



## SCDC POLICY

**NUMBER: PS-10.23**

**TITLE: SELF-PACED IN-CLASS EDUCATION (SPICE) PROGRAM**

**ISSUE DATE: March 9, 2023**

**RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: TRANSITIONAL SERVICES AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

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

**SUPERSEDES: NONE - NEW POLICY**

**RELEVANT SCDC FORMS/SUPPLIES: E-27**

**ACA/CAC STANDARDS:**

**STATE/FEDERAL STATUTES: SC Code Ann. § 21-13-230; SC Code Ann. § 130-40; SC Code Ann. § 130-23; SC Code Ann. § 12-502.17; SC Code Ann. § 59-43-10**

**THE LANGUAGE USED IN THIS POLICY DOES NOT CREATE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT BETWEEN THE EMPLOYEE AND THE AGENCY. THIS POLICY DOES NOT CREATE ANY CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS OR ENTITLEMENTS. THE AGENCY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE CONTENTS OF THIS POLICY, IN WHOLE OR IN PART. NO PROMISES OR ASSURANCES, WHETHER WRITTEN OR ORAL, WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO OR INCONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS OF THIS PARAGRAPH CREATE ANY CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT.**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for development and monitoring of the Self-Paced In-Class Education (SPICE) Program.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** The South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC), in partnership with the South Carolina Department of Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services (SCDPPPS), the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD), and various state technical colleges, will develop and implement the Self-Paced In-Class Education (SPICE) program. The SPICE program is a voluntary inmate education and employment initiative through faith-based community partnerships. The program consists of an institutional component and a supervision component which will provide for seamless transition from the institution to the community upon release for participating inmates. This program is designed for inmates who are on the verge of completing their sentences or inmates identified by the Parole Board.

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## **SPECIFIC PROCEDURES:**

### **1. SPICE PROGRAM INMATE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:**

- The inmate will be screened to participate in SPICE. If they meet all criteria, they are placed in the program.
- The inmate's current conviction(s) must be non-violent or certain Category 4 drug offenses, and the inmate's max-out date must be within nine (9) to twelve (12) months, or the inmate's parole eligibility date must be within nine (9) to twelve (12) months with a max-out date not to exceed two (2) years. The inmate's parole eligibility date can only be considered by the Parole Board.
- Inmates whose current/previous conviction involves a sex offense (including when the facts of the offense were sexual in nature) are not eligible for the SPICE Program.
- Inmate must have no major disciplinary infractions in SCDC within the past six (6) months.
- Inmate cannot have pending detainers (wanted, holds, notifies) that indicate the potential for release to other jurisdictions or to immigration detainers.
- If deemed as a mandatory condition of the inmate's parole by the Parole Board, the inmate must complete the SCDC Addictions Treatment Unit (ATU) Program before attending the SPICE Program.
- Inmates must have a security and a medical classification suitable for the Tyger River, Perry, Leath, Manning, or Kershaw Correctional Institutions.

### **2. ADMISSION CRITERIA:**

#### **2.1 Admission Criteria for Non-Conditional Parole Inmates:**

- A written SCDC Form 19-11, "Inmate Request to Staff," or an Automated Request to Staff Member through the inmate kiosk system must be sent to the Program Coordinator at a SPICE institution or to the Statewide Program Coordinator.
- The request will be screened to verify that the inmate meets the eligibility criteria.
- If the inmate is determined to be eligible, the screened requests will be forwarded to the appropriate Program Coordinator at Tyger River, Perry, Manning, Kershaw, or Leath Correctional Institutions. Each request will be reviewed, and the approved inmate will be transferred/assigned to the appropriate institutional SPICE program.
- The new participant will sign SCDC Form E-27, "SPICE Participant Contract."

### **3. LEADERSHIP AND OVERSIGHT:**

#### **3.1 Statewide SPICE Coordinator:**

- Under the direction of the Assistant Deputy Director, Programs, Reentry and Rehabilitative Services (PRRS), the Statewide SPICE Coordinator assists in the coordination of the statewide SPICE Program;
- Assists with and monitors the SPICE Program budget;
- Ensures compliance with SCDC policy, SPICE Interagency Partnership Agreement, and state and federal laws;
- Maintains a professional working relationship with both internal and external officials as it pertains to the SPICE program;
- Assists in the delivery of educational, life skills, health and wellness, spiritual, and vocational support services for program inmates as needed;
- Conducts studies of problems and needs of SPICE program, and makes recommendations to appropriate officials as needed;
- Reviews inmate program eligibility status and coordinates transfers/placement as appropriate; and
- Serves as the SCDC liaison with the SPICE interagency partners.

#### **3.2 Institutional SPICE Coordinator:**

- Oversees the day-to-day operations of the institutional SPICE program;
- Functions as liaison and contact person between SCDC and collaborating agencies, technical colleges, community groups, churches, and volunteers;
- Recruits program sponsors and mentors from the community to work with the SPICE inmates;
- Assists in the delivery of educational, life skills, health and wellness, spiritual, and vocational support services for program inmates as needed;
- Conducts studies of problems and needs of SPICE program and makes recommendations to appropriate officials as needed;
- Reviews inmate program eligibility status and coordinates transfers/placement as appropriate; and
- Ensures that progress reports and other information are prepared and submitted as needed or requested.

### **4. SPICE INMATE RECRUITING PROCESS:**

**4.1** The SPICE Institutional Program Coordinators and Statewide Program Coordinator will use the following methods to recruit inmates eligible and suitable for the SPICE program:

- Institutional Program Coordinators and the Statewide Program Coordinator will review staff requests from inmates and respond to e-mail requests regarding possible placement.

- Institutional Program Coordinators and the Statewide Program Coordinator will review waiting lists and monthly RIM list for further possible recruitment.
- Institutional Program Coordinators and the Statewide Program Coordinator will participate in institutional orientation to discuss SPICE and who will be placed in it.
- Institutional Program Coordinators and the Statewide Program Coordinator will place inmates in the program who have been identified as eligible for the SPICE program.

## **5. INSTITUTIONAL COMPONENT OF SPICE PROGRAM:**

**5.1** The SPICE program locations are Tyger River, Perry, Leath, Manning, and Kershaw Correctional Institutions. SCDC will have discretionary authority to relocate the SPICE Program as long as it enhances the overall productivity of our objective.

**5.2** SCDC will facilitate the transfer to the approved SPICE Institution of all conditionally paroled/SCDC-approved inmates who have been directed to participate in the SPICE program.

**5.3** SPICE Program participants will complete a curriculum and up to eighteen (18) weeks of educational, spiritual, life skills, health/recreation, and vocational components. It is recommended that SPICE participants be given priority as to placement in educational and vocational opportunities.

**5.4** SCDC will collaborate with the technical colleges to provide meaningful vocational/educational training for the SPICE program participants. The technical colleges will offer a curriculum and training that is geared towards job preparation, job readiness, and skills specific to the workforce.

**5.5** Prior to release, the appropriate technical college staff (Transition Coordinator, etc.) will assist the SPICE participant's transition to the community and thereafter coordinate with other service agencies (SCVRD, South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW), etc.), and employers to assist in inmate employment placement.

**5.6** As a part of the institutional SPICE program component, the institutional SCDC Program Coordinator will attempt to match each participating inmate with both a sponsor and a mentor. The Program Coordinator, in conjunction with Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services, will establish a screening mechanism for identifying appropriate sponsors and mentors. A sponsor is one who assumes responsibility for the inmate as he/she transitions to the community from prison and should be a family member, close friend, or minister. A mentor is a trusted counselor or guide from within the community. Family members of the inmate may not serve as his/her mentor. Upon SCDC/SCDPPPS approval, persons with criminal histories may be considered to be SPICE mentors subject to the requirements outlined in SCDC Policy PS-10.04, "Volunteer Services Programs."

**5.7** Prior to release, the Institutional SCDC Program Coordinator will provide the SCDPPPS Program Coordinator with the name and telephone number for the SCDC approved sponsor and mentor for each inmate completing the program.

## **6. INMATES CONDITIONALLY PAROLED TO THE SPICE PROGRAM:**

**6.1** Inmates who were conditionally paroled to the SPICE program and successfully complete it will be eligible to be considered for immediate parole as determined by SCDPPPS. All other participants will be placed back into the general population until release.

**6.2** The Statewide SPICE Coordinator at SCDC will review the list of eligible inmates and determine if there are any disqualifying factors regarding their participation in the SPICE program.

**6.3** The SPICE Coordinator at SCDC will promptly advise the SCDPPPS Program Coordinator of any inmates who are disqualified. SCDPPPS will notify SCDC of all inmates who are granted conditional parole to the SPICE program.

**6.4** SPICE Coordinators at SCDC will meet with conditionally paroled inmates and require that each inmate signs SCDC Form E-27, "SPICE Participant Contract," agreeing to comply with SPICE program guidelines.

**6.5** SPICE Coordinators at SCDC, in conjunction with SCDPPPS, will work with the inmate to establish a community sponsor and mentor from the local community prior to internal program completion. Inmates must complete the internal component of the program before they will be granted release to parole supervision. Unsuccessful completions will be administratively reconsidered by the Board.

**6.6** SCDC will notify the SCDPPPS Program Coordinator one month prior to participating inmates completing the internal SPICE program component. This will provide a timeframe for residence verification and preparation of release certificates concurrent with their completion of the program.

**6.7** SCDPPPS will track the completion of all other pre-release conditions during the inmate's participation in SPICE to effect timely release to parole upon completion of the SPICE program. SCDPPPS will be responsible for the preparation and completion of the release certificates.

**6.8** SCDC will provide immediate notification to the SCDPPPS Program Coordinator of participating inmates who fail the institutional program component.

## **7. SOUTH CAROLINA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COMPONENT:**

**7.1** The South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) staff will work in cooperation with the program stakeholders to identify SPICE participants who are eligible for SCVRD services and to determine the appropriate vocational direction and service needs. An individualized plan for employment will be developed with the participants prior to release/parole that is consistent with their interests, abilities, and informed choice.

**7.2** SCVRD will assist the participant in transitioning back into their home community by providing job placement assistance consistent with the vocational objective identified on the individualized plan for employment.

## **8. SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION, PAROLE, AND PARDON SERVICES COMPONENT:**

**8.1** Graduates of the SPICE program internal component will be assigned to a designated SCDPPPS Agent who will be trained on the goals and objectives of the SPICE program.

**8.2** Inmates will participate in a spiritual event (e.g., church) at least twice per week for the first ninety (90) days of supervision. If the inmate chooses a non-spiritual community pathway, he/she will arrange with the sponsor/mentor and Supervising Agent for participation in a suitable community event to satisfy this requirement (e.g., life skills training, anger management, performance of community service).

**8.3** Supervision strategies will be implemented to facilitate successful program participation by each inmate (e.g., assistance with impediments to participation, referrals to service providers as necessary, and graduated response to non-participation).

**8.4** SCDPPPS Agents will communicate with the inmate's assigned sponsor/mentor during the course of supervision. SCDPPPS Program Coordinator will communicate regularly with SCDC Institutional SPICE Coordinators and attend meetings related to the program to monitor inmate progress.

## **9. PROCEDURE FOR PROGRAM REMOVAL:**

**9.1** A SPICE participant who receives a major disciplinary charge will be suspended from the program until the charges are heard. If convicted he/she will be dismissed from the program. If the charges are dismissed, the inmate may be considered for reinstatement. If a participant demonstrates disruptive behaviors and/or violation of rules and regulations, the Institutional SPICE Coordinator has the discretion to dismiss the participant from the program. In either case the following steps should take place after required consultation with the Statewide SPICE Coordinator:

- If dismissed, the Institutional SPICE Program Coordinator will inform security SCDPPPS (when applicable) and other appropriate SCDC staff;
- Participant will be told of his/her removal;
- Documentation will be noted in SPICE file and in the Automated Offender Management System as failing to successfully complete the SPICE program; and
- If the charges are dismissed, the inmate may be considered for reinstatement if his/her sentencing time allows the inmate to complete the program, and if the inmate has not missed too many classes.

## **10. DEFINITIONS: None**

**SIGNATURE ON FILE**

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**s/Bryan P. Stirling, Director**

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**Date of Signature**

**ORIGINAL SIGNED COPY MAINTAINED IN THE OFFICE OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT**