



Virginia Department of Corrections

Inmate Management and Programs

Operating Procedure 841.6

Recreation Programs

Authority:

Directive 841, *Program Management*

Effective Date: September 1, 2023

Amended:

Supersedes:

Operating Procedure 841.6, November 1, 2020

Access: Restricted Public Inmate

ACA/PREA Standards:

5-ACI-2E-01, 5-ACI-7C-01, 5-ACI-7C-02,
5-ACI-7C-03, 5-ACI-7C-04, 5-ACI-7C-05,
5-ACI-7C-06; 4-ACRS-5A-16; 4-ACRS-5A-21,
4-ACRS-5A-23; 2-CO-5C-01

Content Owner:	Rose Durbin Corrections Operations Manager	<i>Signature Copy on File</i>	7/3/23
		Signature	Date
Reviewer:	Marcus Elam Corrections Operations Administrator	<i>Signature Copy on File</i>	7/5/23
		Signature	Date
Signatory:	A. David Robinson Chief of Corrections Operations	<i>Signature Copy on File</i>	7/5/23
		Signature	Date

REVIEW

The Content Owner will review this operating procedure annually and re-write it no later than three years after the effective date.

The content owner reviewed this operating procedure in September 2024 and determined that no changes are needed.

COMPLIANCE

This operating procedure applies to all units operated by the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC). Practices and procedures must comply with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations, American Correctional Association (ACA) standards, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards, and DOC directives and operating procedures.

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DEFINITIONS

Community Corrections Alternative Program (CCAP) - A system of residential facilities operated by the Department of Corrections to provide evidence-based programming as a diversionary alternative to incarceration in accordance with COV §53.1-67.9, *Establishment of community corrections alternative program; supervision upon completion.*

Individual Activities - Activities such as weight lifting, jogging, etc., which can be performed on an individual basis.

Inmate - A person who is incarcerated in a Virginia Department of Corrections facility or who is Virginia Department of Corrections responsible to serve a state sentence.

Institution - A prison facility operated by the Department of Corrections; includes major institutions, field units, and work centers.

Leisure Activities - Activities that require minimal levels of physical exertion; examples include, but are not limited to table games, musical activities, leisure reading, walking, etc.

Probationer/Parolee - A person who is on community supervision as the result of the commission of a criminal offense and released to the community under the jurisdiction of Courts, paroling authorities, the Virginia Department of Corrections, or other release authority; this includes post release supervision and Community Corrections Alternative Programs.

Recreation Program Aide - Inmates selected and trained to provide recreational services support under the supervision of recreation staff.



PURPOSE

This operating procedure establishes guidelines and protocols for inmate and Community Corrections Alternative Programs (CCAP) probationer/parolee recreation and leisure programs.

PROCEDURE

- I. Recreation in Community Corrections Alternative Programs (CCAP)
 - A. The Facility Unit Head or designee at each CCAP facility will make recreation and leisure time activities available, within the facility program mission, to meet the needs of the CCAP's probationers/parolees. (4-ACRS-5A-21[C]; 2-CO-5C-01)
 - B. The Facility Unit Head will provide adequate and appropriate areas for recreation and leisure time activities within the resources available to the facility. (4-ACRS-5A-23[C])
 - C. The Facility Unit Head or designee should identify the general recreation resources available including indoor and outdoor recreation areas, sports equipment, and leisure games and equipment and the provisions for accessing recreation areas and equipment in the written orientation materials provided to the CCAP probationer/parolee.
- II. Institution Recreation Programs
 - A. The Facility Unit Head or designee at each institution will provide for a comprehensive recreational program that includes both leisure time activities and indoor/outdoor exercise activities appropriate to the institution's mission and inmate population. (5-ACI-7C-01; 4-ACRS-5A-21[I]; 2-CO-5C-01)
 - B. A qualified full-time staff member will supervise the recreational program at institutions with more than 100 inmates. (5-ACI-7C-02)
 1. The Facility Unit Head will designate a staff member to serve as the Recreation Officer on a part-time basis at institutions with less than 100 inmates.
 2. The appointing authority will consider the individual's education, experience, training in recreation and/or leisure activities, and their ability to supervise the recreation program when determining an individual's appointment to the Recreation Program Supervisor position.
 - C. The institution provides adequate facilities and equipment for all planned recreation and exercise activities that are in proportion to the inmate population and the institution's facilities and equipment are maintained in good condition. (5-ACI-7C-04; 4-ACRS-5A-23[I])
 - D. The institution provides a sufficient number of outdoor and covered/enclosed exercise areas to ensure each general population inmate is offered at least one hour of access to an exercise area daily. (5-ACI-2E-01; 4-ACRS-5A-23[I])
 1. Inmate access to and use of outdoor areas is preferred but covered/enclosed areas must be available for use in inclement weather.
 2. The Facility Unit Head can designate covered/enclosed areas for multiple uses if the design and furnishings of the area do not interfere with scheduled exercise activities.
 3. The minimum size for exercise areas are as follows:
 - a. Outdoor Exercise Areas
 - i. Where 100 or more inmates utilize one recreation area, the institution will provide 15 square feet per inmate for the maximum number of inmates expected to use the space at one time, but not less than 1,500 square feet of unencumbered space.
 - ii. Where less than 100 inmates have unlimited access to one recreation area, the institution will provide 15 square feet per inmate for the maximum number of inmates expected to use the space at one time, but not less than 750 square feet of unencumbered space.



b. Covered/Enclosed Exercise Areas

- i. Where 100 or more inmates utilize one recreation area, the institution will provide 15 square feet per inmate for the maximum number of inmates expected to use the space at one time, with a minimum ceiling height of 18 feet, but not less than 1,000 square feet of unencumbered space.
- ii. Where less than 100 inmates utilize one recreation area, the institution will provide 15 square feet per inmate for the maximum number of inmates expected to use the space at one time, with a minimum ceiling height of 18 feet, but not less than 500 square feet of unencumbered space.

E. Where appropriate to the institution mission, the Facility Unit Head or designee will:

1. Select and train inmates to serve as recreation program aides. (5-ACI-7C-03)
2. Allow inmates to initiate recreational and leisure activities to be carried out under staff supervision. (5-ACI-7C-06)
3. Provide inmates with the opportunity for interaction with the community through various activities. (5-ACI-7C-05; 4-ACRS-5A-16[I])
4. Provide both organized, team and individual competitions and tournaments, and individual activities.

F. Staff will not excuse inmates from educational, program, or work assignments for participation in recreation and leisure activities.

G. Staff should identify the general recreation resources available at the institution including indoor and outdoor recreation areas, sports equipment, leisure games and equipment, and art, craft, and hobby activities, if applicable, in the institution's written *Orientation Manual* or *Packet*.

1. Staff should identify the provisions for accessing available recreation areas and equipment.
2. Rotating or varying recreation schedules should be posted for inmate access.

H. Inmates may participate in outdoor recreation without any heat index restrictions.

I. Staff may suspend an inmate from using recreational or leisure activity areas, equipment, or supplies for misuse or abuse of recreational or leisure activity privileges.

1. Suspensions must be for definite, finite periods and may apply to specific activities while allowing participation in other recreational or leisure activities.
2. If a suspension exceeds 60 days, staff should make provisions for the inmate to receive some form of alternate outdoor exercise.
3. Where appropriate, staff should document inmate disciplinary convictions and subsequent penalties in accordance with Operating Procedure 861.1, *Inmate Discipline*.

J. The Facility Unit Head or Administrative Duty Officer may temporarily suspend or restrict recreation and leisure time activities for institutional emergencies and when necessary to search for contraband.

III. Hobby, Craft, and Art Activities

A. Staff will allow inmates to construct hobby, craft, and art projects using only the items available for purchase from the commissary and as authorized on Attachment 1, *Approved Arts and Crafts Items*.

1. Inmates are prohibited from using personal property items to construct of hobby, craft, and art projects unless the item is an approved arts and crafts item; see Operating Procedure 802.1, *Inmate and CCAP Probationer/Parolee Property*.
2. Items may not use state issued property items and items purchased with state funds in hobby and craft projects, even after the item has served its useful purpose. Any alteration of state issued or state owned property is prohibited.

B. Inmates may request that additional items be sold in the commissary by submitting their request in writing to the Facility Unit Head or designee.



1. The Facility Unit Head or designee will forward the inmate's request to the *Commissary Review Committee* for review and a decision on approval or disapproval for all institutions.
 2. A member of the *Commissary Review Committee* will add approved items to the *Approved Arts and Crafts Items* list.
- C. The Facility Unit Head will establish size and quantity limitations for items authorized on the *Approved Arts and Crafts Items*, unless otherwise designated on the *Institutional Property Matrix*.
1. Inmates must store their arts and crafts supplies, materials, and projects in their secured locker(s) or other designated containers(s).
 2. Inmates must dispose of all property that exceeds the capacity of their secured locker(s) or designated container(s); see Operating Procedure 802.1, *Inmate and CCAP Probationer/Parolee Property*.
- D. Hobby, craft, and art projects must comply with DOC safety and security requirements and the *Specific Criteria for Publication Disapproval*; see Operating Procedure 803.2, *Incoming Publications*.
- E. Hobby, craft, and art projects that can conceal contraband, modifies state property and buildings, alters an inmate's personal appearance, etc. are prohibited,
- F. Completed projects, not approved for inmate possession must be removed from the institution and properly disposed of in accordance with Operating Procedure 802.1, *Inmate and CCAP Probationer/Parolee Property*.
1. Staff may confiscate as contraband any project not approved for inmate possession or not removed from the institution within 30 days of project completion.
 2. Inmates must not give, sell, or trade projects with institution staff, volunteers, other inmates, or the family members of institution staff and volunteers.
 3. Staff will seize as contraband, process for confiscation, and properly disposed of any project that violates the *Specific Criteria for Publication Disapproval*.
- G. When an inmate transfers to an institution that does not allow the same hobby, craft, and art items as the previous institution, the inmate must dispose of these in accordance with Operating Procedure 802.1, *Inmate and CCAP Probationer/Parolee Property*. If the inmate later transfers to an institution that allows the same hobby and craft items, the inmates must purchase new items, if desired, items cannot be returned to the institution after disposal.
- H. Organized Hobby, Craft, and Art Programs
1. The Facility Unit Head at Security Level W - 3 institutions may allow inmates to participate in organized hobby, craft, and art programs using materials purchased from the commissary.
 2. Staff should make information on the hobby, craft, and art program's operation available to the inmate population; this information should include at a minimum the following:
 - a. Eligibility requirements for participation and the approval process.
 - b. Areas approved for the storage of supplies, materials, and projects.
 - c. Areas approved and the times available for inmates to work on projects.
 - d. Types of projects that inmates may construct.
 - e. Requirements for disposition of completed projects.
 3. This operating procedure does not apply to hobby, craft and art projects constructed as part of an institution approved community service activity and not for inmate possession.

REFERENCES

Operating Procedure 802.1, *Inmate and CCAP Probationer/Parolee Property*

Operating Procedure 803.2, *Incoming Publications*



Operating Procedure 861.1, *Inmate Discipline*

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1, *Approved Arts and Crafts Items*

FORM CITATIONS

None

