

# Standards of Conduct for Contractors, Volunteers and Interns

## Definitions

**Contractor** - Any individual or business under legal agreement with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) to provide goods, services or construction for a certain price.

**Volunteer** - Any individual who has been recruited and has requested volunteer status. The person will be involved in on-going programs and will have direct contact with offenders and offenders under supervision. Paid or unpaid student interns shall be considered as volunteers.

**Intern** - A paid or unpaid individual in an educational or experiential capacity whose institution or department assignment will deliver a work product of material benefit to the individual and DRC.

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to contractors, volunteers and interns entering the facilities of the ODRC or working with offenders under supervision. In view of the nature and purpose of the various facilities of ODRC it is necessary that all persons who enter the facilities or work with offenders under supervision in the community, understand the rules and security requirements of a correctional environment. Persons entering a correctional facility or who provide services to offenders under supervision, have certain obligations under law to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the safe and secure operation of ODRC.

## Responsibilities

The Site Manager (APA Regional Administrative/Designee, appropriate Section Manager, or Warden) of each facility/region has the responsibility to ensure that all contractors, volunteers and interns understand the guidelines necessary for their safe entrance and operation while in a correctional setting. Staff will be assigned by the Site Manager to ensure that all such persons are properly oriented to working in a correctional environment. Contractors, volunteers and interns must realize their responsibility to follow the rules of conduct, ethics, policies, and law relating to their assignments. The Site Manager will approve entrance and training of all contractors, volunteers and interns and has the authority to terminate entrance authorization or working relationships for any such person who has demonstrated an inability to follow the approved guidelines. In addition, violations may result in termination of contracts/services and/ or prosecution.

## Personal Conduct

It is essential to the orderly operation of a correctional department that all persons conduct themselves in a professional manner. The following are several types of behavior that will not

be tolerated within a correctional environment, including APA offices. (This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list).

1. The use, possession, conveyance, or unauthorized distribution of illegal drugs, narcotics, or controlled substances is strictly prohibited at any time. Use of alcoholic beverages or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on duty or conducting volunteer work is prohibited.
2. No person shall, without authorization from the Site Manager, allow themselves to show partiality toward, or become emotionally, physically, or financially involved with offenders, parolees, probationers, transitional controlees or their families, or establish a pattern of social fraternization with same.
  - A. No persons shall offer, send or give to an offender, parolee, probationer, transitional controlee, or a member of his/her family, or to any person known to be associated with him/her, any article, monies, favor, or service which is not authorized in the performance of the person's duties and which conflicts or appears to conflict with the person's assigned duties. Contractors/volunteers or interns shall not accept any gift, personal service, or favor from an offender, parolee, probationer, or transitional controlee, or his/her family, or person known to be associated with him/her which is not authorized in the performance of the person's duties and which conflicts, or appears to conflict, with the person's duties.
  - B. Contractors shall not visit an offender, parolee, probationer, or transitional controlee while such an individual is under the supervision of the Department unless such a visit is given prior authorization during the contract service period by the ODRC Contact Person and Site Manager of the respective facility or the visit is part of the job duties.
  - C. Volunteers/Interns shall not visit an offender at the institution or DPCS office that they are volunteering at except as referenced by DRC policy 71-SOC-01. Volunteers must notify their staff supervisor and complete DRC form 1500, Staff Nexus, if/when they choose to visit an offender at another prison.
  - D. Contractors who become involved in any set of circumstances as described above, have an affirmative responsibility of notifying their contact person at the correctional institution who will be responsible for notifying the site manager.
3. No such person shall, without the express authorization of the Site Manager, show favoritism or give preferential treatment to an individual under supervision of the ODRC to include, but not limited to offering, receiving, or giving of a favor or anything of value.
4. Brutality, physical violence, or intimidation of inmates, and/or their families, such persons will not be permitted, nor will force be used beyond that necessary to protect any person from physical harm.

5. The use of obscene, threatening, or abusive language by contractors/volunteers toward offenders or others will not be tolerated.

## **Work Schedule**

Due to staffing and security concerns and the nature of services being performed by contractors, volunteers and interns, it is essential that contractors, volunteers and interns work out a mutually acceptable work schedule with their ODRC Contact Person or Intern Mentor. Failure to perform services consistent with the mutually agreed upon schedule may be considered failure to fulfill the requirements of the contract, volunteer service or internship program.

## **Responsiveness**

1. Inattentiveness to job responsibilities and procedures in a correctional environment can result in escapes, assaults, and other incidents. Therefore, contractors, volunteers and interns must remain fully alert and attentive during the time they are on state property or in a state operated office.
2. To ensure safety and security to the facility and DPCS operations, such persons must abide the instructions of their ODRC Contact Person or Intern Mentor regarding safety and security related issues.

## **Confidentiality**

1. Some contractors/volunteers may have access to official information, ranging from personal data concerning staff and inmates to information involving security. Because of the various degrees of sensitivity afforded to this information, official information may be disclosed or released only as required in the performance of any contractor's/ volunteer's duties upon specific authorization from someone with the delegated authority to release official information. The Director or his designee in the Operation Support Center and the Site Managers are the only persons authorized to release official information.
2. The above shall not be construed as a reason to deny authorized persons access to official records and files. ODRC has an obligation to supply official information in response to requests from organizations or individuals upon determining that such individuals are properly identified and acting in an official capacity. To ensure the proper use of official information the following rules of conduct are established:
  - A. Contractors/volunteers will verify the identification and authority of individuals requesting access to information prior to giving or discussing records, personnel files, or other official information.
  - B. Authorized persons will not be denied access to official information.
  - C. Contractors/volunteers will not use, or release for use, official information for private purposes unless this information is available to the general public.

- D. Contractors/volunteers will not remove from files or make copies of records or documents except in accordance with established procedures or upon proper authorization.
- E. Contractors/volunteers will not make statements or release official information that could breach the security of the institution/APA district office or unduly endanger any person.
- F. Former contractors/volunteers will be granted access only to information available to other members of the general public, and will have no greater standing than members of the public, irrespective of their past contractual relationship and/or any associations developed in the course of such relationships.

### **Illegal Activity**

The very nature and purpose of the Department's existence demand that it closely monitors any alleged illegal activity by its employees and non-employees. Should any contractors, volunteers or interns be arrested for, charged with or convicted of any felony or degree misdemeanor (except for a minor misdemeanor), or is required to be a plaintiff in any court in a criminal matter, that person shall immediately inform his/her ODRC Contact Person or Intern Mentor. Such information shall be evaluated and may be reason to terminate the contract/service/ internship immediately.

### **Conveying or Trafficking in Contraband**

The introduction of contraband into or upon the grounds of any state property, or taking or attempting to take contraband there from, or otherwise trafficking in contraband without the knowledge and consent of the Site Manager of such institution/regional office is prohibited. Contraband is defined as "any" article which is intended for the unauthorized use or possession of any inmate or which is prohibited by law or Department Policy from being carried onto the grounds of an institution, detention facility or APA Office. Examples of contraband, which could be intended for an inmate's/offender's unauthorized possession or use, include letters, stamps, tools, paper, food, messages, and money. Examples of contraband, which are prohibited by law (ORC Section 2921.36), include firearms, knives, explosives, ammunition, drugs, and alcoholic beverages.

### **Investigations**

Every contractor/volunteer/intern is required to immediately report to the Site Manager, or designee, any violation or attempted violation of any law or regulation, and any act or omission by any person which has resulted in a breach of institution security or jeopardizes the safety of others.

Allegations of misconduct will be investigated by the Appointing Authority or his designee (could be immediate supervisor or anyone else in the chain of command). Where appropriate, investigations will be coordinated and conducted by the Department Chief Inspector and/or other appropriate agency. The Ohio State Highway Patrol is responsible for investigating violations of Ohio laws occurring on state property.

During the course of an official investigation, contractors, volunteers and interns are to cooperate fully by providing all pertinent information that they may have. Failure to answer any inquiry fully and to the best of his/her knowledge may be grounds to terminate the contract or internship.

### **Government Property**

1. All government property, including automobiles, identification badges, supplies, equipment, telephones, and facilities are to be used for official purposes only. Loss, misplacement, theft, damage, or destruction of government property issued to and used by contractors, volunteers and interns must be reported to his/her ODRC Contact Person or Intern Mentor immediately.
2. ODRC credentials, identification cards, or badges shall not be used to coerce, intimidate, or deceive others or to obtain any privilege or article not otherwise authorized in the performance of official duties.

### **Chain of Command**

Every contractor/volunteer will be assigned an ODRC Contact Person, or Intern Mentor who will be responsible for informing each person of the rules, policies, and regulations relevant to their work at the institution. In their absence, the contact person shall be the Shift Supervisor, generally known as the Shift Captain or Acting Shift Captain or the previously designated APA staff. In cases of emergency, this person will always be available to respond to questions or needs.

### **Standards of Conduct**

Violation of the Standards of Conduct may result in termination of authorization to enter the grounds of the facility or APA Office Site, referral to the Ohio State Highway Patrol for criminal investigation, referral to the Appointing Authority for investigation, and/or termination of an existing contract with the institution or APA. The following acts are prohibited and considered violations of appropriate conduct:

1. Visiting an offender unless the person is a verified immediate family member and/or have been approved by the Warden of the institution per DRC Policy 71-SOC-01 and DRC Policy 76-VIS-01.
2. Deliberate destruction, damage, and/or theft of state property, offender property, property of visitors, or property of an employee, including state vehicles.
3. Failure to carry out directions provided by the ODRC Contact Person.
4. Commission of a felony or misdemeanor.
5. Interfering with the orderly operation of the institution.
6. Willfully making false, abusive, or obscene statements towards employees, inmates/offenders, or the general public is prohibited.

7. Any acts of discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, age, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation.
8. Theft.
9. Misusing official position for personal gain, including soliciting bribes, in the course of carrying out assigned duties at the institution, APA District Office or Operation Support Center.
10. Failure to report accidents or unsafe work conditions.
11. Threatening, intimidating, or coercing another for personal gain or satisfaction.
12. Fighting with a fellow worker, employee, visitor, or inmate/offender.
13. Interfering or failing to permit an official search, including searches of your person and of your personal property, or failing to cooperate with any official inquiry or investigation.
14. Distribution, possession, misuse, conveyance, or display of weapons, explosives, money, or other contraband.
15. Loss of control of any instrument that could result in a breach of security and/or jeopardize the safety of others, e.g., to include but not limited to, Class A tools, keys, communication devices, identification badges, etc.
16. Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on state property.
17. Reporting to the institution, APA office or place where, as the contractor, volunteer, or intern, you are performing official duties, under the influence of intoxicants, alcohol, or illegal drugs.
18. The posting or removal of any matter on a bulletin board without permission.
19. Other actions that could harm or potentially harm others.
20. Use of excessive force or physical abuse towards an inmate/offender.
21. Threatening or intimidating an inmate/offender.
22. Giving preferential treatment to an inmate/offender, the offering, receiving, or giving of a favor or anything of value to an offender without authorization from ODRC.
23. Engaging in unauthorized personal relationships with inmates or their families, including correspondence or phone communications with inmates and their families.

## **Entry Procedures**

### **Institution Entry:**

The ODRC Contact Person, Intern Mentor will coordinate the initial on-site visit. It is the responsibility of this person to ensure that contractors, volunteers and interns are aware of the rules and regulations governing activities in the institution. A designated administrative staff member must authorize entrance into the facility. Any person entering a correctional environment is subject to search at any time. This search may include a metal detector search, a frisk search, or a strip search. Failure to comply with any authorized search will result in removal from the institution and possible denial of future entry.

Contractors, volunteers and interns must sign in and out upon entry and exiting state property. According to the Departmental Dress Code policy 31-SEM-06, the following shall apply to those entering DRC sites:

1. All uniformed personnel shall report for work in clean, neat uniforms. Uniformed personnel shall always wear the complete uniform while on duty. All non-uniformed personnel shall report to work in clean and neat clothing. Shoes must be clean and in good repair. All clothing shall project a professional and positive image.
2. Jewelry shall be limited to small items worn in moderation. Non-uniformed personnel may wear earrings that present a professional appearance and are not excessive. Except as otherwise permitted by this policy, while on duty, the wearing of any object inserted into an exposed body part that has been pierced is also prohibited. Examples include the tongue, nose, lips, eyebrow(s), etc. Prohibited objects include, but are not limited to, jewelry, posts, straw, or toothpick material
3. Fingernails shall be reasonable in length. Nail polish must be professional and dignified.
4. The following is a list of acceptable clothing for non-uniformed personnel –
  - A. Trousers, slacks, shirts, blouses, sweaters, turtlenecks, etc. must be business casual or dress. Blouses must cover the midriff and cleavage. Capri pants must extend to the middle of the calf or longer.
  - B. Ties are considered part of a professional appearance.
  - C. Skirts and dresses shall be no shorter than the top of the kneecap. Splits must not be extreme.
  - D. Shoes may be dress or business casual and shall be appropriate for a professional office atmosphere. Flip-flops and shower clogs may not be worn. Dress sandals may be worn depending upon safety considerations and at the discretion of the managing officer or the superintendent of the Adult Parole Authority (APA). Tennis shoes/sneakers that are clean and in good repair may be worn on work assignments, but only when approved by the managing officer or the superintendent of the APA. The managing officer or the superintendent of the APA may authorize the wearing of tennis shoes/sneakers that are clean and in good

repair during jean/casual dress days approved by ODRC, in accordance with of this policy, Jeans/Casual Dress Day Events.

- E. Hats must be dress or casual. Ball caps may be worn at the discretion of the managing officer or the superintendent of the APA but shall not bear offensive or inflammatory messages and must be appropriate for the work setting.
  - F. Belts may be dress or casual. Metal or chain-like belts are prohibited. Buckles must be reasonable in size and shall not bear messages that are offensive or inflammatory.
  - G. Appropriate undergarments must be worn. Tight or form-fitting apparel such as leggings or compression garments may be worn as undergarments, e.g., under a skirt or pants, but are prohibited when worn as an outermost garment.
  - H. Denim attire of any type is generally not acceptable. The managing officer may approve exceptions as determined to be appropriate.
5. Wearing of political campaign badges, buttons, shirts, pins, etc., is always prohibited.
  6. Uniformed and non-uniformed personnel may color or lighten their hair, but the color must be a naturally occurring hair color. All hairstyles must be kept in a neat, clean manner, be of a conservative nature, not detract from one's personal appearance as a professional and shall not provoke undue personal attention. Certain hairstyles may be considered incompatible with a professional and dignified appearance. Any pattern cut into the hair, to include, but not limited to, numerals, designs, radical vertical hair styling or side-blocking is not permitted. Hair shall not be worn in a manner that interferes with job performance, wearing assigned uniform headgear, or that compromises the safety of the individual. Facial hair must be professional in appearance, to include, but not limited to, length and well-groomed. Facial hair may be prohibited where it prevents the proper wearing and sealing of a gas mask or self-contained breathing apparatus for those individuals required.
  7. Any marking on the body, which is inflammatory or known as a gang insignia such as, but not limited to, swastikas and double lightning bolts, are not to be displayed at work by any employee or independent contractor. Such body markings are strictly prohibited.
  8. Exceptions to the clothing lists may be made for special circumstances, such as for religious accommodations, training, and unusual work environments, at the managing officer's discretion.

Only items necessary for the volunteer/contracted service or internship may be brought into the correctional environment. Large sums of money, pocketknives, etc., are not permitted. The contractor/volunteer will be asked to store the items either in their car or available lockers in the entrance area. If a contractor/volunteer requires medication they should take only that amount that is necessary for the day. All persons must sign the medication log if they require a dosage during their stay. This log will identify the type of medication and the amount. The institution cannot be responsible for loss of property. If a tradesman requires tools to perform their contracted service, all tools must be inventoried, and a copy supplied to the Major. The Major may wish to review



institution tool control policy and discuss security of equipment. A written authorization for all tools from the Deputy Warden of Operations or Major will be required before they are authorized to enter the institution.

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The contractor/volunteer service or internship may or may not require contact with inmates/offenders. Contractors, volunteers and interns are prohibited from developing any relationship with inmates outside of contractor, volunteer or internship activity. They cannot mail letters or make telephone calls to the inmate/offender for them. If a contractor/volunteer/intern receives mail or telephone calls from inmates or their families, they must report this to their ODRC Contact Person or the Deputy Warden, or APA Administrative Assistant. A contractor/volunteer/intern should never disclose personal information such as their address, telephone number, or any personal information about their family or friends. There is no instance where sharing such information will serve a useful purpose.

**DPCS Office Entry:**

Entrance procedures will be explained during the orientation process to each DPCS Volunteer or Contractor that must report to a regional office.

If at any time a contractor/volunteer has a question, they should contact their ODRC Contact Person, Intern Mentor, DPCS Administrative Assistant, the Shift Captain, or the Deputy Warden of Operations.

I have read and understand the Standards of Conduct for Contractors/Volunteers/Interns, including the rules and guidelines listed above. I understand that entering a correctional institution, APA Office, or the Operation Support Center carries responsibilities necessary to ensure safety and security to the facility and will abide by all rules and guidelines contained herein.