



*State of North Carolina
Department of Public Safety
Prisons*

Chapter: E
Section: .3500
Title: **Community Resource
Council**
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POLICY AND PROCEDURE

.3501 Policy

It is the policy of North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Prisons to partner with the Community Resource Councils (CRC), by which citizens are identified and approved to provide services to the staff and the offender population. Rehabilitative Services will designate a coordinator who will be responsible for coordinating the Community Resource Councils within Prisons.

(a) General

Community Resource Councils are developed to provide orderly assistance in stimulating community involvement and to promote volunteerism in correctional facilities throughout the state. Council activities shall be governed by Department of Public Safety and North Carolina Prisons' policies and procedures.

Each Prison facility will organize and maintain a Community Resource Council. Councils will be established based on the mission and function of each facility. Upon written justification, a facility may request a temporary exemption from the requirement of having a council through the chain of command with final approval by the Director of Rehabilitative Services. A copy of the temporary exemption will be maintained on file at the facility, and in the offices of the Region Director and Citizen Participation Administrator.

(b) Statement of Purpose

- (1) Councils shall be governed by an established statement of purpose approved by the Commissioner of Prisons. Copies of this purpose statement will be maintained in the Office of the Commissioner of Prisons and Citizen Participation Administrator.
- (2) Wardens and Council chairpersons shall clarify the specific mission and purpose of their Community Resource Council. Goals and short-term objectives should be developed and updated annually to provide positive leadership and recognition of members for the achievement of correctional goals established by the local facility, the correctional administration, and the Community Resource Council.
- (3) Issues not addressed in the by-laws should be resolved at the discretion of the individual councils consistent with applicable departmental policies and state law.

(c) Role of the Designated Facility Community Resource Council Coordinator

The role of the Facility Community Resource Council Coordinator shall be to manage the Community Resource Council by assisting with arrangements for meetings, notify the Citizen Participation Administrator with changes in appointments, ensure that a copy of the Community Resource Council Reporting Form has been forwarded to the Citizen Participation Administrator each quarter, distribute a copy of the Community Resource Council Quarterly Report to council members and update the Community Resource Council Appointment/Reappointment application and all other forms related to policy and procedures of the Facility and Prisons. The application and other pertinent information should be filed in a secure location at the facility.

(d) Appointment

- (1) The Warden will recommend individuals to serve as council members. Each Warden may confer with local community leaders during the selection process. The Community Resource Council Appointment/Reappointment application will be completed by each individual wishing to become a member of the Community Resource Council. Completed forms will be submitted to the Commissioner of Prisons or designee for consideration. Appointees must be at least 21 years of age.
- (2) The Commissioner of Prisons or designee shall appoint council members to two-year terms. Council appointments will be made annually with appointments effective January 1 of each year. When unscheduled vacancies occur, new appointees will serve the unexpired term of the Council member and may be eligible for reappointment to a full term.
- (3) All Council members serve at the pleasure of the Commissioner of Prisons.

(e) Recruitment

While it is recognized that Council members serve at the pleasure of the Commissioner of Prisons, the following should be considered when recruiting individuals for the Community Resource Council:

- (1) Persons who have or have had an intimate, romantic, or unduly familiar personal relationships with an offender prior to the offender's incarceration including, but not limited to intimate, romantic, or unduly familiar physical contact, conversation or correspondence may not provide volunteer services for that offender nor may they provide volunteer services at the facility the offender is housed. Offenders and Community Resource Council members are not to correspond with each other by phone or letter unless prior approval is granted by the Warden.

- (2) Employees of Prisons shall be considered to serve as a Council member at the facility where they are employed.
- (3) In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, employees will not perform the same type of duties as a Council member, which they perform as part of their Department of Public Safety job responsibilities.
- (4) A relative of a Prisons employee will not serve as a Council member at the facility where their relative is employed. Relatives approved as Council members shall be restricted from any program involvement that may lead to undue familiarity with offenders.
- (5) Employees approved as Council members shall be restricted from program involvement that may lead to undue familiarity with offenders.
- (6) Employees who have received disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination for violating agency sexual abuse or sexual harassment policies will not be approved as a volunteer.
- (7) Former employees are eligible to serve as a Council member unless the employee resigned under circumstances listed below;
 - (A) Engaging in undue familiarity with an offender;
 - (B) Writing of discussing personal affairs with an offender;
 - (C) Borrowing anything from or lending anything to, or accepting gifts or personal services from, or barter or trade with any offender to include cards, letters and telephone cards;
 - (D) Bringing any type of contraband into a prison;
 - (E) Using their knowledge of the prison system to circumvent policy; and
 - (F) Other acts of misconduct or personal behavior that undermines security or corrective treatment
- (8) Individuals with criminal records may be considered to serve as a Council member after one year of unsupervised involvement in the community with no additional arrests. Individuals who have been convicted of a sexually related offense are prohibited from serving as a Council member. This also applies to all individuals identified as sex offenders.
- (9) An immediate family member of an offender may not provide services as a Council member at the facility where the offender is housed. **For the purposes of this policy**, immediate family member is defined as parent, child, stepparent, stepchild, sibling, grandparent, aunt/uncle, spouse (married or common law), nephew/niece or in-law.

(f) Community Resource Council Activities

- (1) Volunteers. The Council should be involved in recruitment of volunteers to assist in providing volunteer services and/or fundraising activities at the facility for staff and offenders.
- (2) Fundraising. Guidelines for special local fundraising must be developed to assure appropriate documentation of receipts and expenditures. If a major (anything greater than \$5,000) fundraising project is contemplated, such as for the construction of a religious services center, a separate fundraising body must be established and incorporated as a nonprofit organization. All fundraisers greater than \$5,000 must be submitted for approval on the “Facility Community Resource Council Fundraising Request” form and submitted to the Citizen Participation Administrator for review and approval by the Commissioner of Prisons, the Director of Rehabilitative Services with final approval by the Secretary of the Department of Public Safety and the Controller’s Office prior to commencement of the project.
- (3) Program Activity. Acceptable program activities for Council volunteers may include assisting offender families in understanding prison policies and procedures, providing workshops for staff on relevant issues, providing or assisting with services that aide in the pre-release planning and preparation of offenders, supporting staff appreciation programs, supporting agency goals and programs or generating in-kind contributions of equipment and supplies. Any in-kind contribution in an amount greater than \$1,000 shall be subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Public Safety.

(g) Meetings

- (1) Councils must meet at least four times a year unless they have received a written exemption from the Director of Rehabilitative Services or designee. Requests must be submitted by the council chairperson with approval of council membership.
- (2) To conduct business at a regular or special meeting, a quorum of 40% of the total active Council membership must be in attendance. Each facility shall appoint a Council with a minimum of five and a maximum of nine members. Recruitment efforts should be documented by the facility with documentation available for review if requested.
- (3) Community Resource Council meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Law. Council meetings held at a correctional facility shall be open to the public subject to constraints of custody and security.

(h) Training

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- (1) A training program approved by the Citizen Participation Administrator will be conducted by each facility Community Resource Council Coordinator for each Council member. Upon completion of training, members will sign the “Acknowledgement of Volunteer Training and Refresher” form and will then be issued a Blue Volunteer Identification card.
 - (2) Training should be offered to Council members on a continuing basis to assure efficiency of operations and the achievement of Prison goals.
 - (3) Each Volunteer shall sign guidelines pertaining to the following:
 - (A) Rules and Regulations concerning the handling of their identification card
 - (B) Entrance and Exit policy
 - (C) The expectations of their role
 - (D) Dress codes
 - (E) What may be taken in or out of the facility
 - (F) How to respond if the facility goes into an emergency mode of operation
 - (G) Security practices
 - (H) Undue familiarity with offenders (including corresponding either by phone or mail) with offenders,
 - (I) PREA – must be updated annually
 - (J) Non-Disclosure (Confidentiality of information)
 - (K) Cell Phone and Tobacco violations
 - (L) Other information deemed pertinent to the safety and security of the Facility
 - (4) The completion of the training is to be documented on the “Acknowledgement of Volunteer Training and Refresher” form and maintained on file at the facility.
 - (5) Each facility’s Community Resource Council Coordinator shall ensure criminal background investigations are conducted on the facility’s active volunteer CRC members every other year and maintain a signed DCI for each volunteer CRC member in a secure location.
- (i) Reporting
- A copy of the Community Resource Council Form of each council meeting shall be submitted to the Citizen Participation Administrator after each council meeting. The facility coordinator shall maintain a copy of the report along with minutes of each meeting. A Quarterly Community Resource Council report shall be compiled from all reports submitted to the Citizen Participation Administrator and distributed to appropriate staff including the Director of Rehabilitative Services.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a long horizontal stroke followed by the letters 'wh' in a cursive style.

Commissioner of Prisons

April 04, 2022
Date

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