections Web Based Volunteer Application which consists of the Personal Data Sheet (Attachment 2), Volunteer Services GCIC/NCIC Consent Form (Attachment 4), GDC OPS Background Screening Packet (Attachment 9), and Volunteer Application Processing Checklist (Attachment 7). Copies of these forms will be maintained by the host facility in the volunteer's individual file;

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7. Scheduling Certified Volunteer training for volunteers who have successfully completed the volunteer background check and approvals, and issuing Certified Volunteer identification once the training requirement is met; and
  8. Obtaining signed Volunteer Service Agreement (Attachment 1), a completed copies of Attachments 2, 3, and Attachment 1 of SOP 208.06 Sexual Abuse/Sexual Harassment PREA Education Acknowledgment Form from each volunteer during initial Certified Volunteer Training and before Certified Volunteer identification is issued. Copies of these forms will be forwarded to the host facility and maintained as part of the volunteer's personnel file.
- B. The Facility Chaplain. The Facility Chaplain has authority, responsibility, and accountability for citizen involvement and volunteer services. This shall be accomplished by doing the following:
1. Conducting program needs assessments to determine the types of supplemental services that are appropriate for his/her facility. These assessments will provide the basis for planning and program evaluation;
  2. Overseeing the recruitment, screening, selection, orientation, training, and supervision of all volunteers, ensuring that:
    - a. Prospective volunteers are recruited from all cultural and socio-economic segments of the community, as may be reasonable and appropriate;
    - b. All persons who perform professional services do so only when certified or licensed;
    - c. All required criminal history, personal reference checks, and PREA update has been satisfactorily completed prior to beginning service; and
    - d. The duties proposed for volunteers are appropriate to offender and institutional needs.

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3. Maintaining a system for official registration and identification of volunteers and a file for each Certified Volunteer. This should include at a minimum a personnel folder for each Certified Volunteer and a current facility volunteer listing;
4. Securing citizen involvement to assist with the programs, services, and activities provided to the offender population. Chaplains must ensure equal access to all individuals (offenders or citizen volunteers), including those who have disabilities, for participation in all deliverables provided by Chaplaincy Services. Chaplains will provide reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access. Reasonable accommodations may be satisfied through various means, which include auxiliary aids such as; qualified interpreters, large print documents, braille documents, pocket amplifiers, communication access real-time translation (CART) services, audio description, magnifying sheets, audiobooks, etc. If Chaplains need to secure any auxiliary aids or assess reasonable accommodation requests, they should contact the GDC ADA Coordinator's Office for assistance (See SOP 103.63 for contact information and additional guidance);
5. Ensuring appropriate recognition of persons whose activities make a positive contribution to the delivery of programs and services;
6. Reviewing and approving each community group which provides services or programs for the facility;
7. Posting a current dated schedule of community resource services in locations readily accessible to offenders. Programs may be listed as part of the overall program schedule for offender activities; and
8. Providing for the registration and supervision of Visiting Volunteers in facilities (prisons and centers) by ensuring that all Visiting Volunteers:
  - a. Sign in and out as a visitor using Attachment 1, Visitor's Log Regarding Public Access Rights, following procedures established in SOP 205.17;

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- b. Are escorted by an employee or a Certified Volunteer while in the institution or center;
  - c. Sign Attachment 5, Visiting Volunteer Waiver of Liability, which shall be either attached to the agency Incident Report if an incident occurs or discarded after one week if no incident occurred; and
  - d. Comply with all requirements applicable to offenders and institution visitors including the requirements of SOP 227.05, Visitation of Offenders.
- C. Facility Responsibilities. Each facility shall ensure that each of the following tasks are completed, either by the Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment or other warden appointee:
1. Orientation and training of volunteers which is specific to their facility. At all state and county correctional facilities, Certified Volunteers will receive a local orientation and any additional hours as deemed necessary by the Warden, Superintendent, Facility Chaplain, or State Volunteer Services Coordinator;
  2. Supervision of each volunteer's activity;
  3. Recognition of volunteers for service performed;
  4. Termination of a volunteer's services and removal of the volunteer from the respective facility list of volunteers, if determined appropriate by the Warden/Superintendent. Such actions should be communicated to the State Coordinator of Volunteer Services, immediately informing him/her of the termination and reason for termination. A Certified Volunteer may be removed from service for any of the following reasons:
    - a. The program services are no longer needed, based on facility or offender needs;

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- b. The facility does not have adequate resources to support the program due to demand on security or supervisory staff, relocation of program space or changes in program schedules;
  - c. The Certified Volunteer resigns for personal reasons; or
  - d. The Warden or Superintendent determines that in the best interest of the facility that the volunteer should not serve in that capacity.
5. Inclusion of volunteers in policy development and revision which relate to their activity;
6. Permitting Visiting Volunteer individuals or groups to visit the institution to assist in rehabilitation programs and services. Such persons must register and be under supervision at all times. Visiting Volunteers will not be provided GDC identification cards;
7. Perform or initiate annual renewal of certification for Certified Volunteers to include a criminal history background check, following procedures outlined in SOP 104.18 Obtaining and Using Records for Criminal Justice Employment. Facilities not authorized to complete their own annual renewals will initiate the renewal process by completing Attachment 8, Volunteer ID Renewal Confirmation, and having the Certified Volunteer complete Attachment 4 GCIC/NCIC Consent Form and Attachment 1 of SOP 208.06 Sexual Abuse/Sexual Harassment PREA Education Acknowledgment Form. These forms will be maintained in the Certified Volunteer's local file and a copy will be sent to the Volunteer Services Coordinator for completion of the renewal process. Facilities which are authorized to complete their own annual renewals will accomplish those renewals in a timely manner and will maintain the above forms in the Certified Volunteer's local file. If the GCIC/NCIC check is conducted at the facility level, any new derogatory information found on a renewal GCIC/NCIC will be immediately reported to the State Volunteer Services Coordinator's Office;

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8. In connection with the annual renewal process, Certified Volunteers will be asked to complete Attachment 6 to this SOP, Volunteer Services Evaluation and to drop/deposit these completed survey documents in the respective facility suggestion box. Facility leadership is requested to share completed volunteer survey information with the State Volunteer Services Coordinator at GDC Central Office;
9. A Certified Volunteer who allows their ID to expire past 90 days will be required to be re-certified through the four-hour training;
10. Ensure that Certified Volunteers meet the following eligibility requirements:
  - a. Certified Volunteers MUST:
    - i. Deliver a service that meets a need that has been identified by Department staff;
    - ii. Make a commitment to provide on-going service;
    - iii. Provide references to be checked for positive evidence of ethical, professional, and personal integrity;
    - iv. Complete an appropriate, documented, orientation/training program prior to assignment;
    - v. Agree in writing to abide by all agency policies and particularly those relating to confidentiality of information and security practices, using Attachment 1, Volunteer Service Agreement;
    - vi. Agree to background checks;
    - vii. Provide assurances regarding performance of duty, confidentiality, personal/business dealings with offenders and liability; and

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- viii. Work under the direction of a staff supervisor with a written “Description of duties.”
- b. Volunteers SHALL NOT:
  - i. Be under 18 years of age;
  - ii. Be a family member or a close friend of an offender in the same facility in which the volunteer’s work takes place;
  - iii. Be on an offender’s visitor list;
  - iv. Be an ex-offender, unless approved following the procedures described below in paragraph 9;
  - v. Perform professional services unless certified or licensed to do so;
  - vi. Represent in an official or unofficial way, or be a member of, an organization identified as a “hate group” by the Office of Professional Standards or otherwise espousing an ideology of discrimination or violence toward others based upon an individual’s race, gender, religion, national origin, or other identity; or
  - vii. Be a registered sex offender or listed on a sex offender registry.
- 11. Ex-offenders can be valuable as staff resources, as well as powerful role models in offender rehabilitation programs. Security considerations require careful and consistent consideration of any ex-offenders in correctional service. To that end, an ex-offender may become a Certified Volunteer provided that:
  - a. There is no evidence of criminal behavior since release from prison;

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- i. Maximum time served and released offenders have been out for three (3) years with no probation, parole, or pending criminal charges;
  - ii. Probationers and Parolees are completely off parole and/or probation and have been out for three (3) years; and
  - iii. In all felony cases and misdemeanor criminal offenses, offenders must be totally “off paper” for three (3) years to be considered for GDC volunteer service. Infrequent traffic related moving violation offenses are subject to review but do not absolutely disqualify volunteer service under this 3 year “off paper” policy.
- b. Reference checks provide evidence of maturity, sobriety, and a record of responsible citizenship;
  - c. All normal procedures for certification have been satisfactorily completed as described above; and
  - d. The application for certification has been cleared by the State Volunteer Services Coordinator for final approval by the Commissioner or his designee.
12. Department employees may serve as Certified Volunteers provided that:
- a. The volunteer work in no way conflicts with employee responsibilities; including that GDC employees shall not volunteer at the facility where they are employed;
  - b. They conduct their services as volunteers, in accordance with this SOP, and not as employees;
  - c. They are placed on the facility volunteer list and assigned a staff supervisor after following all standard procedures for volunteer certification;

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- d. The department employee must also notify their GDC supervisor in writing of their GDC volunteer participation to include the name of the GDC facility where they will serve as a volunteer; and
- e. The department employee will use their employee identification card and will NOT be issued a Certified Volunteer identification card.

D. Community Resources Coordinator. The Warden or Superintendent shall issue a memorandum designating an employee or a Certified Volunteer to serve as the facility's Community Resources Coordinator. It is suggested that the Deputy Warden for Care and Treatment, the Institutional Programs Manager or the Chaplain be appointed. If a Certified Volunteer is appointed to serve in this capacity, he/she must be supervised by the Deputy Warden for Care & Treatment, the Superintendent or designee. Each Community Resource Coordinator shall:

1. Supervise the volunteers and Certified Volunteers who work in his/her program area;
2. Maintain a record of community resource activities and forward a monthly report to the Facility Chaplain; and
3. Assist the Statewide Volunteer Coordinator by providing appropriate training to their program area.

**V. Attachments:**

- Attachment 1: Volunteer Service Agreement
- Attachment 2: Personal Data Sheet
- Attachment 3: Sample Request for Identification Card
- Attachment 4: Volunteer Services GCIC/NCIC Consent Form
- Attachment 5: Visiting Volunteer Waiver of Liability
- Attachment 6: Annual Volunteer Services Evaluation
- Attachment 7: Volunteer Application Processing Checklist
- Attachment 8: Volunteer ID Renewal Certification Validation Form

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Attachment 9: GDC OPS Background Screening Packet

**VI. Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:**

Upon completion, Attachments 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 9 shall become part of the volunteer's file to be maintained for two (2) years past termination of the volunteer's services. Upon completion, Attachment 5 will be maintained at the participating facility for a period of six months after the visitation of the volunteer, then destroyed. Upon completion of the process, Attachment 6 shall be forwarded to the office of Volunteer Services Coordinator for review with no retention required.