



## SCDC POLICY

Change 1: [Section 9.1](#)

NUMBER: PS-10.25

TITLE: PROGRAMS OFFERED BY SCDC

ISSUE DATE: March 22, 2023

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS, REENTRY, AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

POLICY MANUAL: PROGRAMS, REENTRY, AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

SUPERSEDES: PS 10.19, "Programs/Courses And Hybrid Housing, Development And Approval"

RELEVANT SCDC FORMS/SUPPLIES: Automated Request to Staff Member (ARTSM); 10-26; 10-27; 10-28; [Attachment A](#); Application-online; Guidebook-online; Scoring Criteria-online; Fidelity checklist for every Core and Recommended program; Informal Observation Form; Evaluation Reporting Instrument and Tools (for providers to use to report data back to us); Program Catalog

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

STATE/FEDERAL STATUTES: South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 1-32-10, et seq., as amended. 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Act, Public Law 110–199; Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2018, First Steps Act (Public law 115-391).

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for the selection and administration and quality of programs for offenders within the South Carolina Department of Corrections.

POLICY STATEMENT: The South Carolina Department of Corrections will provide evidence-based practices and principles associated with effective correctional programming, stemming from a risk needs assessment and responsiveness, to address the criminogenic factors that led an offender to criminal choices; prepare the offender for employment; prevent re-offending; engage in pro-social community activities; and meet family responsibilities. In this way, the SCDC will improve sustainable institutional and public safety.

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1. GOALS OF SCDC PROGRAMS:

## **SCDC Programs will:**

- Ensure that programs provided to offenders address criminogenic factors that may have led to criminal choices.
- Provide structured courses of needed duration that are evidence-based and address criminogenic needs identified through risk/needs assessments.
- Create consistency and continuity in program implementation across sites in order to compare results and determine effectiveness.
- Enable the collection and analysis of data to measure individual and site outcomes and to identify best practices and programs.

## **2. OVERVIEW:**

### **2.1 Categories of Programs:**

#### **2.1.1** Core programs shall incorporate the following principles:

- Clearly addresses at least one criminogenic need in one or more of the dynamic domains/needs/areas;
- Refers to or is based on theory or research;
- Relies on facilitators who have appropriate credentials/experience and/or training;
- Relies on a structured and cohesive curriculum that differs according to risk level and that includes clear purposes, evidence-based practices, a facilitator's guide, unit/lesson plan(s), periodic assessment to gauge learning and tailor instruction, participant feedback, and a plan for process and/or outcome evaluation, including data collection and sharing;
- Includes allowable incentives for positive program participation and completion

**2.1.2 Recommended** Evidenced-Based programs that do not meet the rigorous criteria of a core program but address at least one criminogenic need. These programs show promise of effectiveness, and the SCDC PRRS staff will work with providers and applicants to ensure that the program meets an essential need.

**2.1.3 Elective** programs include any activity or constructive interaction which promotes citizenship, develops learning and employability skills, builds life skills and resilience, addresses well-being, and motivates personal engagement with both prison and community-based services. Meaningful activities may include but are not limited to attending a workshop, educational seminar or resource fair, participation in a weekly group that has not been identified as Core or Recommended, inmate-led groups that have attendance requirements, established rules and staff oversight, or any other non-leisure activity that includes constructive interaction. Elective programs are not subject to evidence-based criteria, nor does an elective program need to address a criminogenic need.

### **2.2 Expected Outcomes for approved SCDC programs:**

- Improve behavior and self-management; reduce disciplinary infractions
- Increase educational achievement
- Increase employability chances
- Reduce criminal activity while incarcerated
- Improve communication and relationship skills
- Reduce recidivism

## **3. APPLICABILITY:**

This policy applies to all programs conducted for offenders in the custody of the South Carolina Department of Corrections and its correctional institutions. Such programs include disciplines in academic education, career-technical education, employment preparation, addictions recovery, pro-

social cognitive skills, faith-based principles and supports, mental health, life skills, health, and recreation services. These rehabilitative and life skills programs include all those offered/facilitated by SCDC employees, inmates, contractors, and volunteers.

#### **4. LEADERSHIP AND OVERSIGHT:**

**4.1** The Deputy Director, Assistant Deputy Directors, and Division Directors of SCDC's Programs, Reentry, and Rehabilitative Services (PRRS) are responsible for developing and implementing program policy, for ensuring that the Program Oversight Committee meets and clearly understands its purpose, and for implementing programs to a high-quality standard.

**4.2 Program Oversight Committee (PRRS POC):** In consultation with the PRRS Deputy Director, SCDC's Director shall appoint the agency's Program Oversight Committee members, to include diverse leaders across the agency representing the expertise needed to make the best decisions possible regarding offender programming. The Deputy Director of PRRS shall serve as the chairperson of the SCDC Program Oversight Committee and will be responsible for resolving any issues in the decision-making process the POC Members are unable to resolve themselves. Each member of the committee must complete a form verifying understanding of conflict of interest and sign an assurance that no conflict of interest exists. **4.3 Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)** may be asked to review curriculum should the committee agree that an independent expert is needed. A subject matter expert has an established credibility on a topic earned through broad and deep knowledge of a specific process, content area, function, or technical element/technology. Each SME must complete a form verifying understanding of conflict of interest and sign an assurance that no conflict of interest exists.

#### **5. PROGRAM FACILITATION (STAFFING):**

**5.1** All approved core and recommended programs must be facilitated by trained instructors or an approved community partner or volunteer. Designated administrators shall track the credentials, licensure, and/or training of program facilitators.

**5.2** All facilitators who are not SCDC employees must participate in SCDC training as determined by the SCDC Training Academy in consultation with the Deputy Director of PRRS.

In addition, prior to entering any SCDC Institution, facilitators who are NOT SCDC employees must be deemed and approved volunteer and complete required volunteer training.

**5.3** Inmates may assist with recommended programs. Inmates are able to facilitate/teach elective programs. Inmates may be assigned as program facilitator/aides, but inmates may not be left unsupervised to teach or supervise other offenders unless the program is elective. Staff shall retain authority over the program enrollment, attendance, and oversight to ensure the integrity of the program is maintained. Offenders who register as high risk for reoffending may not teach or facilitate classes with offenders who register as low risk for reoffending.

#### **6. APPROVAL PROCESS:**

##### **6.1 Submission and Approval of Programs**

**6.1.1** The POC shall meet at prescheduled dates regularly to review the submitted program applications.

**6.1.2** Guidelines and instructions for completing the Program Application are available on SCDC's website ([www.scdc.gov](http://www.scdc.gov)).

**6.1.3** The POC and its subcommittees shall use the Program Evaluation Scoring Criteria for assessing all program submissions.

**6.1.4** Incarcerated persons may neither design nor submit an application for program approval.

**6.1.5** All programs submitted to POC for review shall use the SCDC Program Application which will be available through an online application.

**6.1.6** The POC may request and/or schedule program applicants to present on the details of their program in front of the committee and/or schedule an on-site observation session if the program is currently being facilitated in a prison.

**6.1.7 The POC will refer the application to the Deputy Director with one of the following three recommendations:**

- Approve —The approved program shall then be added to the reentry program catalog and all submitted materials, including the corresponding Program Oversight Committee Action, will be available upon request.
- Request Modification/Interview—The submitting entity may modify the proposed program, and/or resubmit by providing additional documentation as requested by the POC.
- Deny —The program may not be provided.

**6.2** All applicants should receive a response to their application within 60 business days.

**6.3** The Deputy Director shall document all programs in the statewide program list, *The SCDC Program Catalog*. This catalog shall be maintained and made available to employees on the SCDC intranet and the public on the SCDC Programs web page.

**6.4** A shared agency file will be established that contains all information for each approved program. In this way, effective programs may be more easily replicated.

**7. IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROVED PROGRAMS:**

**7.1** Once approved, the applicant must begin immediately to implement the approved program. The provider is responsible for ensuring its approved program is implemented in accordance with the program requirements. Failure to do so may result in the removal of a program by SCDC as an approved program. No programs shall be altered in any way without prior POC review and approval.

**7.2 Program Facilitators (anyone running a program) shall ensure:**

- The active status of all approved and the category of approval (core, recommended, and elective) being facilitated at the institution. Program facilitators shall keep PRRS informed regarding the active status of approved programs as needed.
- All approved programs should be offered at least once in a 12-month period. An inactive program may have approval revoked at the discretion of the SCDC POC.
- Data are collected, and fidelity and outcomes (evaluation) data are collected and shared with PRRS.
- Programs target offenders with moderate or high risk for recidivism.
- Low-risk offenders are NOT to be in classes or activities (Core, Recommended, or Elective programs) with moderate- or high-risk offenders.

**3 Positive Incentives for Program Participants**

**3.1** Participants, who successfully complete programs identified by the Deputy Director PRRS/designee, with positive participation, will be permitted to choose from one of two Canteen bags created. Additional positive incentives list may include items such as a graduation ceremony, certificates, educational kit to include composition notebook, dictionary, etc. as approved through the Deputy Director of PRRS.

**3.2** Eligibility criteria for positive incentives may include program completion, workshop completion, intervention completion, improved positive behavior, case plan progress, perfect attendance, improved behaviors, medication compliance, etc. The distribution and earning of positive incentives shall be documented for each offender by the facilitator and Institutional Programs Team (see below).

**7.4 Institutional Programs Team**

**1.1** Each institution shall create an Institutional Programs Team of five members that shall include at a minimum the Program Coordinator(s), a mental health staff member, and a classification team member.

**1.2** This team shall report to the Associate Warden for Programs, and the AWP shall be the chair of the team.

**1.3** This Institutional Programs Team shall maintain a site program inventory, a current schedule, and provide/share information regarding programs with POC and Division Director for Special Programs, Evaluation, and Grants. All programs operating in an institution must be on the SCDC's Approved Program list.

- 1.4** The Institutional Programs Team chair or designee shall notify the PRRS designee when a program has been inactive for 12 consecutive months. All approved programs that have not been facilitated for 12 consecutive months may be removed from the reentry program catalog.
- 1.5** The Institutional Programs Team is responsible for creating and maintaining an institutional program schedule, **with priority given to offenders identified as high risk and moderate risk**. Programming for low-risk offenders should be provided only if staff, space, and programs are available. Offenders at low risk for recidivism may NOT be enrolled in or attend classes with offenders at moderate or high risk for recidivism.
- 1.6** The Institutional Programs Team must submit a quarterly report which provides the number and type of programs offered in the quarter along with details of completion rates, class cancellation records, and the number of offenders participating in each session/class.

## **MONITORING OF PROGRAMS:**

**8.1** The POC and PRRS will assist and consult with providers of all programs to ensure the program is implemented as designed and that data is available for evaluation. Each program must have a checklist of designed program requirements that will be used to create the observation tools and that will be kept in the shared agency file.

**8.2** All approved programs will experience informal and formal observations to ensure fidelity of implementation and proper operation. *Fidelity of implementation* refers to the implementation of a practice or program as intended by the researchers, developers, or designers.

- 2.1** Informal observation can be conducted by any member of the Institutional Programs Team or member of PRRS or SCDC subject matter experts, such as in Mental Health or Addictions Recovery. These informal observations will be unannounced and the observer will provide written feedback to the program facilitator and the POC using an informal observation tool.
- 2.2** Formal observations will be conducted at least once per course cycle by the Institutional Programs Team, the Program Coordinator, the POC, or the Division Director for Special Programs, Evaluation, and Grants. Prior to the scheduled observation, the program facilitator will meet with the designated observer to discuss the session plan and scope of sequence of activities. The observer will provide written feedback to the program facilitator and the POC using a formal observation tool. Any needed refinement will be jointly discussed.

## **3 Evaluation: Each program must provide data regarding two tiers of evaluation: process and outcome(s).**

**3.1** A process evaluation reveals how well the planned program meets the standards set forth in the application. Factors that affect process evaluation include:

- Is the target population the one identified in the application?
- How well did the implementation align with the proposed program design (and fidelity of implementation rubrics?)
- Are the Facilitator Guide and participant workbook adequate to achieve participant outcomes?
- How satisfied were participants with how the program was provided?
- Did staff meet standards for expertise, training, and teaching? How satisfied were staff with the instructional materials?
- Did the plan and implementation match?
- Was the intended schedule, syllabus or work plan realistic?

**3.2** Outcome evaluation reflects how well the program achieved its intended positive results for participants as indicated in the application.

- Attendance data
- Completion data
- Participant demographics
- Mastery of course content
- Reduced disciplinary infractions
- Reduced criminal activity of participants while incarcerated

- Identified outcomes associated with any of the following educational achievement, increased employability skills, and/or improved communication and relationship skills

4 Recidivism will be factored for all program completers and participants.

5 Evaluation results will be shared and posted by the POC. Programs not able to show research/evidence that indicate positive change in an offender's behavior shall work with the POC and PRRS staff to improve the program. If a program fails to achieve intended outcomes after two cycles, it will be removed from SCDC's approved program list. Applicants may revise the program and submit a new application with changes for approval.

## 9. SCDC PROGRAM CATALOG:

2020, the House Legislative Oversight Committee recommended that the SCDC create a list of programs offered to offenders, i.e., an SCDC Program Catalog. This list will be created and updated annually, and the catalog will be posted on the SCDC PRRS web site. Digital copies will be provided to each institution.

*9.1 Proverbs 226 - Forgive me Dear: Proverbs 226 is comprised of four separate components. This particular component is called "Forgive me Dear." Forgive me Dear gives fathers/mothers the opportunity to interact with their child(ren) in a healing environment that allows the parent to apologize to the child(ren) and ask for forgiveness. The event is held in the visiting room or gym and is attended by Proverbs 226 volunteers, children, adult caregivers and inmates. The event includes icebreaker games and a picnic style meal as part of the healing process. During the event, the father/mother will get on their knees and wash the feet of their child(ren) signifying a new beginning.*

*9.1.1 Minor children (under 18 years old) can participate in this event without being approved on the inmate's visitation list. An inmate must meet the criteria to participate in the Proverbs 226 Family Event. The criteria for the Proverbs 226 Family Event are as follows:*

- *Inmates must be disciplinary report free for 6 months to participate in first event*
- *Inmates must remain disciplinary report free to participate in subsequent events*
- *Children must be 18 years old or less*
- *Children must not be the victim of the offender*
- *Children must have approval of caregiver to attend. Approval must be noted on SCDC Form 25-160, "Parent Consent Form." Once SCDC Form 25-160 has been completed, it should be forwarded/sent to the facility Chaplain at least one week prior to the event.*
- *Adult attending must be on visitation list*

*(Changes in RED above amended by Change 1 dated February 20, 2025)*

## 10. SCDC PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT:

Each year, the PRRS will issue an annual report that addresses the evaluation, implementation, and outcomes for approved programs at each institution.

SIGNATURE ON FILE

s/Bryan P. Stirling, Director

Date of Signature

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