



SCDC POLICY

NUMBER: PS-10.17

TITLE: CHARACTER - BASED UNITS AND PROGRAMS

ISSUE DATE: October 14, 2022

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: DIVISION OF INMATE SERVICES

***POLICY* MANUAL:** PROGRAMS, *REENTRY*, AND *REHABILITATIVE* SERVICES

SUPERSEDES: *PS-10.17 (May 21, 2018); (Replaces PS-10.15)*

RELEVANT SCDC FORMS/SUPPLIES: Automated Request To Staff Member (ARTSM); 10-26; 10-27; 10-28; Attachment A;

ACA/CAC STANDARDS: 4-4277, 4-4428

STATE/FEDERAL STATUTES: South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 1-32-10, et seq., as amended.

PURPOSE: To provide guidelines for the development and monitoring of Character-Based Unit (CBU) Programs.

POLICY STATEMENT: Within the limitations imposed on the South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC) as a result of its safety and security needs, SCDC will be committed to providing programming that will assist inmates to become more successful members of society and help to reduce the recidivism rates of these inmates. Character Based Programs are designed to assist with inmate institutional adjustment, rehabilitation, successful re-entry into the community upon release, the reduction of recidivism, and improved institutional security. Character Based Programs provide the structure, resources, and environment to increase opportunities for personal growth and collective change. (4-4428)

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[Attachment A](#): Universal Standard Operating Procedures, a detailed addendum, may supersede portions of this policy. The Universal SOP provides enforceable, auditable criteria that is mandatory for all CBUs.

Character Program Mission Statement:

SCDC Character Programs provide opportunities to participants for personal development, *and* education in a residential environment supported by behavioral contracts and peer-to-peer accountability methods that improve institutional safety.

Character Program Vision Statement:

SCDC's commitment to Character Programming will improve educational skills, pro-social attitudes, and behaviors during incarceration and following release. Character Based Units will cultivate powerful, positive transformations in the lives of participants.

SPECIFIC PROCEDURES:

1. GOALS:

(See [Attachment A](#): Universal Standard Operating Procedures)

1.1. CBU Program Goals:

- Create a cleaner, quieter, safer living environment.
- Reduce disciplinary infractions for the institution.
- Emphasize educational growth.
- Provide a more stable, pro-social living environment.

1.2. CBU Program Objectives:

- Provide courses helping with self-actualization.
- Provide core courses that support the Social Contract, and Peer-to-Peer accountability.
- Provide structured courses in a Peer-to-Peer environment.
- Promote personal development.
- Promote Peer-to-Peer accountability.

Community/House Rules:

Each institution must establish and maintain a written set of Community/House Rules that are institution specific.

All Character Based Units will be known as CBU's. Each institution may adopt a site-specific name for their housing unit. However, for purposes of uniformity, only one formal name, CBU, will be recognized.

2. ESTABLISHING/EXPANDING A NEW CHARACTER-BASED UNIT (CBU): Institutions interested in establishing a new CBU will follow the outline below in the initial establishment phase:

- A written request will be submitted to the Division of Programs, *Reentry, & Rehabilitative* Services for review and approval, prior to establishing or expanding any CBU. (See [Attachment A](#): Universal Standard Operating Procedures)

3. LEADERSHIP AND OVERSIGHT:

3.1 Under direct oversight of the *Facility Warden*, institutional leadership and institutional program management includes the following:

- *SCDC Staff Sponsor: A member of the institution's staff, chosen by the Warden, will serve as the staff sponsor of the CBU. This can be one or more staff members and/or co-sponsors.*

- **CBU Administrative Committee:** The primary council of employees that works closely with the inmate leadership to advance the strong rehabilitative objectives of the Program. Members of the CBU Administrative Committee are typically selected by the SCDC *Staff Sponsor*, with the Warden's concurrence, based on their expertise in various areas as well as a demonstrated interest in the rehabilitative/restorative goals of the Program. The recommended composition of the Committee is: SCDC *Staff Sponsor* (Chairman); Security (Major, or Administrative Captain); Chaplain; Behavioral Health Counselor; Classification Case Manager or Caseworker. The Committee should meet *monthly, or more frequently if needed*, to review unit activities, programmatic changes, problematic issues, recommendations for removal, Inmate Program Liaison performance, etc.
- **Inmate Program Liaisons (General Provisions):** A group of inmates carefully selected for their demonstrated leadership abilities, integrity, and excellent reputation. They act as mentors for both inmates in the CBU and inmates in other living units to assist them with adjustment; act as mediators involving inmate/inmate and inmate/staff issues; review and recommend classes and class schedules; conduct quarterly peer reviews on all CBU residents and present them to the Committee; act as liaisons between the Committee and CBU residents; actively participate with the Committee in the conceptualization, planning and implementation of various programs and projects within the CBU; and provide outreach to inmates from other housing units. As set forth in SCDC Policy OP-22.15, "Inmate Governance," section 5, it is important to understand that these responsibilities in no way imply that the Inmate Program Liaisons have control or authority over any staff and/or inmates. All contact to recruit programs and/or supplies will be the sole responsibility of the CBU Administrative Committee. The Inmate Program Liaison will not make direct contact with any entity to provide/solicit assistance or services.
- **Inmate Program Liaisons:** Inmates who are members of the institution's Inmate Representative Committee (IRC) are not automatically promoted to levels of responsibility within the CBU. IRC and CBU function autonomously of one another, and the two should not be confused. IRC members must meet the CBU eligibility criteria as any other applicant/participant.

(See [Attachment A](#): Universal Standard Operating Procedures)

4. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS:

4.1 See Attachment A, "Universal Standard Operating Procedures," for application procedures.

4.2 All applications for admission to a CBU are voluntary, and made without coercion.

4.3 **Equal Opportunity:** No inmate is excluded from the application/selection process based on race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or medical/mental health reasons (4-4277).

5. FORMAL ORIENTATION, INDUCTION, AND SIGNING OF THE SOCIAL CONTRACT:

(See [Attachment A](#), Universal Standard Operating Procedures)

5.1 Once a resident receives a housing assignment in the CBU, a series of events take place that solidify his/her place in the community.

5.1.1 The new resident is greeted by members of the community who have accepted the specific responsibility of making newcomers feel welcome. If the new resident has already been assigned to an inmate mentor, the inmate mentor explains the CBU's opportunities and expectations to the new resident.

5.1.2 As soon as possible, the new resident undergoes orientation. This orientation should include a meeting conducted by several Inmate Liaisons and should be led by at least one staff member.

5.1.3 Social Contract/Community Rules (refer to [Attachment A](#), Universal Standard Operating Procedures).

5.2 Town Hall Meetings:

5.2.1 Town Hall Meetings will be held to give the participants the opportunity to discuss the business of the community in an open, formal setting. The meeting should be chaired by the **Staff Sponsor**/designee and should take place **at least monthly**. **NOTE:** Minutes will be taken by a designated Inmate Liaison, and will be reviewed by the Administrative Committee.

5.2.2 During the Town Hall Meeting, the new resident is formally inducted into the community by reading and publicly signing the Social Contract (SCDC Form 10-27). The new participant should be given the opportunity to address the community, telling them in the participant's own words both who the participant is today, and how the participant hopes the CBU will help him/her to become a better person. This not only gives the community the opportunity to meet the new participants, it gives the new participants the opportunity to explain his/her current situation and plan for personal development.

6. VOLUNTEERS:

Institutions are encouraged to work with and utilize a wide variety of volunteers to enhance the CBU programs. The Administrative Committee and the Inmate Liaison will work together to design and implement innovative programming utilizing volunteers. Volunteers are subject to the requirements of SCDC Policy PS-10.04, "Volunteer Services Programs." The Administrative Committee is responsible for all communication in regards to the development of volunteer based programs/services. Inmates will not serve on, or participate in, committees with volunteers to seek external funds to support institutional programs. Inmates will not make final decisions on programs and supplies that support programs in an institution.

Volunteers writing grants, and/or soliciting funding to support institutional programs will seek advance written approval for such grant applications, or solicitations, from the Division of Programs, **Reentry, & Rehabilitative Services**.

6.1 Volunteer Mentors: Character based programs may offer mentoring/instruction by registered volunteers and inmate mentors to each inmate. The size of the program will vary according to availability of appropriate mentors. In programs where one-on-one volunteer mentoring is used, mentoring topics will be geared towards personal growth in ethical behavior and interpersonal relationships. Reasonable efforts will be made to match inmates with volunteer mentors who are best suited to address the individual inmate's needs. Volunteer Mentors, where used, will be assigned as available by the Administrative Volunteer Coordinator Committee with input from the Inmate Program Liaisons.

7. COURSES AND ACTIVITIES:

(See [Attachment A](#); Universal Standard Operating Procedures.)

7.1 Character Based Units place a heavy emphasis on involvement in courses and activities. Residents who do not have a verified High School diploma or GED are required to be actively enrolled in and participating in formal Education classes. Those who are unable to read or for whom English is a second language are required to be involved in classes to improve their skills.

7.2 A wide range of volunteer-led and inmate-led courses and groups are available to inmate residents. Skill building, self disclosure, self help, instructional, spiritual, and educational groups may be chosen. Inmate work schedules should be taken into account when developing program schedules.

7.3 The CBU Administrative Committee, with recommendation from the Inmate Program Liaison, may require that a resident take specific programs or groups based on documented behavioral issues, educational needs, committing offense(s), etc. Minimally, residents must participate in at least three (3) courses each quarter.

7.4 No courses will be offered in Character-Based Units that:

- Promote conversion of inmates toward a particular faith or religious preference or criticize the faith of others.
- Promote negative attitudes against inmates based on race, creed, religious preference or sexual orientation.

7.5 Each course will provide an outline of activities offered to inmates and an example of class/activity/mentoring schedule for approval by Programs, **Reentry**, & **Rehabilitative** Services once a year. These classes/activities/mentoring sessions will promote the goals of this policy.

7.6 Members of the CBU are not authorized to contact any outside entity for the purpose of establishing courses/programming for the unit. All such requests **must be** approved by the Division of Programs, **Reentry**, & **Rehabilitative** Services at Headquarters.

8. ENGAGEMENTS/CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

(See [Attachment A](#), Universal Standard Operating Procedures)

8.2 It is highly encouraged to use the Engagement process to also recognize those members of the community who have displayed exemplary behavior or who have provided services that benefit the community and/or the institution as a whole.

9. REMOVAL FROM THE CBU:

9.1 When it is recognized that a participant is exhibiting behavior that violates the Social Contract, and mentoring and peer support fails to positively correct the behavior, the Inmate Program Liaison will present a recommendation to the CBU Administrative Committee as to the potential removal of the offending participant. After review, the Committee will make a determination. If the Committee decides to remove the participant, he/she will be informed and given terms for possible future reinstatement. If a participant recognizes that he/she is not living up to the social contract, he/she is expected to remove himself/herself from the program. An ex-participant will be required to wait a minimum of one (1) year to reapply for admission.

Zero Tolerance infractions and disciplinary offenses are detailed in [Attachment A](#), the Universal Standard Operating Procedures.

10. PARTICIPANT EMPLOYMENT:

(See [Attachment A Section 10](#); Universal Standard Operating Procedures.)

11. DEFINITIONS: None

SIGNATURE ON FILE

s/Bryan P. Stirling, Director

Date of Signature

Attachment A

SCDC Character Based Units

Universal Standard Operating Procedures

∅ It's not our mistakes that define who we are, it's how we recover from those mistakes.

Learning takes place in the mind, and is demonstrated by one's behavior through the formation of associations between specific actions and events. Behavior is a feature of one's individuality that can be transformed. **C**hange begins when one desires change and learns how to affect change. Peer-to-Peer programming promotes, supports, and reinforces positive, dynamic change.

Character ethics depend on deep personal change that comes from within. Good character involves personal integrity, fairness, humility, courage, loyalty, ambition, consideration for others, sincerity, and determination. Character, good or bad, identifies one's underlying, fundamental values.

In every organization there are those who organize, encourage, hold others accountable, facilitate, and to some extent, lead. Peer-to-Peer programming takes full advantage of all of these attributes. Levels of inmate guidance must support the SCDC Mission Statement "providing rehabilitation and self-improvement opportunities for inmates" in Character Programs, dorms, and across the yards.

Peer-to-Peer programming, in conjunction with peer accountability, encourages the abandonment of negative character traits and the development of a refined set of core values and positive personal traits. Character

Programming is where this process of reform, personal development, and personal growth takes place. Character Programs create synergy, and define CBUs (Character Based Units) as living in an improved community, rather than survival of the fittest.

When the true meaning of Peer-to-Peer/Character Programming is embraced, CBUs will be self-regulating environments. The level of success is based on the strength of peer accountability.

Character Program Mission Statement:

SCDC Character Programs provide opportunities to participants for personal development, education, and change in a residential environment supported by behavioral contracts and peer-to-peer accountability methods that improve institutional safety, reduce criminality, and recidivism.

Character Program Vision Statement:

SCDC's commitment to Character Programming will improve educational skills, prosocial attitudes, and behaviors during incarceration and following release. Character Based Units will cultivate powerful, positive transformations in the lives of participants.

Character Based Units (CBU):

1. GOALS

CBU Program Goals:

- Create a cleaner, quieter, safer living environment.
- Reduce disciplinary infractions for the institution.
- Emphasize educational growth.
- Provide a more stable, prosocial living environment.

CBU Program Objectives:

- Provide courses helping with self-actualization.
- Provide core courses that support the Social Contract, and Peer-to-Peer accountability.
- Provide structured courses, in a Peer-to-Peer environment.
- Promote personal development.
- Promote Peer-to-Peer accountability.

Community/House Rules:

Each institution must establish and maintain a written set of Community/House rules that are institution specific. Community/House Rules will cover local matters not addressed in the SOP. ***Community/House Rules cannot supersede the Universal SOP.*** Community/House Rules will display signatory approval ***of the Warden.***

2. ESTABLISHING/EXPANDING A CHARACTER-BASED UNIT (CBU)

START-UP

A written request to establish or expand a CBU must be submitted to the

Facility Warden for approval. The request must contain specific information on the proposed CBU. The request must include:

- Name of the Institution.
- Name of Warden.
- Proposed name of the CBU (if any).
- CBU start date.
- Name of the **Staff Sponsor**.
- CBU population (proposed number of participants in the CBU).
- CBU Programs (name and number of proposed programs within the CBU)
- Anticipated outcomes for the institution and the participants.

Once approved, the Warden will:

- ***Forward his/her approval to Central Classification for consideration of the designated bed assignments. Due to space limitations Central Classification may not be able to designate beds reserved for use only by program participants.***
- Hold a general staff meeting to explain/introduce the CBU concept and state the staff buy-in process.
- Select the **Staff Sponsor** if the position does not exist, (preferably the Associate Warden of Programs or equivalent) with approval from the Division of Programs, **Reentry**, & **Rehabilitative** Services.
- Establish the Institutional CBU Administrative Committee (see guidelines below.)
- Determine the optimum location for the CBU.
- Identify the Inmate Liaisons using the criteria below, excluding the one (1) year in the program.
- Announce the program to the general population and begin to take applications.
 - **NOTE:** Screening of application is outlined in Section 4.
- Begin to solicit volunteers and other community support for the unit.
- Begin to identify programs for the unit.
- When applications are processed and successful candidates are identified, hold an organizational meeting to serve as the initial program orientation and contract signing.
- Work with Classification to establish the procedure to begin moving participants to the CBU.

Expansion

Expansion must be well planned. Like starting a new CBU, expansion can be time consuming, requiring staff "buy in" and willing inmate participants. Expansion of a CBU requires prior written approval by the **Warden**.

To expand an existing CBU, seasoned and respected Inmate Program Liaisons are required to move into the new CBU Expansion Unit. The veteran Liaisons help build a foundation from which the new CBU will rise. Veteran Liaisons recruit, engage, and mentor participants ensuring standards are maintained. These Liaisons will also identify, and work closely with those who are the new Program Liaisons in the CBU Expansion Unit. The veteran Liaisons will become Advisors to the "new" Liaisons, providing encouragement, feedback, and guidance to all participants.

3. LEADERSHIP AND OVERSIGHT:

Inmate Peer Programming Job Descriptions:

Inmates, under no circumstances will be placed in, or elevated to, a position of control or authority over another inmate (OP 22.15.5).

Leadership in the CBU does not entitle participants to control, bully, dictate to, or manipulate other participants. These positions provide stability and guidance to the CBU and its participants.

Inmate Program Liaison:

Approved by the *Staff Sponsor*, and/or CBU Administrative Committee, the Inmate Program Liaisons must exhibit proven leadership qualities, organization abilities, integrity, and demonstrated positive character traits. Some of the Liaisons' responsibilities are:

Inmate Program Liaison Duties:

- Encourage and guide fellow participants in adapting to a new way of thinking, while living in a pro-social environment that focuses on the community;
- Serve others through the sacrifice of time, energy, and resources, building and sustaining the peer-to-peer relationships that are fundamental to character programs;
- Ensure community adherence to the Social Contract, general community rules, rules of conduct, and the Zero Tolerance Policy, through positive role modeling and reinforcement;
- Mediate conflict resolution among community participants promoting a harmonious living environment;
- Mentor all program participants;
- Serve as a conduit through which community concerns and issues flow, and are properly elevated to the Warden, Associate Warden, *Staff Sponsor*, Unit Manager, or CBU staff;
- Assist staff in the planning and implementation of new courses/programs;
- Assist staff in the selection and review of inmates making application to join the CBU; staff has final authority in the selection process.
- Create course schedules that are conducive to participation, and review new course proposals;
- Promote, recruit, and provide outreach to prospective participants who are not Character Program participants;
- Carry out or delegate the procedures on which the courses depend;
- Conduct Town Hall meetings;

- Help conduct quarterly reviews, as needed, on all program participants and present those reviews to the CBU **Staff Sponsor** and the Administrative Committee;

Inmate Program Liaisons Criteria:

- Must be gainfully employed.
- Must be free of Level 1 or Level 2 convictions, and receive no more than two (2) convictions or administrative resolutions as a result of Level 3, Level 4, or Level 5 charges during a 24-month period.
- Meet all of the requirements of a Program participant.
- Be a program participant for a minimum of two (2) years unless the institution is establishing a new Program, or the individual was an Inmate Program Liaison in his/her previous institution and transfers while still in good standing. (The dispatching institution will provide proof of "good standing" status to the receiving institution upon inmate transfer).
- Successful service as a Lead Mentor for a minimum of six (6) consecutive months unless the institution is establishing a new program or the individual was an Inmate Program Liaison (PS-10.17.34), or mentor in his previous institution and transferred while still in good standing. (The dispatching institution will provide proof of "good standing" status to the receiving institution upon inmate transfer).
- Must specifically demonstrate a history of exceeding what is required in terms of meaningful interaction with others, conceptualization and development of program ideas, outreach, etc. (PS-10.17.34).
- Must have a good reputation and integrity as determined by staff and peers (PS-10.17.34).
- Must have at least a high school diploma/GED.
- Must have successfully completed leadership training.
- Meet all requirements of a Lead Mentor.
- Must be unanimously recommended and approved by current Program Liaison, Advisors/Ambassadors, and the CBU Administrative Committee.
- Actively participate in courses in the CBU.
- Be of good reputation, maintaining high personal standards, as determined by peers and staff.
 - Initially appointed by SCDC staff, the position of Inmate Program Liaison should be self-perpetuating. As one Program Liaison vacates the position, the remaining Unit Liaisons will recommend the replacement to staff based on Unit Liaison criteria.
 - Institutions should set the optimum of Inmate Program Liaisons for each wing based on population needs. The number of Inmate Program Liaisons will not be less than two (2) and will not exceed more than **six** (6) per wing.
 - All newly appointed Program Liaisons will serve in a probationary status for a period six (6) months. At the end of six (6) months, all Program Liaisons will meet to review the Probationary Liaison's performance and successful participation in the role. The Probationary Liaison will either be assessed as having successfully completed the probationary period, or the Probationary Liaison will be recommended for removal from Liaison status. All Program Liaisons must vote on the removal of any inmate from Liaison status.

Inmate Lead Mentor:

The position is comprised of a select few program participants who have served extensively as Mentors. The Inmate Lead Mentor must demonstrate a significant capacity for leadership, while embracing the commitment to the principals of life in a Character dorm, and the Social Contract. Inmate Lead Mentors will support and guide a group of mentees, performing the same duties as Inmate Peer Mentors. Additionally, they are "advisors" the Inmate Peer Mentors turn to when seeking resolution to conflicts and problems, before escalating the issues to Inmate Programs Liaisons, or staff. As "leaders," a replacement Inmate Program Liaison is often selected from the group of Inmate **Lead** Mentors. Inmate Lead Mentors have the same duties/responsibilities as Inmate Peer Mentors and must meet the following criteria:

Inmate Lead Mentor Criteria:

- Must meet all criteria of a Peer Mentor.
- Must have at least one (1) year successful service as a Peer Mentor.
- Demonstrate above average skills in conflict resolution/mediation.
- Impressively demonstrate their abilities as a Mentor.
- Agree to complete all tasks and work in close accord with Program Liaisons.
- Proven record of above average decision-making abilities and relationship building skills.
- Unanimously approved by Program Liaisons and the CBU Administrative Committee.

The number of Lead Mentors should be adequate to assist in serving the population of the wing.

Inmate Peer Mentors:

The power of peers dramatically influences positive learning and personal development, or conversely inhibits it. SCDC Character Program Mentors will provide positive support, and will exhibit, and reinforce the pro-social behaviors necessary for program and participant success.

Inmate Peer Mentors are program participants displaying significant personal development who act as counselors and guides with their peers. Inmate Peer Mentors, assigned a specific number of mentees, will assist those mentees in creating personal development plans, and then regularly evaluate the mentees' progress. The Inmate Peer Mentor will be available to assist the mentee by inspiring, guiding, and intervening, when necessary. Inmate Peer Mentors must find creative ways to counsel, console, and compel the mentees to take the personal initiative to invest in themselves, their living community, the institution's population, and in the lives of their personal families.

Inmate Peer Mentors should create realistic expectations for success in their mentees. Mentors will provide the mentees with constructive feedback that helps the mentee understand where improvement is needed, without belittling or embarrassing the mentee.

Inmate Peer Mentor Criteria:

- Must be gainfully employed;
- Must be free of Level 1 or Level 2 convictions, and receive no more than two (2) convictions or administrative resolutions as a result of Level 3, Level 4, or Level 5 charges during a 24 month period.
- Demonstrate a pattern of above average decision-making abilities and relationship building skills;
- Meet all of the requirements of a Program participant;

- Be a successful and active Program participant for at least one (1) year;
- Must have at least a high school diploma/GED;
- Must have successfully completed leadership training;
- Must have successfully completed all Core curriculum;
- Must actively participate in courses in the CBU; and
- Must be recommended by another Mentor, or Lead Mentor.

Inmate Peer Mentor Duties include:

- Take initiative helping and motivating others, while personally investing in the success of the community;
- Exhibit positive behaviors that help escalate community morale;
- Communicate clearly and with respect;
- Help hold the community to the commitment of the Social Contract;
- Maintain a positive attitude during difficult times;
- Build rapport with mentees that is authentic, sympathetic, and inspiring;
- Lead by example, as a reflection of personal character, while not losing focus on his/her own personal development;
- Intervene in internal conflict seeking an informal and peaceful resolution to minor disputes;
- Agree to provide guidance, counseling, peer support, etc. to new participants or participants in need of such encouragement; and
- Conduct quarterly reviews on all program participants and present those reviews to the Program Liaisons.

The number of Inmate Peer Mentors should be sufficient so that no Mentor has more than eight (8) Mentees.

Inmate Program Clerks:

Clerks are hand selected from among the CBU residents. These participants demonstrate a capacity for organization skills, computer literacy, critical thinking, objectivity, as well as time management and administrative skills. They must also exhibit honesty and reliability because of the amount of information they must maintain. The Clerks will reliably carry out requests for information and the recording of documentation. This position will work closely with the Inmate Program Liaisons, while understanding this position is directly accountable to and overseen by the **Staff Sponsor**.

Inmate Program Clerk criteria:

- Must be gainfully employed;
- Must be free of Level 1 or Level 2 convictions, and receive no more than two (2) convictions or administrative resolutions as a result of Level 3, Level 4, or Level 5 charges during a 24-month period.
- Meet all of the requirements of a Program participant;

- Be an active program participant for a minimum of two (2) years (unless the institution is establishing a new Program);
- Must have proven skills in Microsoft Office;
- Must have a good reputation and integrity as determined by staff and peers;
- Must have at least a high school diploma/GED;
- Must have good organizational skills;
- Must actively participate in courses in the CBU.

Inmate Program Clerk duties include but are not limited to:

- Meet, at least twice weekly, with the Inmate Program Liaison in order to maintain a consistent line of communication;
- Create and maintain CBU data, all documents, memos, and guidelines that regulate every aspect of the program, submitting them to the **Staff Sponsor** for approval;
- Generate all memos, reports, and informational postings;
- Generate and maintain all CBU support paperwork;
- Maintain all current unit records;
- Record and maintain all current and former residents' information;
- Track attendance for all CBU courses and outreach activities;
- Generate, organize, record, and maintain all Quarterly Review materials;
- Track educational status of all participants (work with PUSD);
- Maintain course schedules; and
- Format and maintain course syllabi and handout materials.

The number of Inmate Program Clerks is established by each institution, included in the House Rules, with signatory approval by the Institution's **Staff Sponsor** and the Warden.

CBU Liaison Advisors/Ambassadors:

Selected by **the** Wardens, Program Liaisons **s** act as program advisors and ambassadors to all CBUs. They will engage Character Program residents, from a Peer-to-Peer perspective, to help staff identify the assets and needs of Character Communities. The purpose of the Liaison Advisor is to assist staff in enhancing the quality of each CBU from an internal perspective. Liaison Advisors, with security in mind, will be accountable to the Warden, yet they will work closely with Programs, **Reentry**, & **Rehabilitative** Services. Advisors are not positions of authority, holding influence over others.

CBU Liaison Advisors criteria:

- Must be gainfully employed;
- Must be free of Level 1 or Level 2 convictions, and receive no more than two (2) convictions or administrative resolutions as a result of Level 3, Level 4, or Level 5 charges during a 36-month period.

- Meet all of the requirements of a Program participant;
- Be a program participant for a minimum of four (4) consecutive years (unless the institution is establishing a new Program or the individual was an Inmate Program Liaison in his/her previous institution and transfers while still in good standing. The dispatching institution will provide proof of "good standing" status to the receiving institution upon inmate transfer); and
- Be an Inmate Program Liaison for a minimum of three (3) consecutive years:
 - The initial group of Liaison Advisors/Ambassadors will consist of the group of participants who worked with Programs, **Reentry**, & **Rehabilitative** Services, facilitating the standardization of the program.
 - CBU Liaison Advisors/Ambassadors will serve at the discretion of the Division of Programs, **Reentry**, & **Rehabilitative** Services.

4. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS:

CBU Resident Selection Process

Application: Inmates will initiate the application process by sending an Automated Request to Staff Member (ARTSM) to the designated employee of the appropriate institution, requesting admission to the Character Based Program. The designated employee will screen the prospective inmate's record to determine if the prospective inmate meets the minimum qualifications, which are:

- One (1) year with no major disciplinary conviction;
- Six (6) months with no administrative resolutions;
- At least six (6) months in general population, or transfer from a Character Based Unit in another institution as a participant in good standing. The dispatching institution will provide proof of "good standing" status to the receiving institution upon inmate transfer;
- High school diploma/GED, or enrollment in education;
- Evidence of meaningful program involvement (participation in personal development programs); and
- Consistent employment history within the inmate's physical/mental limitations.

The inmate who meets the qualifications will then complete SCDC Form 10-28, "Correctional Institution Character-Based Unit Application." A pre-orientation meeting is scheduled with the applicant and Inmate Program Liaisons. Program Liaisons provide information about the CBU while allowing the applicant an opportunity to interact with participants from the unit. Program Liaisons, in a basic briefing, answer any questions the applicant may have and provide insight regarding expectations of life in the CBU.

Selection: The CBU Administrative Committee will meet to discuss applicants, review all available information, both formal and informal. **Staff Sponsors** will be consulted during the applicant review process for knowledge of, or familiarity with, applicants. A consensus will be reached by the Administrative Committee as to whether an applicant is a good candidate in terms of what the applicant brings to the program, or may gain from the program. The Administrative Committee will make the final decision. Once selected for participation, the applicant will be moved into the first available bed based on classification guidelines and perceived compatibility.

Equal Opportunity: No inmate will be excluded from the application/selection process based on race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or medical/mental health reasons (4-4277).

Educational Requirements: Education attainment is the foundation for programming in all CBU's. Any applicant who lacks a high school diploma or GED must be enrolled in, and actively participating in, formal educational classes through PUSD, or be on a waiting list for PUSD classes. Waiting list status must be verified in writing by PUSD. (Active participation is defined as consistent, measurable improvement in test scores.)

For anyone requiring tutoring or assistance, additional courses and mentors will help foster skills improvement in preparation for the GED courses. Education is not an option; it is a requirement for application/participation in the CBU.

Education/Tutoring:

Each CBU shall provide educational tutoring, approved by PUSD, to any participant without a High School diploma or GED. Inmate tutors can do much to aid in the education process.

Tutoring and education programs held in the CBU are not Character Programs and will not be counted as such. Active enrollment in the education attainment is a prerequisite for all Character Programs and will not be counted as Character course work. Active enrollment is defined as regular and consistent attendance, and improvement, in Peer-to-Peer tutoring, or course work offered by PUSD leading to graduation or success in the GED program. (Some special exceptions for this enrollment requirement will be considered on a case-by-case basis as recommended by PUSD. Written exceptions will be noted, and maintained, by the institution's **Staff Sponsor**.)

5. FORMAL ORIENTATION, INDUCTION, AND SIGNING OF THE SOCIAL CONTRACT:

Induction and Signing the Social Contract (SCDC Form 10-27):

Reference SCDC PS-10.17.

Orientation and Induction are the warm, friendly welcome to life in the CBU. This is not to be hurried; it is a time to answer any questions a new resident may have.

Social Contract: As a part of SCDC policy, the Social Contract may not be modified (additions or deletions) for any reason. The signing of the Social Contract is very important for the new resident. New residents must participate in the Core Course, "An introduction to the Social Contract," prior to the formal contract signing. This course provides detailed instruction on participant expectations, Community/House Rules, and life in a CBU. The new CBU participants must pass an exam at the end of this course, prior to signing the Social Contract. The intent of this course is to inform comprehensively on the level of accountability that is required of all participants.

Should a new participant decide that the expectations of life in the CBU are too great, the participant may voluntarily sign out of the CBU, immediately returning to General Population, without consequence. Once signed out, the participant must wait for a period of one (1) year from the date of sign out to re-apply to the CBU.

The applicant, upon acceptance and by signing the Social Contract voluntarily agrees to abide by the rules and conditions of life in the CBU.

Contract signing will be a special event conducted at a Town Hall Meeting, with all program residents present.

Town Hall Meeting: Town Hall meetings will be held to give the participants the opportunity to discuss the business of the community in an open, formal setting. The meeting should be chaired by the institution's **Staff Sponsor**/designee and should take place **at least monthly**. **NOTE:** Minutes will be taken by a designated Inmate Liaison, and will be reviewed by the Administrative Committee. During the Town Hall Meeting, the new resident is formally inducted into the community by reading, and publicly signing the Social Contract. The new participant should be given the opportunity to address the community, telling them in the participant's own words both who the participant is today, and how the participant hopes the CBU will help him/her to become a better

person. This not only gives the community the opportunity to meet the new participant, it gives the new participant the opportunity to explain his/her current situation and plan for personal development.

- Participants who have not signed the Social Contract within **one (1)** week of admission to the CBU, or refuse to sign the Social Contract, may not live in the CBU. They will be returned to General Population immediately.

Quarterly Review: Program Liaisons, Lead Mentors, and Mentors will conduct performance reviews on each participant, quarterly. Reviews will note if the participant is employed, engaged in positive programming or activities, and contributing to the success and well-being of the community. Participants who fail to show evidence of such will be placed on a Redemption/Probation Plan. Subsequent review failures will result in Program Liaisons recommending to the Administrative Committee that the participants be removed from the CBU. Quarterly reviews are maintained by the Program Clerk and retained for a period of two (2) years.

6. VOLUNTEERS:

Reference SCDC Policy PS-10.17.6

SCDC recognizes the need, and welcomes volunteer support of the CBU, and active involvement in teaching courses that benefit the participants.

Inmates will not serve on, or participate in, committees with volunteers to seek external funds to support institutional programs. Inmates will not make final decisions on programs and supplies that support programs in an institution.

Volunteers writing grants, and/or soliciting funding to support institutional programs will seek advance written approval for such grant applications, or solicitations, from the Division of Programs, **Reentry**, & **Rehabilitative Services**.

CBU Courses:

Previously referred to as "programs," the essence of activity in the Character Programs are the courses. Courses offer the participant the opportunity to generate and embrace personal change. The courses are not a classical methodology of behavioral modification, but rather a means to personal discovery, revealing untapped potential, and altering one's lifestyle, by choice.

Course progression follows an academic structure, with an accumulation of credits based on successful course completion. Credit accumulation is relative to the course type, or importance.

- Mission Critical (Core/Mandatory) courses have a weight of three (3) credits each;
- Mission Supportive (Personal Development and Life Skills) courses have a weight of two (2) credits each;
- Elective courses have a weight of one (1) credit each.

Progression through Character Programming must have a definable period, ultimately resulting in "graduation." The progression mirrors collegiate models consisting of four (4) tier equivalents, Alpha Tier (freshman), Beta Tier (sophomore), Gamma Tier (junior), and Delta Tier (senior). Completion, "graduation," does not mean the end of the road, but provides a demarcation of an inmate's advancement in the program. It is essential that there be no perception that a participant's progression, i.e. Beta Tier, Delta Tier, etc., has any more authority in the program than does the Alpha Tier participant.

A fifth tier, Omega, will be reserved for those who attain Ambassador status. Those in Omega have completed all course requirements for graduation, are actively and consistently giving back to the CBU community, and seek no self-promotion. Omega participants will have served as Lead Mentors, Program Clerks, or Program Liaisons,

having no less than four (4) consecutive years in the CBU, and have above average scores on the last four (4) quarterly reviews.

Character Programs have Mission Critical courses (Core/Mandatory) that all CBU participants are required to complete. These courses will include Character 101, Violence Prevention, Impact of Crime, 7 Habits on the Inside, and other evidence based, or essential curriculum, the Division of Programs, *Reentry*, & *Rehabilitative Services* identifies and prescribes.

Progression from each Tier requires an accumulation of at least 24 credits per tier. Tier advancement is not determined by the number of months/years in the program, but by the number of earned credits.

Elective courses may not be taken for credit, until all Mission Critical courses have been completed. (Participants, at any point, can take Electives. However, credit will not be given for courses until all Mission Critical courses are completed. Credit will not be retroactive.)

Mission Critical and Mission Supportive courses may be taken at the same time. Mission Supportive and Electives may be taken at the same time. No participant is allowed to take only Elective courses, for credit, at any point.

- End of course exams will be administered for all Mission Critical and Mission Supportive courses. Exams will measure proficiency in the subject matter, as well as provide proof of passing status. Tests will provide a numeric score, not just a "Pass" or "Fail" grade. Grades are recorded as a portion of the participant's transcripts. Exams will be kept on file for a period of one (1) year.
- Some courses will require two (2) quarters of instruction, or more, for completion. Course credit is based on completion of the individual course, regardless of the length of instruction i.e. "7 Habits on the Inside" may be taught across two (2) consecutive quarters. Upon completion, participants will earn three (3) credits. If a participant fails to complete the second half of the course, no credit is given, and the course must be retaken. Participants are not allowed to complete the second half "at a later date.")

NOTE: Course credit will NOT be calculated or recognized based on hours of participation. Course credits are based on successful course completion, not contact hours (hours of class participation).

Course Schedule:

Courses will be offered on a quarterly basis with the following standard schedule:

- **Quarter 1:** January 1st - March 31st
- **Quarter 2:** April 1st - June 30th
- **Quarter 3:** July 1st - September 30th
- **Quarter 4:** October 1st - December 31st

Course Requests

Anyone (staff, inmate, or volunteer) may propose a new course, so long as he/she provides a syllabus *outlining* the course curriculum. The individual must prove they possess the training/experience necessary to certify proficiency and teach the subject matter effectively. Proficiency is obtained via education, formal training, job experience, or professional certification. The requestor must possess all course materials, books, CDs, DVDs, charts, or handouts prior to approval. Additionally, each course will require a final exam. A copy of the final exam must accompany each Course Request, and be approved.

CBUs will not provide/allow courses promoting the conversion of participants from one particular faith, or religious preference to another. Courses will not criticize the faith or belief of others. Courses will not be used to

promote, recruit, or perpetuate gang activities. Additionally, courses will not promote bias or negative attitudes toward others based on race, creed, religious preference, or sexual orientation.

Avoiding all perceptions of discrimination or coercion, faith-based courses are not Mission Critical courses in Character Programming. SCDC recognizes the value of faith-based courses as they relate to personal development. Nonetheless, faith-based courses are Electives; participation is not mandatory. All faith-based courses must fall under the Chaplaincy with each institution's Chaplain responsible for course oversight.

- All Mission Critical and Mission Supportive courses, regardless of content, must relate to the Social Contract, support Peer-to-Peer accountability, teaching and reinforcing positive, ethical, and pro-social behaviors, while also providing structured learning/educational opportunities to all participants.

Participation, Attendance, & Assignments:

Attendance in courses is important to successful participation in the Program. Courses instructors are responsible for maintaining accurate attendance records. Attendance records will be submitted to the Clerks.

Participation: All participants must be actively involved in a minimum of three (3) courses per quarter. Failure to meet this minimum requirement leaves participants subject to review by the **Staff Sponsor** and/or the Administrative Committee and/or removal from the CBU. A "minimum participation waiver/excused participation" must be approved, in writing, by the **Staff Sponsor** and/or the Administrative Committee for a period not to exceed two (2) quarters, and kept on file by the Program Clerk. If the "minimum participation waiver/excused participation" becomes chronic, more than two (2) occurrences in one (1) year, the participant will voluntarily sign out, or be removed by the CBU Administrative Committee, from the CBU.

Once a participant registers for a course, attendance and active involvement are mandatory.

Absences: Participants with excessive, unauthorized, absences from any course will not receive credit for course completion. "Excused" absence is when the participant is out of the institution, or has a valid OTR. (OTR absences are subject to review by the institution's **Staff Sponsor**.) Upon review, participants can be removed from courses, or denied course credit, for an excessive number of OTR's.

Participants are counted as a "late arrival" 10 minutes after the class has begun. Two (2) "late arrivals" will count as one (1) absence. A participant who is more than fifteen (15) minutes late will be counted absent. Failure to meet this requirement will result in removal from the course with no course credit earned.

Leaving classes early will be noted in the attendance record. Two (2) occurrences of leaving class early will count as one (1) absence. Leaving early is defined as leaving class at least **ten (10)** minutes prior to class dismissal. There are no excused early departures.

Assignments: A participant must show interest and willingness to participate in class discussions, completing 80% of all in-class assignments or homework the classes require. This ensures participant's commitment and success. Instructors will engage all participants in discussions, class assignments, and homework.

Exams: All courses should give a final exam; Mission Critical and Mission Supportive course tests are mandatory. Testing ensures that participants are learning from the classes. Tests will be used to measure participant progress.

Instructors must develop an exam, for pre-existing courses, for their class. All exams will be graded on a 100-point-maximum system. All grades will be turned into the Program Clerk within three (3) days of the conclusion of class, along with the class attendance roster. The Program Clerk will keep all graded exams on file for a period of one (1) year. Participant's grades will be reviewed quarterly.

- Failure to meet any of these requirements will result in no course credit for the participant.

Outreach/Recruiting:

Each institution will develop an outreach and recruiting mechanism for their respective yards. It is expected, as part of the due diligence, that CBU participants use their positive experiences, and "different" living conditions, as outreach to those who would greatly benefit from all the CBU offers. Part of life in the CBU is "paying it forward" to help others live a more meaningful life while behind bars.

As part of the outreach process, Character Programs are to offer intra-institutional courses in locations other than the CBU, i.e. the Step Down Unit, Mental Health, or other housing units. Participants, approved by the Warden, or **Staff Sponsor**, will be recognized by Unit Managers and other staff as being authorized to teach in other living units, outside of the CBU.

Recruiting will not take place at, or in, Reception & Evaluation (R&E), or between institutions. Inmates who are at R&E do not meet the CBU entrance criteria, and the environment at R&E is less than ideal for recruiting.

8. ENGAGEMENTS/CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

Engagements and Conflict Resolution: Engagements are a process that encourage constructive criticism and create a record for future reference, if warranted. In the spirit of peer support, the CBU will promote a positive and healthy approach to addressing disagreements and objectionable behavior. In all cases, participants will consider these matters in a calm manner without accusation.

- Informal Engagements are "one-on-one" meetings between peers, but should be documented in the Engagement Log. The Informal Engagement is a conversation seeking to resolve a disagreement or to address behavior not in keeping with life in the CBU. Multiple Informal Engagements with the same individual, three (3) or more, for the same matter will result in a Formal Engagement.
- Formal Engagements, involving Mentors and Program Liaisons, require formal documentation of matters that cannot be resolved through the Informal Engagement. The Engagement Log is used for this matter. During the Formal Engagement, the Mentor, Lead Mentor, and a Program Liaison should be present. Should the participant's behavior continue, the matter, and Formal Engagement, should be referred to the CBU's Administrative Committee for the participant's removal from the CBU.
- Engagements, not always a result of negative behaviors, should be used as positive reinforcement for a job well done. Engagements should also be used to recognize those who exhibit exemplary behaviors and attitudes, and for those who provide support services that benefit the CBU and/or the institution as a whole.
 - Engagement protocol may vary from institution to institution. However, specifics of Engagements will be detailed in each institution's Community/House Rules.

9. REMOVAL FROM THE CBU:

Zero Tolerance:

Zero Tolerance infractions, by their very nature, are egregious and undermine the integrity of the Character Program. Zero Tolerance infractions, derived from SCDC Policy OP-22.14, will result in immediate removal from a CBU. Violation of Zero Tolerance expectations threaten the stability of the CBU, and jeopardize the success of the program as a whole. Incidences/reports of Zero Tolerance transgressions will be elevated to the **Staff Sponsor** and the CBU Administrative Committee for review. Because participants and staff built the CBU on trust, there are no exceptions to violations of the Zero Tolerance rules per SCDC Policy OP-22.14.

CBU Zero Tolerance infractions include:

- Possession/Use of Alcohol;
- Possession/Use of Drugs, or drug related paraphernalia;

- Possession/Use of Tobacco;
- Disrespecting an Officer, Staff member, or Volunteer;
- Physical Abuse/Fighting;
- Abuse of an Animal (for institutions participating in animal rehabilitation or training);
- Public Masturbation/Exhibitionism, Sexual Misconduct, or Sexually Acting Out;
- Possession/Use of a Cell Phone;
- Stealing;
- Tattooing, Receiving Tattoos, or Possession of Tattoo Related Paraphernalia;
- Self-Mutilation; and
- Gang Activity.

Anyone convicted of a Level 1, 2, or 3 SCDC disciplinary offense will be removed from the CBU, and returned to General Population. Multiple informal/administrative resolutions, Level 3, Level 4 or Level 5 convictions, more than three (3) in 24 months, will lead to removal. Infractions documented in the Engagement Log, and supported by staff through a formal disciplinary conviction, or administrative resolution, will result in the person's removal from the CBU.

10. PARTICIPANT EMPLOYMENT:

Gainful Employment:

All program participants will be gainfully employed. Gainful employment (work), for CBU participants, is defined as any SCDC recognized job in which an inmate is employed, Prison Industry, Prison Industry Enhancement program, Education, Maintenance, Food Service, Horticulture, etc., or earning EWC. Work is further defined as a location outside of the inmate's living unit; Program Liaisons, Lead Mentors, and CBU Clerks are exempt from the location requirement. No living unit will have more Dorm Workers than are routinely required to keep the unit clean. Dorm Worker, or any other job position/title, will not be exploited for the sake of the "gainful employment" of program participants.

11. ADMINISTRATIVE REDEMPTION: (Allendale Correctional Institution ONLY)

Provisions in the SOP may require a program participant's removal to General Population. However, Allendale's **Staff Sponsor**, or Administrative Committee, may offer the participant an intensive probation period not to exceed 90 days, upon receipt of unanimous petition from the Program Liaisons. Probation is voluntary.

During such probation, the participant must be moved to a housing unit where he/**she** will be denied benefits inherent of the CBU. The participant will be required to adhere to all standards of the CBU, i.e. House Rules, and the Social Contract, and any additional requirements sanctioned by the **Staff Sponsor** or Administrative Committee.

Upon successful completion of the terms of the probationary period, the participant may be provisionally reinstated as a member of the CBU. A lack of compliance, during the probationary period, will result in the participant's removal from the program. No program participant may receive intensive probation more than once in a 12-month period.

Why be satisfied with mediocrity when excellence lies before each of us? Excellence is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice.