

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

**VOLUNTEER SERVICES PLAN**

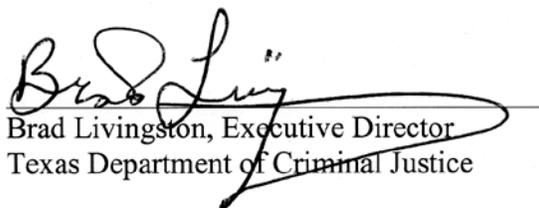
# Texas Department of Criminal Justice

## VOLUNTEER SERVICES PLAN

### FOREWORD

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) encourages volunteers and volunteer organizations to provide services and activities for offenders incarcerated, those transitioning between confinement and society, and those on supervision, to reduce incidence of recidivism. TDCJ policy, Administrative Directive (AD) – 07.35, “Administration of Volunteer Services in the TDCJ” directs the Agency to develop a Volunteer Services Plan which establishes uniform rules and regulations to guide staff in both the conditions and procedures relating to volunteers in the TDCJ.

The TDCJ is fully committed to abide by and enforce the provisions outlined herein, and all volunteers and employees are expected to comply with its requirements.

  
Brad Livingston, Executive Director  
Texas Department of Criminal Justice

7/16/07  
Date

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# Texas Department of Criminal Justice Volunteer Services Plan

## I. Purpose

The purpose of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Volunteer Services Plan is to establish consistent, standard operating procedures throughout all divisions of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ or Agency) for the administration, coordination, and reporting of volunteer services. This *Plan* shall be an overall policy guide for each division of the Agency in implementing and operating their individual volunteer services programs.

## II. Definitions

**Approved Volunteer** - A person who provides a service or who participates in volunteer activities on a regular basis and has been approved through the application process and has completed the volunteer training and orientation.

**Certified Volunteer Chaplain's Assistant** - An approved Chaplaincy volunteer that has received additional security and Chaplaincy policy training and assists the Chaplain on the unit in accordance with the TDCJ/Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division (RRPD) Chaplaincy Manual.

**Certified Substance Abuse Volunteer** - An approved Substance Abuse volunteer that has received additional Substance Abuse departmental training to assist the Unit Volunteer Coordinator and Substance Abuse Treatment Program Administration with the utilization of volunteers.

**Community Partnership Assistant** – An individual employed by any Community Outreach Program, state, federal or law enforcement agency, and is being compensated to perform an official duty. If a Community Partner has not completed the TDCJ volunteer training then direct oversight is required.

**Contraband** - Any item brought into, or taken out of a unit/office, or in the possession of an offender, visitor or employee as defined in the Texas Penal Code, Section 38.11, or is prohibited by the rules and regulations of TDCJ.

**Correspondence** – An approved volunteer (excluding employee volunteer) may correspond with an offender. Correspondence shall not include any references that are sexual, or refer to criminal behavior, gang-related information, contraband or any other actions that are inappropriate in nature. Such exchange shall terminate the volunteer approved status. The volunteer shall include, as part of his return address, the volunteer category under which he provides services (e.g., chaplaincy volunteer, education volunteer, substance abuse volunteer, or other area). It is recommended that volunteers use the organization, program, or church address which they represent as the return address.

**Employee Volunteer** - An individual who has been approved and completed training as a volunteer but is also employed by TDCJ and donates time and services outside of his/her normal job functions and required working hours. Employee volunteers shall not serve as mentors and may not correspond with offenders. The Warden and/or Office Administrator shall have final approval of an employee's volunteer assignment on the unit/office.

**Ex-Offender** - An individual convicted of any crime (excluding traffic violations) and no longer incarcerated; has completed parole, community supervision, or mandatory supervision, and all requirements under the law.

**Ex-Offender Volunteer** - An individual convicted of any crime (excluding traffic violations) and no longer incarcerated; and has completed parole, community supervision, or mandatory supervision, and all requirements under the law; or an individual who has discharged his sentence for eighteen months or more. Ex-Offender volunteers shall be an approved volunteer, participate in formal training and comply with all TDCJ departmental procedures and record-keeping requirements.

**Mentor** - An approved volunteer who meets Agency-approved mentor criteria and is recommended by TDCJ program staff. Approved employee volunteers may not serve as mentors. (AD-07.38 Mentor Guidelines).

**Mentoring** - A one-to-one (same gender) relationship that focuses on the rehabilitative needs of the mentored offender fosters caring and support, encourages personal development, and assists in re-entry to the community upon release. Programs utilizing husband and wife teams may be allowed to mentor individual offenders.

**Offender** - An individual in the custody of or under the supervision of a city, county, judicial district (probation), state or Federal agency. These individuals include but are not limited to

patients, parolees, individuals under mandatory supervision, and incarcerated individuals.

**Offender or Victim Contacts** - The number of times an offender or victim has been provided some type of rehabilitative service, activity or program from an individual volunteer or volunteer group. (Note: The same offender or victim may have multiple contacts with volunteers depending on the rehabilitative programming in which the offender or victim is participating.)

**Partner's Program Volunteer** - An offender who has been released for a period of six (6) months and has one (1) year of sobriety (six months of which may be acquired during their incarceration) and must be accompanied by an approved volunteer. Partner Program participants may visit the units more than one time (AD- 07.36 Partner's Program).

**Releasee** - An individual convicted and sentenced for any crime (excluding traffic violations), and currently on community supervision, parole or mandatory supervision.

**Releasee Volunteer** - An individual convicted and sentenced for any crime (excluding traffic violations) and has at least 18 months of satisfactory community supervision, parole or mandatory supervision. Releasee volunteers shall be an approved volunteer, participate in formal training and comply with all TDCJ departmental procedures and record-keeping requirements. Violations in supervision may result in removal from the volunteer program.

**Special Volunteer** - Any individual or group who provides a service or participates in volunteer activities no more than four (4) times or events per calendar year, and has not established a pattern of regular, scheduled participation. Special volunteers do not complete a Volunteer Application, and normally are not subject to a criminal history (NCIC/TCIC) check unless deemed necessary by appropriate unit/office staff.

**Student Intern Volunteer** - A student who is enrolled in a university or community college; desires to volunteer for limited periods of time; and is taking course work which requires "internship" experience for course credit, pre-professional training or work experience.

**TDCJ Volunteer Coordination Committee** - Members of the Volunteer Coordination Committee (VCC) shall consist of representatives designated by TDCJ divisions and departments that utilize volunteers. A Program Specialist in the RRPD serves as committee coordinator.

**Unit Volunteer Coordinator** - An employee on the unit whose primary function is to coordinate Substance Abuse Treatment volunteers; however, they may assist in other program areas when

deemed necessary.

**Victim** - An individual or family member directly or indirectly affected by the unlawful behavior of an offender.

**Volunteer Review Committee** – The Volunteer Review Committee (VRC) shall consist of the Chairman of the Volunteer Coordination Committee, the Director of the Correctional Institutions Division or Parole Division, and a designee of the appropriate program area. A designee may be substituted for any of the members, as needed. Committee functions are: review justifications from wardens/office administrators regarding placement denials, and volunteer plan violations, volunteer suggestion forms, and other related volunteer issues.

**Volunteer Services Staff** - Employees in the various divisions assigned to carry out volunteer coordinator responsibilities for a particular area such as an office, department, unit, jail, or other similar area.

**Volunteer Visit** - Each time an approved or special volunteer visits any unit/office in order to provide some type of rehabilitative service, activity or program for offenders or victims.

**VS00** - Serves as the official TDCJ volunteer database from which authorized users' access volunteer status, unit restrictions, record of visits, and all other related volunteer information.

### **III. Oversight of Volunteer Services**

#### **A. The Volunteer Coordination Committee**

The Division Director or designee of the Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division (RRPD) serves as Chairman of the Volunteer Coordination Committee (VCC) and a Program Specialist from RRPD will serve as the VCC's coordinator. The VCC shall serve as the reporting entity for volunteer activities for the Agency. Its functions are to:

1. Establish Agency-wide philosophy, goals and objectives regarding volunteer utilization.
2. Enhance and coordinate volunteer activities.
3. Report annually to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice, TDCJ managers, legislators and public about volunteer activities.
4. Develop Agency-wide volunteer policies and procedures (Volunteer Services Plan)
5. Analyze critical issues and provide guidance to departments/divisions.
6. At least annually, meet to review the Agency-wide *Volunteer Services Plan*.

7. Develop new volunteer goals and objectives, consistent with the mission of TDCJ.
8. Review volunteer programs, as reported by their department/division, and identify new or continuing areas in which volunteers are needed and may serve.
9. The VCC shall solicit input from other staff members, volunteers, victims, and offenders regarding volunteer issues.

B. The *Volunteer Services Plan*, along with applicable policies and procedures, shall be the guide for developing, implementing, and managing volunteer services programs within the Agency and shall consist of generic procedures to include: designated categories of volunteers, recruitment and screening/approval procedures; orientation; training; coordination; evaluation; recognition activities; documentation of volunteer hours served; number of offender contacts; record-keeping; code of conduct; confidentiality rules and laws; and other similar categories. Each division shall be responsible for compliance with the Agency-wide *Plan* and any procedures specific to their division. All departments/divisions shall strive to treat their volunteers in a uniform, consistent manner from location to location.

#### **IV. Volunteer Program Requirements**

- A. The agency may decline the services of an individual for any reason other than race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disabilities, genetic information or age (18 years or over).
- B. Individuals desiring to be “approved” volunteers shall complete a Volunteer Application Form (Appendix F) and shall be screened utilizing the information provided. Upon receipt of the completed form, designated volunteer staff shall complete the Texas Crime Information Center (TCIC) and National Crime Information Center (NCIC) checks. Fingerprint cards may be required when deemed necessary. Volunteers shall be advised by letter to attend security training (Appendix A) or of denial of application (Appendix B). Current background references may be requested and checked; and a personal interview may be conducted at the discretion of the appropriate division director or designee. An individual’s criminal record may affect acceptance as a volunteer. The possession of a criminal record, or specific offenses on record, may be used to determine placement or denial of the applicant.
- C. A releasee may serve as a volunteer provided he has completed at least 18 months of satisfactory supervision on parole, mandatory supervision or community supervision. A letter from the supervising officer concurring with the releasee’s participation in the

TDCJ Volunteer Program must be provided. An ex-offender who has demonstrated 18 months of successful reentry into the community since discharging his sentence may also apply.

- D. All ex-offenders and releasees will be screened for gang affiliation. Any individuals that are confirmed as a member of a Security Threat Group while incarcerated who did not complete the GRAD (Gang Renouncement and Disassociation) process must be approved on an individual basis by the Volunteer Review Committee.
- E. Placement of volunteers shall be made with the Warden/Office Administrator approval. Denial of placement of an approved volunteer must include a written justification from the Warden/Office Administrator and will be submitted to the VRC.
- F. Any ex-offender or releasee convicted of a sex offense, as defined by Administrative Directive 04.09 "Sex Offender Identification Criteria and Methods of Recording Information", may not serve as a volunteer unless approved by the Manager of the Sex Offender Rehabilitation Program (SORP) or designee.
- G. Volunteers shall be respectful to the needs and requirements of each department/division and volunteer activities shall be in keeping with sound correctional practices for security and orderly operations.
- H. An approved volunteer shall not be placed at a location where a relative or friend resides or is supervised. If a volunteer is placed at a location where a relative or friend is later assigned, the volunteer shall notify the volunteer staff immediately so that the volunteer can be reassigned to another location. EXCEPTION: The Warden/Office Administrator may permit exceptions to this practice, but the exception should be documented on the VS00.
- I. All volunteers shall be required to present a valid picture identification card (e.g. driver's license or similar photo identification) upon entrance.
- J. Individuals seeking to volunteer in contracted facilities such as the Transitional Treatment Center (TTC)/Halfway House will submit a completed volunteer application form to the facility. The contact person at the facility will forward the application to the appropriate department/division volunteer staff. The application shall be screened and designated staff will complete a Texas Crime Information Center (TCIC) and National

Crime Information Center (NCIC) check. Fingerprint cards may be required when deemed necessary. The facility will be advised in writing of the approval/denial of the individual. The facility will maintain a copy of the record while the individual is serving as a volunteer.

## **V. Volunteer Orientation/Training**

### **A. Approved Volunteers:**

1. All potential volunteers pending final approval shall participate in security and department/division orientation and training before final approval is granted and placements made. Employees and former/retired employees who have separated employment from the Agency within two years or less of volunteering may not be required to attend security orientation and training.
2. Volunteers who will be on a unit to perform an activity or service must complete security training. This training shall include security and safety, rules of conduct, definition and examples of contraband, emergency situations, confidential information, lines of communication, liability, and other pertinent information. Security staff conducting volunteer training must be trained through their regional office, must be in a supervisory position, and must be a positive representative for the Agency. A list of participants that attend training (training rosters) shall be forwarded to RRPD staff and a copy sent to the Regional Office.
3. Training essential to performing volunteer assignments in a parole office shall be the responsibility of designated parole staff. Training curriculum shall be reviewed by the VCC in order to assure Agency consistency. Training rosters shall be retained by appropriate staff with monthly totals forwarded to RRPD staff. Additional training that is departmental or program specific will be conducted by the appropriate staff.
4. All volunteers shall sign a TDCJ Acknowledgment of Training/Orientation (Appendix E) after attending training. This form provides a written record of the volunteer's training and their written acknowledgment of Agency rules and risks. The Acknowledgment of Training/Orientation form will be maintained in the volunteer's permanent file and serves as the needed documentation that the volunteer's status changes from TRO or Pending to Approved

5. All approved volunteers shall be required to participate in periodic volunteer retraining.

B. Special Volunteers:

1. Individuals that want to participate in activities or visits but are not approved volunteers will be considered special volunteers with the following restrictions: special volunteers shall contact the unit/office or administrative staff at least seven (7) days prior to the event or visit for approval. The Special Volunteer Approval Form (Appendix D), listing all special volunteers by name with, their driver's licenses or an identifying number, and indicating if the individual is a releasee or ex-offender, will be completed. These forms shall be used for entrance and exit from the unit/office, and for record-keeping purposes.
2. Special volunteers (individuals/groups) approved for visits will receive a Letter of Orientation (Appendix C), or be given one prior to participation in activities.
3. Direct oversight is required for special volunteers unless otherwise approved by Warden or Parole Office Administrator. Special volunteer groups will stay together unless otherwise approved by Warden or Parole Office Administrator.
4. Special volunteers may visit no more than four times or participate in no more than four events per calendar year and have not established a pattern of regular scheduled participation.

C. Student Intern Volunteers:

1. Placement of student intern volunteers shall be approved by the appropriate TDCJ department/division supervisor.
2. In order to assure a worthwhile intern experience, intern supervision shall be jointly managed by designated TDCJ program staff and the student's professor.
3. Student intern volunteers shall be approved volunteers, participate in formal training and comply with all TDCJ departmental procedures, and record-keeping requirements.

4. Major course studies for which volunteer interns may be placed are criminal justice, political science, sociology, psychology, social work, health professions, education, teaching, agriculture and industry-related fields, seminary and ministerial training, or other fields as appropriate to each division.
5. Student interns that will not have direct contact with offenders (office setting and administrative duties) will complete (Appendix L).
6. Student interns that will have direct contact with offenders will complete the necessary forms with the Department/Division with which they will be serving their internship. Departments/Divisions that have student interns that will have direct contact with offenders should have a memorandum of agreement with the participating University.

D. Partner Program Volunteers:

1. A releasee who wishes to participate in the partner's program must be referred by an approved volunteer.
2. Must be released from incarceration at least six (6) months at the time of application.
3. Shall have one (1) year or more of continuous sobriety, six (6) months of which may be acquired during their incarceration.
4. Must have a letter from their supervising parole / community supervision officer stating that they have satisfactorily completed at least six months of supervision and have their approval to participate in the partner's program. If the sentence was discharged, a copy of the discharge papers showing completion of sentence must be submitted.
5. The partner application must be signed by an approved volunteer that is willing to "sponsor" the Partner. By signing the application, the volunteer attests to the positive characteristics they have seen displayed by the applicant.
6. Approved partners must be accompanied to the unit by the "sponsor" volunteer. (Partner Program AD. 7.36)

## **VI. Guidelines for Volunteer Management**

The following guidelines will be adhered to by all volunteers and staff:

- A. During orientation/training, volunteers shall be cautioned against forming any non-professional, personal/emotional involvement with offenders. Future service as a volunteer will be declined if the volunteer chooses to establish a close personal relationship with an offender.
- B. An approved volunteer (excluding employee volunteers) may correspond with an offender (refer to Correspondence in the Definitions Section). Volunteers shall not reference personal information when corresponding with offenders. (Ex: personal photographs, personal relationships, or personal finances etc.)
- C. No volunteer shall contact the victim of any offender, including a family member who may be the victim. The offender may state that he wants to reconcile with or “make it up” to the victim. It is the responsibility of the TDCJ volunteer to notify volunteer staff if the offender has made such a request, but the volunteer is not to act upon the offender request. While it is understood that restoration, forgiveness, and reconciliation are important aspects of rehabilitation, the right of the victim will always take precedence over the desire of the offender. The victim, if and when he or she chooses to come face to face with his or her offender, can contact Victim Services Division to arrange mediation.
- D. All volunteers shall sign-in and out on an appropriate volunteer log and wear volunteer/visitor badge if required by unit/office.
- E. No volunteer shall enter a unit with a cellular phone, pager, or any other electronic equipment. Access to telephone service on a unit /office will be limited to emergency use only, with the exception of Certified Volunteer Chaplain’s Assistants (CVCA) making telephone calls to a family member of an offender when authorized. Any such calls pertaining to an offender’s family must be made from within the facility. Volunteers shall be advised that calls made from the unit may be monitored by Agency personnel.
- F. Volunteers shall dress in a conservative and responsible manner that is appropriate for the volunteer assignment being performed and adhere to the grooming standards

established herein. Regardless of the volunteer assignment, any attire which is of extreme design, revealing in nature and conveys messages of a derogatory or offensive nature through language, logos or symbols is prohibited. This includes signs or symbols of apparent membership in a Security Threat Group/Gang as evidenced by tattoos or other signs or symbols of membership. Any extreme haircuts, styles or colors are also prohibited. Items that will not be allowed are: jewelry items shall not be worn on the facial areas (e.g., earrings/studs in nose, tongue, or eyebrow), any attire (to include slits in skirts) shorter than three (3) inches above the middle of the knee while standing, sweat suits and wind suits unless they are appropriate for the activity being conducted, any attire that exposes midriff or shoulders, any attire that is considered to be see-through, low-cut (in front or back) or tight-fitting, any all white clothing, open-toed shoes worn without socks or hose. The Agency may take into consideration the type of activity being offered by the volunteers before ruling on whether or not grooming standards or attire are appropriate.

- G. Volunteers shall be provided with safety and security training. Agency safety guidelines should be followed by the volunteer during their service. Volunteers will immediately report an injury to their assigned staff member. The TDCJ staff member will report the injury to the unit/office Risk Management Coordinator and document the injury on the TDCJ Non-Employee Injury Report (RM-03NE Rev.2/04). The unit/office Risk Management Coordinator will investigate the injury and forward the Injury Report to the Agency Risk Management Department. This form shall be retained as determined by Risk Management in the Record Retention Schedule.
- H. Volunteers shall not bring firearms, weapons of any kind, or other contraband onto TDCJ premises. Volunteers shall not carry out any contraband from a unit.
- I. Volunteers shall not be permitted to perform any activity involving the actual receipt or handling of money (either cash or readily negotiable documents such as checks, money orders, state warrants and the like) while performing volunteer/intern services for TDCJ.
- J. Volunteers shall not mail any items of correspondence for offenders. This includes information between different offenders, family members verbal or written.
- K. Volunteers shall not place money in an offender's Trust Fund Account. Exception: family member or individual with whom a relationship was established prior to incarceration and declared to appropriate volunteer staff.

- L. Volunteers may not visit an offender in regular unit visitation. Exception: family member or individual with whom a relationship was established prior to incarceration and declared to appropriate volunteer staff.
- M. Volunteers shall not allow a releasee to reside at their personal place of residence. Exception: family member or individual with whom a relationship was established prior to incarceration and declared to appropriate volunteer staff.
- N. Volunteers shall not have releasees in their homes. Exception: group meeting programs/ activities (i.e., AA/NA meetings).
- O. Volunteers may transport releasees.
- P. Coordination and direct oversight of volunteer activities is provided by staff. Direct oversight does not necessarily imply that the volunteer's assigned staff member must be physically present while the volunteer activity is being performed (i.e., tutoring, teaching, leading support groups, mentoring, training, and performing other similar activities).
- Q. Supervision of offenders is a staff function. Volunteers shall not, under any circumstances, supervise or manage offenders or other volunteers. However, certified volunteer chaplains' assistants and certified substance abuse assistants may coordinate and facilitate religious/substance abuse programming.
- R. Volunteers shall submit proof of qualifications such as licenses, certificates, or other similar items for services that require special training and certification. Documentation of proof shall be kept in the volunteer's file.
- S. Volunteers shall not accept any personal gifts from offenders or give personal gifts to offenders. Exception: See mentoring plan.
- T. Volunteers may use TDCJ office space, supplies, and equipment. TDCJ Wardens/Office Administrators shall maintain control over such usage.
- U. In the event a volunteer has a complaint or concern, he will report it directly to his assigned staff member who will assess the concern, decide if it can be resolved at his level, or report it to the designated divisional volunteer authority. Volunteers may use

the Volunteer Suggestion Form (Appendix K) to provide information to Department/Division staff or to the Volunteer Review Committee (VRC), if appropriate.

- V. Information revealed by an offender to a volunteer that is criminal in nature, or could impact public/unit/office safety must be reported immediately to Agency staff.
  
- W. TDCJ has zero tolerance for sexual misconduct, as defined in PD-29 “Sexual Misconduct with Offenders”. It is a felony offense if anyone, including a volunteer, at a correctional unit, violates the rights of a person in custody or engages in sexual contact, sexual intercourse, or deviant sexual intercourse with a person in custody. Volunteers are prohibited from establishing or continuing in personal relationships with offenders, including engaging in or attempting to engage in any form of consensual sexual misconduct with offenders or forcing or attempting to force offenders to participate in non-consensual sexual misconduct. Volunteers who violate the policy shall not be allowed to continue to perform services for the Agency. It is also the policy that any volunteer who witnesses any such misconduct shall be required to report the misconduct immediately to the Warden/Department Head. A volunteer shall not be subject to harassment, retaliation, intimidation or coercion for reporting a personal employee-offender relationship or any incident of sexual misconduct.
  
- X. Communication with the media regarding any TDCJ business must be approved by the TDCJ Public Information Office prior to contact and dissemination.
  
- Y. TDCJ maintains a drug free workplace. If a volunteer is required to take a prescribed medication while on the unit/office, then only the needed amount in the original container will be kept secured by the volunteer.
  
- Z. Assigned staff member, or other appropriate authority, must be informed of the following:
  - 1. Changes in volunteer’s name, address or phone number;
  - 2. If a relative or friend of the volunteer becomes incarcerated;
  - 3. If a relative or friend is transferred or released to the same unit/office where the volunteer is assigned;
  - 4. If the volunteer becomes personally involved with an offender/releasee; or
  - 5. If the volunteer is arrested.
  
- AA. No one shall proselytize or induce someone to convert to one’s faith or recruit someone

to join one's party, institution, or cause while serving as a volunteer. Volunteers shall not disparage the faith of any offender, nor deliberately seek to influence a change in any offender's denomination.

- BB. Volunteers who violate the policy shall not be allowed to continue to perform services for the Agency.
- CC. Volunteer Suggestion Form (Appendix K) will be available to volunteers in order that they may have input into the TDCJ Volunteer Services' goals and objectives. These forms will be forwarded to each Department/Division administrative staff or the VRC and will be maintained as administratively valuable.
- DD. Volunteers shall not carry messages from an offender or to an offender either in written or verbal form. This includes making or accepting personal calls for or from offenders/offender's family members and passing information to and from other offenders.
- EE. Prior to the date of the scheduled event, volunteers, volunteer groups, or special volunteers must submit a list of items they intend to bring into the facility to the Warden or his designee. Volunteers are allowed to bring in electronic musical devices to include PA systems and components, such as microphones and speakers, and portable music players needed for background music, laptop computers **without broadband** capability. Other electronic devices allowed include amplifiers and instruments used with amplifiers. Before laptop computers are allowed on the unit the volunteer will sign an affidavit stating that the laptop computer does not have Broadband capabilities. No PDA, Blackberry, cell phone units or any variations of these type of units are allowed on the unit at any time.

## **VII. Placement of Volunteers**

- A. While preferences of the volunteers shall be considered, placement of volunteers will be based on the needs of the unit/offices, needs of the offender population, space availability, existing program schedules, and the volunteer activity itself.
- B. Approved volunteers shall sign the Volunteer Assignment Description Form (Appendix G), which will become a part of the Unit/Office Volunteer File, and will be updated as necessary. This form shall be submitted with an exit form and become part of the

volunteer's permanent file or kept on the unit as administratively valuable.

- C. All approved volunteers shall agree in writing to abide by Agency policies relating to security and confidentiality of all records and information, both written and verbal, which pertains to employees, offenders, and releasees. A volunteer may have access to confidential information on an as needed basis as approved by the appropriate department and applicable Warden or unit/office administrator or their designee.

### **VIII. Declining Volunteers and Resignations**

- A. The Agency may decline the services of a volunteer for any reason other than race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, genetic information or age (18 years or older).
- B. A volunteer who has resigned or has been inactive for one (1) year or longer, and wishes to return to service shall re-apply, complete the Volunteer Application Form (Appendix F), and attend Volunteer Training and Orientation prior to resuming volunteer services. Departments/Divisions shall screen volunteer records once per year and volunteers who have not provided services during the last 12 months shall change to delete status.
- C. In the event a volunteer violates Agency rules or does not perform responsibilities in accordance with the assignment description or expectations, the volunteer's assigned staff member shall be notified and consult with the division's designated volunteer authority who shall take or recommend appropriate action. Action may include, transfer to another assignment, temporary suspension, retraining or decline further volunteer services.
- D. When a violation of policy occurs, the unit/office staff will complete the Volunteer Violation of Policy Form (Appendix H) and a copy will be sent to the Departmental/Divisional Volunteer Administrator for review. If the volunteer's status needs to be changed or if comments need to be added to the VS00, this information should be obtained from the Violation of Policy Form. When a violation warrants a volunteer being exited, a copy of the form must be sent to the VCC Coordinator and all other department/division notified. A copy of the form will be placed in the volunteer's file and the information will be available if future employment with the TDCJ is sought as described in the Acknowledgement of Training/Orientation Form (Appendix E).
- E. If a volunteer resigns their status shall be changed to delete.

## IX. Recordkeeping and Reporting of Volunteer Statistics/Activities

In order to accurately record volunteer services within the TDCJ, each Department/Division shall report all monthly volunteer statistics/activities to the VCC Coordinator.

### A. Definitions for Volunteer Statistics:

**Correspondence** - Correspondence shall not be considered an offender or victim contact and shall not be reported as such.

**Cumulative (C)** - In statistical reports, the cumulative number (C) for each volunteer category shall reflect the total volunteer activity to date.

**Fiscal Year Total** - The statistics for all volunteer categories shall start from a zero balance EXCEPT for the number of approved volunteers, employee volunteers, certified volunteer chaplains' assistants and any carry-over student intern volunteers. (Fiscal year is September 1 – August 31.)

**Monthly (M)** - In statistical reports, the monthly number (M) for each volunteer category shall reflect that volunteer activity for the reporting month.

**Offender or Victim Contacts** - The number of times an offender or victim has been provided some type of rehabilitative service, activity or program from an individual volunteer or volunteer group. (Note: The same offender or victim may have multiple contacts with volunteers depending on the rehabilitative programming in which the offender or victim is participating.)

**Training** – the actual number of volunteers that have completed volunteer training/orientation for the reporting month.

**Volunteer Hours** - The actual number of hours a volunteer has spent in providing some type of rehabilitative activity or service for offenders or victims.

### B. TDCJ Monthly Volunteer Report will be completed by each department/division and forwarded to VCC Coordinator on a monthly basis. These monthly reports will become a part of the Volunteer Fiscal Report that will be maintained in the record retention schedule as administratively valuable.

C. TDCJ Non-Employee Injury Report (Appendix J) as described in Risk Management (RM-25) establishes the Risk Management Department responsible for the investigation and reporting of all accidents and injuries occurring on Agency owned or leased property. Upon notification of a non-employee injury the Department Head of the department where the injury occurred shall immediately notify the following Agency personnel:

- Unit Risk Manager if the injury occurs within the cognizance of the secure unit/office.
- Risk Management Headquarters, if the injury occurs outside of the cognizance of a unit/office.

The respective Risk Management Office shall maintain reports of all TDCJ non-employee injuries, to include investigation, in accordance with the current Agency Records Retention schedule.

D. TDCJ Special Volunteer Approval Form (Appendix D) will be sent to the department/division designated staff to be maintained for the calendar year. Each department/division's designated staff shall maintain records of special volunteer activity including the number of special volunteer visits, number of special volunteer hours served, and number of offender/victims contacts by special volunteers.

E. Rosters of those individuals participating in volunteer training along with the Acknowledgement of Training/Orientation Form shall be completed at the training location. For security training, these forms will be forwarded to the appropriate department/division. A copy of the roster will also be sent to the CID Regional Offices. For training in a parole office the roster and Acknowledgement of Training/Orientation Form will be maintained in that office. The number of volunteer trainings held and the number of individuals trained will be reported to the VCC Coordinator. Rosters will be maintained for one calendar year and the Acknowledgement of Training/Orientation Form will become a part of the volunteer's file.

F. The volunteer staff shall submit a monthly statistical and narrative report (Appendix I) by the 10th of each month to their department/division's volunteer staff. The division's designated volunteer staff shall submit a monthly statistical volunteer report for that division to the VCC Coordinator by the third Friday of each month. A fiscal year summary of all monthly reports shall be submitted to the VCC Coordinator within three (3) weeks of the previous fiscal year's end. The monthly report shall include the following information: number of approved volunteers (to include employee volunteers,

ex-offenders, mentors, partners, and student interns), volunteer visits, volunteer hours, offender/victim contacts, special volunteer visits, special volunteer hours, and offenders contacted by special volunteers.

- G. Each department/division's designated staff shall enter data into the Volunteer Tracking System (VS00) to record volunteer activity as required by the VS00. This database shall serve as the official record for all users regarding the volunteer's status, history of visits and other necessary information. The database will be maintained for all approved volunteers. Those in a denied status will be maintained as long as administratively valuable and those becoming inactive they will be held for (3) years once their status has been changed to delete.

## **X. Volunteer Files**

- A. The Master Volunteer File (paper file) for approved volunteers will be held by Central Administration Staff for all department/division areas with the exception of the Parole Division which will be maintained at the Parole Office where the volunteer was assigned. These files will be maintained for three years after the volunteer has a status of delete. Volunteer files with a status of denied due to rule violations will be maintained as administratively valuable by all departments/divisions. Individuals who apply to be an approved volunteer but fail to complete the necessary training or fail to submit required documents/licenses within the allotted timeframe will be classified as incomplete and the Volunteer file will be destroyed. Individuals who apply for approved volunteer status but are denied due to their background check will be classified as denied and documents received will be maintained as administratively valuable.
- B. The electronic file (VS00) is created when a completed application is received by each department/division. The VS00 serves as a record of volunteer status and a history of visits and will be maintained three years after the volunteer's status has been changed to delete. Volunteers with a denied status will be maintained as administratively valuable. Individuals who apply for approved volunteer status but fail to complete the necessary training and/or submission of documents in the required length of time will be classified as deleted. Individuals who apply for approved volunteer status but are denied due to their background check will be classified as denied.
- C. The Master Volunteer File will contain the following documents:
- TDCJ Acknowledgement of Training/Orientation

- Volunteer Application (Volunteer Background Questionnaire will be removed and destroyed after volunteer application is processed)
- TDCJ Volunteer Exit Form (when appropriate)
- TDCJ Volunteer Assignment Form (Parole and Victim Services only – all other Departments/Divisions shall maintain the form in the Unit/Office File)
- Criminal History (NCIC/TCIC)
- Pertinent Licenses/Certification

**XI. Implementation and Monitoring of Volunteer-led Activities and Services**

The VCC has established that each Department/Division that utilizes volunteers shall establish monitoring functions to ensure volunteer-led activities and services achieve Departmental/Divisional objectives and contribute to the Agency’s mission. Each Department/Division shall have direct oversight of volunteer-led activities and services which could include receiving, reviewing, approving and monitoring. The VCC shall review the procedures for all Departments/Divisions as appropriate.

**XII. Recognition of Volunteers**

Recognizing the valuable contributions of volunteers is an important part of the volunteer program. Volunteers shall be recognized annually with a formal Volunteer Recognition Event or informally, with a letter and certificate of appreciation.

Local or regional events must be coordinated with appropriate division volunteer administrator designees. The Agency-wide annual volunteer awards ceremony will be coordinated by the VCC and its Chair. In all cases, awards, events, or ceremonies provided by the Agency must adhere to the financial limits set forth in Texas Government Code Ann. Chapter 2109 (Vernon 2000).

**XIII. Volunteer Review Committee**

- A. The VRC shall be a standing committee that will consist of three members or their designees:
- Director of Rehabilitation and Reentry.
  - Director of Correctional Institutions Division or Director of Parole Division.
  - VCC Member from the appropriate program area.
- B. Members of this committee will be determined by the area in which issues have arisen. The functions of the VRC are as follows:

- Review submitted justifications from wardens/office administrators regarding placement denial of approved volunteers.
- Review volunteer plan violations, volunteer suggestion form and other related volunteer issues (Appendix M).

## **APPENDIX OF VOLUNTEER FORMS**

### **A. Notice to Attend Training**

*Purpose:* To notify individuals of approval of their volunteer applications.

### **B. Letter of Disapproval**

*Purpose:* To notify individuals of disapproval of their volunteer applications.

### **C. Special Volunteer Letter of Orientation**

*Purpose:* A letter of orientation is to be sent to a special volunteer or leader of a group of special volunteers before a visit is made. This letter will be sent from the unit/office volunteer staff and will provide basic rules of conduct.

### **D. Special Volunteer Approval Form**

*Purpose:* This form is sent from unit/office volunteer staff to the special volunteer group and is to be returned to the volunteer staff at least seven (7) days in advance of the planned visit. It is used for recordkeeping purposes, and to obtain a list of individuals who are not approved volunteers and who want to participate in an event or activity.

### **E. Acknowledgment of Training/Orientation Form**

*Purpose:* This form, approved by the TDCJ Office of General Counsel, should provide acknowledgment of responsibilities, duties, rules, risks, and other similar information. It is to be kept as a written record throughout a volunteer's active tenure and for three (3) years after becoming inactive. After receipt of the acknowledgement of training/orientation form the volunteer status will be updated to approved.

### **F. Volunteer Application Form and Volunteer Background Questionnaire**

*Purpose:* An application form and background questionnaire should be used in order to provide the information necessary to screen volunteer applicants.

**G. Volunteer Assignment Description Form**

*Purpose:* This form should be used to get a detailed description of the activity or event the volunteer will be participating in. A copy will be maintained by the appropriate unit/staff staff. If the volunteer violates policy and is exited, this form should be attached to the violation of policy form

**H. Volunteer Violation of Policy Form**

*Purpose:* This form shall be completed by the unit/office staff whenever a violation of policy has occurred. This form should then be sent to the Departmental/Divisional Volunteer Administrator for review. If the volunteer is being exited a copy of the Violation of Policy Form will be provided to the VCC Coordinator.

**I. Monthly Volunteer Report**

*Purpose:* This report shall be sent to the Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division office by the third Friday of each month to report the divisional/departamental monthly volunteer activities. The statistics will be compiled and reported on a monthly basis by the Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division office

**J. TDCJ Non-Employee Injury Report**

RM-03NE Rev (2/04)

*Purpose:* This report shall be completed by the volunteer staff/designee that is reporting the injury of a volunteer. The report shall be completed immediately upon being notified by the volunteer that an injury has occurred. If the injury occurs within the cognizance of a secure unit, the report shall be forwarded to the Unit Risk Manager. If the injury occurs outside of the cognizance of a unit, the report shall be forwarded to the Risk Management Headquarters, Huntsville.

**K. Volunteer Suggestion Form**

*Purpose:* This form may be completed by the volunteer and submitted to department/division staff or mailed to the Volunteer Review Committee, Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division, P.O. Box 99, Huntsville, TX 77342.

**L. Memorandum of Agreement**

*Purpose:* The purpose of this Memorandum is to enter into an agreement with a University to allow a student intern access to TDCJ. The form will be used when the student intern will not have direct contact with the offender population.

**M. Volunteer Review Committee Form**

*Purpose:* The purpose of this form is to review volunteer plan violations, or other related volunteer issues (Appendix M).

**Volunteer Services  
Notice to Attend Training**

Area of Interest

Windham    Substance Abuse    Victim Services    Chaplaincy    Sex Offender Treatment    Parole

**ATTN:**

**This is not a letter of approval; TDCJ training must be completed before approved**

**No firearms of any kind are allowed on state property (including parking lots)**

**No Cellular Phones/Pagers are allowed in the facility**

Date

«First\_Name» «Last\_Name»

«Address\_1»

«City», «State» «Postal\_Code»

Dear «Title» «Last\_Name»,

**Thank you for choosing to serve as a volunteer in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Your successful involvement as a volunteer is important and we will work with you to make your experience with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice a meaningful one.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** IN ORDER TO BE ALLOWED ENTRANCE TO THE TRAINING/ORIENTATION SESSION, YOU MUST **PRESENT THIS LETTER**. THERE WILL BE **NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY**. IF YOU DO NOT **ATTEND A TRAINING SESSION WITHIN SIX (6) MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS LETTER, YOUR APPLICATION WILL BECOME NULL AND VOID**. ENCLOSED YOU WILL FIND THE SCHEDULED TRAINING SESSIONS; **PLEASE CALL THE FACILITY TO CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE PRIOR TO THE DATE OF TRAINING**.

**Do not invite anyone who has not been approved through proper channels to attend this training with you.** Do not bring children or pets to the training site. Please remember it is important for you to adhere to a very strict dress code. Shorts, halter-tops, crop tops, sleeveless shirts, tight clothing, sandals, or any other clothing that is revealing is not appropriate. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact this office prior to attending the training/orientation session.

**For security reasons, you may not visit units as an approved volunteer until your name is added to the roster available at the units.** Your name will be **updated** as approved approximately three (3) to four (4) weeks after your training is completed. Please remember that you must **call before** visiting any TDCJ facility, and you will be **required** to show picture identification at all times.

Please Note: If your address or phone number changes while you serve as a volunteer, informing this office will permit us to keep you informed of Agency news.

Again, thank you for your interest in Volunteer Services. With your help, we can make a difference!

Sincerely,

Department/Division Volunteer Staff

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix A

## Volunteer Services

### Area of Interest

Windham    Substance Abuse    Victim Services    Chaplaincy    Sex Offender Treatment    Parole

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear (Name):

We appreciate your interest to serve as a volunteer with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in the Volunteer Services Program.

We regret to inform you that your application for the Volunteer Services Program was not approved. If you have any questions, please contact the appropriate department.

Sincerely,

---

Department/Division Volunteer Staff

cc: File

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix B

## Volunteer Services

### Special Volunteer Letter of Orientation Unit Level

**No firearms of any kind are allowed on state property (including parking lots)**

**No Cellular Phones/Pagers are allowed in the facility**

**Prior approval must be obtained before bringing any items (musical instruments, literature, amplifiers, etc).**

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Special Volunteer,

Prior to service with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), it is requested that you and/or group read and become familiar with the following information. It identifies rules of conduct that have been established to ensure the safe functioning of the unit and the welfare of our volunteers, staff and offenders. With approval, special volunteers may visit a facility no more than four (4) times or events per year.

#### RULES OF CONDUCT:

- Because you have requested to come into a TDCJ facility, as a part of a system to change behavior, you are encouraged and expected to demonstrate integrity in everything you do.
- All special programs, groups and volunteers are under the direct oversight of the appropriate staff.
- Programs will be scheduled according to the needs of offenders, and the availability of space, time and security supervision-
- You cannot perform volunteer services on a unit where you may have a relative or friend incarcerated.
- Please dress in a manner appropriate to the occasion and service. Avoid carrying large sums of money, avoid wearing expensive jewelry, provocative or suggestive clothing, any attire that is of extreme design, revealing in nature, or any attire or haircut style that conveys messages of a derogatory or offensive nature through language, logos or symbols. For security purposes, wearing all white clothing on a unit is prohibited.
- Cold weather clothing (e.g., coats, gloves, scarves, hats, boots, or other similar cold weather clothing) shall be secured as determined by unit/department staff. Do not leave clothing or any other personal items unattended.
- Appropriate staff must be notified in advance if you have a prescription or non-prescription drug in your possession while on the Unit.
- Refer all offender requests to the department/division volunteer staff and any problem or situation that arises about which you are in doubt. **ASK BEFORE YOU ACT!**
- Do not mail any items, correspondence, etc. for offenders.
- Do not accept personal gifts from offenders.
- Do not give money to an offender or his family, either directly or indirectly. Do not deposit money into an offender's account.

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix C Unit Level

**Page 2 of 2**

## Orientation Letter

- No one shall disparage the faith of any offender, nor deliberately seek to influence a change in any offender's denomination. Religious programs will not be used to proselytize from any group.
- In the event you are taken hostage, the Department will not bargain for your release. Also, TDCJ will not be held liable and/or responsible in the case of personal injuries while you are on the Unit.
- In the event that you are sued as a result of performing services, the State of Texas will not indemnify you and will not provide a defense to such litigation.
- Uniformed officers are for the protection of all. Their orders are to be obeyed at all times.
- Information gathered and maintained by TDCJ in connection with the supervision of offenders is confidential and privileged by statute, and shall not be disclosed to anyone other than those persons entitled to receive such information under Texas law.
- Some information related to substance abuse treatment is further made confidential by federal law, and may not be disclosed to anyone except as provided by that law.
- Professional behavior and good common sense are essential to your participation.

There are many rules and regulations not covered in this letter which are to protect offenders, staff and you. Please consult staff members concerning any questions you may have regarding policy or procedure.

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with TDCJ. The investment of your time is an important contribution, which provides interaction between the criminal justice system and the community. This interaction is a key element in the rehabilitation process.

Sincerely,

---

Unit Staff

## Volunteer Services

### Special Volunteer Letter of Orientation Office Level

#### No firearms of any kind are allowed on state property (including parking lots)

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Special Volunteer,

Prior to service with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), it is requested that you and/or group read and become familiar with the following information. It identifies the rules of conduct that have been established to ensure the safe functioning of the office and the welfare of our volunteers and staff. With approval, special volunteers may visit a facility no more than four (4) times or events per year.

#### RULES OF CONDUCT:

- Because you have requested to come into a TDCJ Parole Office, as a part of a system to change behavior, you are encouraged and expected to demonstrate integrity in everything you do.
- All special programs, groups and volunteers are under the direct oversight of the appropriate staff.
- Volunteer services and activities will be scheduled according to the needs of offenders, and the availability of space, time and staff availability.
- Please dress in a manner appropriate to the occasion and service. Avoid carrying large sums of money, avoid wearing expensive jewelry, provocative or suggestive clothing, any attire that is of extreme design, revealing in nature, or any attire or haircut style that conveys messages of a derogatory or offensive nature through language, logos or symbols.
- Do not leave personal items unattended.
- Refer all offender requests to the volunteer staff and any problem or situation that arises about which you are in doubt. **ASK BEFORE YOU ACT!**
- Do not accept personal gifts from offenders.
- Do not give money to an offender or his family, either directly or indirectly.
- No one shall disparage the faith of any offender, nor deliberately seek to influence a change in any offender's denomination. Religious programs will not be used to proselytize from any group-
- TDCJ will not be held liable and/or responsible in the case of personal injuries while you are in the office.
- In the event that you are sued as a result of performing services, the State of Texas will not indemnify you and will not provide a defense to such litigation.
- Information gathered and maintained by TDCJ in connection with the supervision of offenders is confidential and privileged by statute, and shall not be disclosed to anyone other than those persons entitled to receive such information under Texas law.
- Some information related to substance abuse treatment is further made confidential by federal law, and may not be disclosed to anyone except as provided by that law.
- Professional behavior and good common sense are essential to your participation.

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix C Office Level

**Page 2 of 2**

## Orientation Letter

There are many rules and regulations not covered in this letter which are to protect offenders, staff and you. Please consult staff members concerning any questions you may have regarding policy or procedure.

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with TDCJ. The investment of your time is an important contribution, which provides interaction between the criminal justice system and the community. This interaction is a key element in the rehabilitation process.

Sincerely,

---

Office Staff



<b>TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b>					
<b>Acknowledgment of Training/Orientation</b>					
Area of Interest					
<input type="checkbox"/> Windham	<input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Chaplaincy	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex Offender Treatment	<input type="checkbox"/> Parole

I have attended volunteer training/orientation at \_\_\_\_\_ (location) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) and understand the information presented regarding TDCJ rules, volunteer task expectations and responsibilities.

I have received a copy of the *TDCJ Volunteer Services Orientation/Training Handbook for Volunteers.*

I understand the following:

1. I shall comply with all security and program regulations and requirements of the TDCJ to the best of my ability. Failure to comply or violation of rules or program procedures may result in my services being declined as a volunteer from all TDCJ facilities or offices and will be cause for forfeiture of future volunteer participation or employment with the TDCJ. My services as a volunteer/intern may be declined by me or the TDCJ for any reason (other than discrimination as per policy).
2. I understand that I must immediately inform the Warden/Office Administrator, or other appropriate authority, about any act that might result in harm to any individual or threaten the security of the unit/office.
3. I must cooperate with any investigation conducted by the TDCJ.
4. I understand and hereby state that I agree to maintain confidentiality of all records and information, both written and verbal, which pertains to employees, offenders or releasees within the TDCJ. I understand that I may incur a penalty for disclosure of such information, i.e., criminal prosecution or civil suit.
5. I must inform my assigned staff member, or other appropriate authority, of the following: changes in my address or phone number; if a relative or friend becomes incarcerated or is transferred to the unit/office where I volunteer; if I become personally involved with an offender/releasee; or if I am arrested.
6. I attest that I have been fully advised of and clearly understand the following:
  - a. The property that I seek to enter is under the supervision and control of the TDCJ and is a place of confinement or supervision for individuals who have been convicted of crimes and who are serving or completing their sentences.
  - b. Offenders/releasees who are confined or are supervised on this property may have been convicted of violent crimes and may be permitted to move freely in some areas in which I may be present.
  - c. Criminal prosecution may result if I introduce any drugs, weapons, or contraband onto State property.
  - d. There are inherent risks that I may encounter as a volunteer due to the nature of the Agency's mission. I assume all risks that may result from the operation of the unit /office.
  - e. It is a felony offense if a volunteer, at a correctional unit, violates the rights of a person in custody or engages in sexual contact, sexual intercourse, or deviant sexual intercourse with a person in custody.
7. I understand and agree that I will not:
  - a. Accept gifts from or give gifts to offenders.
  - b. Conduct business transactions with offenders/releasees or their families.
  - c. Participate in receipt or handling of money (either cash or warrants, and the like) or personal funds of offenders/releasees; collect or distribute restitution owed by offenders/releasees; **or contribute to offender trust funds.**
  - d. Give legal advice to offenders/releasees.
  - e. Interfere with law enforcement investigation of offenders/releasees.
  - f. Give public statements about general or specific offenders/releasees.
  - g. Give personal information to offenders, except approved mentor volunteers.

- h. Allow releasee to reside at my personal place of residence exception family members or an offender that was previously identified as a relationship that existed prior to their incarceration.
  - i. Have releasees in my home, exceptions are group meetings/activities (i.e. AA/NA).
  - j. I shall not visit an offender in regular unit visitation with the exception of family members or an offender that was previously identified as a relationship that existed prior to their incarceration.
8. I shall report or notify my assigned staff member or appropriate authority in advance if I am unable to report to my volunteer station at the scheduled time. While performing my volunteer duties, I will conduct myself in a professional manner and dress in conservative attire. I agree to be cooperative, courteous, reliable, and to obey all rules and follow given instructions.
  9. I understand that as a participant in the TDCJ Volunteer Program, I am not a TDCJ employee and therefore I am not entitled to any compensation or employment benefits. I am not covered by Worker's Compensation, retirement or leave accrual. I will not be reimbursed for mileage, parking, meals or other volunteer related expenses.
  10. I understand that my volunteer/intern participation does not guarantee future employment with the TDCJ, and that I may not be awarded a future contract(s) to provide services to the TDCJ.
  11. I understand that I am not an agent of the TDCJ, and I will not make any commitment on behalf of the TDCJ to third parties.
  12. I, the undersigned, do hereby waive and release any and all rights to claims of any kind or nature which may exist or accrue in the future against the TDCJ, its personnel, employees, staff or agents because of, as a result of, or in connection with the duties, responsibilities and service which I will undertake with offenders under the supervision of the TDCJ.
  13. I understand that in the event that I am sued as a result of my performing services as a volunteer/intern, the State of Texas will not indemnify me and will not provide me a defense to such litigation.
  14. Volunteers who work with victims must abide by TDCJ Victim Services Division policies and procedures.

_____ Printed Name of Volunteer	
_____ Signature of Volunteer	_____ Drivers License Number
_____ Signature of Training Instructor	_____ Date Signed
<b><i>Acknowledgment of Department Orientation</i></b> I have received further orientation by the appropriate department regarding rules, volunteer service expectations and responsibilities.	
_____ Signature of Volunteer	_____ Date Signed
_____ Signature of Department/Division Volunteer Staff	_____ Date Signed

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

**PERSONAL INFORMATION (Please Print)**

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Last, First, MI) Street City State Zip
3. Primary Phone# ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary Phone # ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_
4. SSN \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Driver's License State \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_
6. Other Names \_\_\_\_\_ (Maiden or Alias) 7. What foreign language do you speak? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Current Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_
9. Have you ever been employed by the TDCJ?  yes  no If yes, give division, department, location, title and dates of employment: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Are you a victim of or related to any TDCJ offender or releasee now supervised by the TDCJ?  yes  no  
 Name of Offender \_\_\_\_\_ ID#: \_\_\_\_\_ Facility: \_\_\_\_\_  Victim  Relative
11. List any other offender that you are visiting in unit visitation or knew prior to their incarceration.  
 Name of Offender \_\_\_\_\_ ID#: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Facility \_\_\_\_\_  
 Attach additional information if needed.

**Please Use This Section to Indicate Program Areas of Interest for Volunteer Service**

- Chaplaincy**  **Substance Abuse Treatment Program**  
*Religious preference* \_\_\_\_\_ *Fellowship:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Sobriety Date:* \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
- Windham School District**  **Sex Offender Treatment Program**  **Parole Division**  **Victim Services**  
*Unit of interest* \_\_\_\_\_
- Will volunteer in:**  **Prison Setting**  **Parole Office**  **TTC/Halfway House**  **Student Intern**

**Criminal History**

**NOTE: For the security and safety of volunteers, offenders and employees, criminal histories of applicants are reviewed, and may require fingerprinting in some instances. If volunteer applicants have previous felony convictions, they are not necessarily excluded from participation. All applications will be reviewed and receive a response. \*When answering questions, include all convictions. Do not include any violation of the law committed before your 17th birthday if the final decision was made in juvenile court or under a youth offender law or any conviction record that was expunged under federal or state law or minor traffic violations.**

1. Have you ever served time in any adult correctional facility?  Yes  No  
 If yes: Years served \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ID # \_\_\_\_\_
2. Have you ever been a member of a gang?  Yes  No  
 If yes, name and description of gang: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you have any criminal charges currently pending?  Yes  No  
 If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you now or have you ever been placed on probation or parole?  Yes  No  
 If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Have you ever forfeited property/bond as a result of being charged with any criminal act?  Yes  No  
 If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Have you ever been convicted of a crime?  Yes  No

Convicted includes deferred adjudication, community supervision, and those that may not appear on record at this time, but excludes minor traffic violations. If yes, provide the information below: (Attach additional information if needed)

When: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Charges: \_\_\_\_\_ Disposition: \_\_\_\_\_

**Felony**  **Misdemeanor**

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Mo. Day Year

Please complete all information and mail both pages to:

*For All Program Areas:* Volunteer Services/TDCJ  
TDCJ  
P.O. Box 99  
Huntsville, TX 77342-0099

*For Windham School District:* TDCJ/ Windham School District  
Division of Instruction  
P.O. Box 40  
Huntsville, TX 77342-0040

**VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE**

*\*The form is to be kept separate from the Volunteer Application*

This information is needed for TDCJ to conduct a criminal history check to determine whether access to TDCJ units, facilities, and offices should be approved. Please be sure to provide **ALL** of the information requested.

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last, First, MI)
2. Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Primary Phone #: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary Phone #: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_
4. Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth: City \_\_\_\_\_ ST \_\_\_\_\_
5. Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Driver's License State \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_
7. Sex:  Female  Male 9. Other names used (maiden, alias, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
8. Race:  White  Black  Hispanic  Amer. Indian  Asian or Pacific Island  Other \_\_\_\_\_



**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**  
**Violation of Policy Form**

Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last, First, MI)

Unit/Office where violation occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License State/Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Volunteer's assignment: \_\_\_\_\_  
Attach Volunteer Assignment Description form

2. Beginning date of service: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Most recent training date: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Describe violation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Check action taken and explain:

- Change volunteer's responsibility \_\_\_\_\_
- Require retraining \_\_\_\_\_
- Transfer volunteer to another unit/office \_\_\_\_\_
- Temporary Suspension \_\_\_\_\_
- Volunteer's services are declined \_\_\_\_\_
- Volunteer resigned \_\_\_\_\_

6. Was the volunteer notified of action? (Yes/No)      7. By Whom? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Method of contact?     Phone     Email     Letter

9. Copy will be placed in volunteer's unit/office file and original sent to department/division staff.

10. Include all copies of documentation to be used to make the final decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ Unit/Office Staff

\_\_\_\_\_ Unit/Office Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_ Department/Division Staff

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix H

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
MONTHLY VOLUNTEER REPORT**

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last, First, MI)

Volunteer Activity	Month
<i>CHAPLAINCY</i>	
<b>APPRV'D VOL.:</b>	
# Approved Volunteers	
# Mentors	
# Vol. Chaplains Assistant	
# Vol. Employees	
# X-Offenders	
# Apprv'd Vol. Visits	
# Apprv'd Vol. Hours	
# Apprv'd Vol. Offender Contacts	
<b>SPEC VOL.:</b>	
# Spec Vol. Visits	
# Spec Vol. Hours	
# Spec Vol. Offender Contacts	
<i>PAROLE DIVISION</i>	
<b>APPRV'D VOL.:</b>	
# Approved Volunteers	
# Apprv'd Mentors	
# Apprv'd Vol. Employees	
# Vol. Student Interns	
# X-Offenders	
# Apprv'd Vol. Visits	
# Apprv'd Vol. Hours	
# Apprv'd Vol. Offender Contacts	
<b>SPEC VOL.:</b>	
# Spec Vol. Visits	
# Spec Vol. Hours	
# Spec Vol. Offender Contacts	
<i>SATP</i>	
<b>APPRV'D VOL.:</b>	
# Apprv'd Volunteers	
# Partner	
# Vol Employees	
# Vol. Student Interns	
# X-Offenders	
# Apprv'd Vol. Visits	
# Apprv'd Vol. Hours	

# Apprv'd Vol. Offender Contacts	
# Apprv'd Partner Visits	
<b>SPEC VOL.:</b>	
# Spec Vol. Visits	
# Spec Vol. Hours	
# Spec Vol. Offender Contacts	
<i>SOTP</i>	
<b>APPRV'D VOL.:</b>	
# Apprv'd Volunteers	
# Vol. Employees	
# Vol. Student Interns	
# Apprv'd Vol. Visits	
# Apprv'd Vol. Hours	
# Apprv'd Vol. Offender Contacts	
<b>SPEC VOL.:</b>	
# Spec Vol. Visits	
# Spec Vol. Hours	
# Spec Vol. Offender Contacts	
<i>VICTIM SERVICES</i>	
<b>APPRV'D VOL.:</b>	
# Apprv'd Volunteers	
# Vol. Employees	
# Vol. Student Interns	
# Apprv'd Vol. Visits	
# Apprv'd Vol. Hours	
# Apprv'd Vol. Offender Contacts	
# Apprv'd. Vol. Victim Contacts	
<b>SPEC VOL.:</b>	
# Spec Vol. Visits	
# Spec Vol. Hours	
# Spec Vol. Offender Contacts	
# Spec Vol. Victim Contacts	
<i>WSD</i>	
<b>APPRV'D VOL.:</b>	
# Apprv'd Volunteers	
# Vol. Employees	
# Vol. Student Interns	
# Apprv'd Vol. Visits	
# Apprv'd Vol. Hours	
# Apprv'd Vol. Offender Contacts	
<b>SPEC VOL.:</b>	
# Spec Vol. Visits	
# Spec Vol. Hours	
# Spec Vol. Offender Contacts	

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix I

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
NON-EMPLOYEE INJURY REPORT  
UNIT: \_\_\_\_\_**

Name:	_____	
	Last, First, M.	
Address:	_____	
	Mailing Address	
	_____	
	City, State, Zip	
Date of Birth:	_____	
Date of Injury:	_____ Day of Week: _____ Time: _____ AM/PM	
Describe how injury occurred: _____		
_____		
_____		
_____		
_____		
Part of Body Injured: _____ Type of Injury: _____		
Reporting Supervisor's Name: _____		
Signature: _____		
Investigation Results: _____		
_____		
_____		
_____		
_____	_____	_____
Unit Risk Manager's Name	Signature	Date

RM-03NE Rev (2/04)

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix J

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
VOLUNTEER SUGGESTION FORM**

Unit/Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Last*
*First*
*MI*

Please indicate on the scale below your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements. A rating of 1 indicates that you disagree with the statement, a rating of 5 indicates that you agree.

	<u><i>Disagree</i></u>				<u><i>Agree</i></u>
1. My volunteer assignment is satisfying and meaningful.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My volunteer service is effective.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My qualifications are well matched to the task.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Training provided adequate preparation and guidelines.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Staff is supportive and treats me as a team member.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Department/Division staff provide clear guidelines.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Department/Division staff are available and helpful to answer questions and provide instruction as needed.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The unit/office is prepared for my visits.	1	2	3	4	5

***Please answer the following questions:***

9. How long have you served as a volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_(years/months)

10. How frequently do you report as a volunteer?  
 weekly     monthly     other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. On average, how many hours do you spend on each volunteer visit? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What have you enjoyed least about the volunteer assignment?

***Continued...***

13. What have you enjoyed most about the volunteer assignment?

14. What changes would help you do your assignment better?

15. What other volunteer assignments would be of interest to you?

***Additional Comments:***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Program Area

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Date

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
AMONG**

**\_\_\_\_\_ (“UNIVERSITY”)**

**AND**

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE (“TDCJ”)**

**AND**

**\_\_\_\_\_ (“STUDENT INTERN”)**

**Purpose and Description:**

The purpose of this Memorandum of Agreement is to enter into an agreement with the University to allow access and insight into the criminal justice field and to provide them with a working knowledge of how TDCJ functions. The goal is to contribute to the enrichment of the educational process and to establish a stronger relationship between the educators at the University and TDCJ. This will also allow the student a chance to explore the variety of job opportunities that are available throughout the TDCJ system and give the student the chance to decide what field or department the student would like to pursue.

**Responsibilities of the University:**

Appoint a University official to serve as a liaison between the University and TDCJ on matters relating to the Student Intern Program (“SIP”). This person will be responsible for providing information to TDCJ concerning students who have applied for the SIP and all requested background information regarding the intern.

Contact highly qualified members of the student body regarding internship opportunities with TDCJ.

Authorize students to perform intern services without regard to race, religion, sex, age, national origin, or physical handicap.

Report to TDCJ any disciplinary actions or proven acts of misconduct concerning the intern while attending University, where policy permits.

Notify the TDCJ liaison when the student intern no longer satisfies the academic standards of the University.

**Responsibilities of TDCJ:**

Appoint an official to serve as liaison with the University on matters pertaining to the SIP.

Select only students who have been approved by the University to participate in the SIP.

Brief the University liaison person as to the qualifications that TDCJ requires in order to approve the student intern.

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix L

Ensure that the student intern receives valuable and educational work assignments and provide a flexible work schedule to allow the student intern a chance to continue to attend classes.

Keep a record that evaluates a student's job performance and job duties that the student has performed.

Notify the University liaison if the student intern has dropped from the program because of unsatisfactory job performance, interest, or disciplinary problems.

Ensure that all applicants for the SIP are evaluated and selected without regard to race, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability.

Maintain a log concerning the total number of hours worked by the intern during the internship program and provide this information to the University liaison at the end of the internship program.

### **Responsibilities of Student:**

Complete all written assignments required by the University liaison in regard to the SIP.

Maintain a regular and consistent work attendance record during the hours that are scheduled by the TDCJ liaison. Absences must be reported to the University liaison in order for the student to make up these absences at a later date.

Maintain regular attendance at any University meetings, conferences, or other functions for which the student intern is required to attend.

Fulfill, in a professional manner, all the duties and responsibilities assigned by the supervisor. Special emphasis is placed on absolute commitment to the principle of confidentiality regarding sensitive information to which the intern may be allowed access.

Execute a confidentiality agreement, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

Execute an Internship Release and Indemnity Agreement, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit "B".

Comply with the TDCJ Volunteer Policy AD-7.35.

Complete required volunteer training.

### **Description of Work:**

The duties of the student intern will be to participate as a volunteer in performing various types of work assignments in the criminal justice field under the guidance of TDCJ personnel.

The student intern, working without compensation, will not be considered an employee of TDCJ. The time worked by the student is not considered as creditable service for leave accrual or any type of employee benefits.

The student intern will constantly work under the supervision of the TDCJ liaison or a designated supervisor with TDCJ and the student will report to this person upon arriving at work.

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix L

**Conditions Concerning the Student Internship Program ("SIP"):**

The student intern is to work only in an administrative office, not within a secured correctional facility. The student intern may be allowed to tour a unit if prior approval is received from the TDCJ liaison and the unit warden.

The student intern is to dress in suitable business attire that conforms to TDCJ established dress code.

The student intern will be considered a volunteer and will not be placed in a position to supervise other employees.

The student intern will complete a volunteer application and may be subject to and must pass a background investigation to be conducted by TDCJ and adhere to the agency's existing policies and procedures, to include participation in volunteer training.

The student intern may be terminated from this program due to lack of available work as well as for unsatisfactory progress, interest, or conduct.

There is no commitment on the part of TDCJ to employ any intern upon the completion of the SIP.

**Evaluation:**

The TDCJ liaison will periodically evaluate the student intern concerning the student's progress in the program. At the end of the program, the TDCJ liaison will provide the appropriate University official with a brief report detailing the intern's work history and an overall rating of the student intern.

**Terms of Agreement:**

This Agreement shall be in effect upon signature of all parties and will continue in effect until terminated by either the University or TDCJ by providing the other party with 30 days' prior written notice.

If any part of this agreement is determined to be void or unenforceable, all other parts shall remain in force and effect.

THE UNIVERSITY

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT INTERN

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT "A"**

**CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

In consideration of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice ("TDCJ") entering into this Memorandum of Agreement among TDCJ, the University and the undersigned, to which this Confidentiality Agreement is attached as an exhibit, the undersigned agrees that all information, records and data, regardless as to form, oral or otherwise, shall be held in the strictest of confidence by the undersigned and shall not be disclosed by the undersigned in any format, orally or otherwise, without the prior written consent of an authorized employee of TDCJ or as required by an enforceable court order.

In the event of a breach of this Agreement, TDCJ shall be entitled to all remedies, at law and in equity, to include injunctive relief.

**STUDENT INTERN**

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name\_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT "B"**

**INTERNSHIP RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT  
(Not Paid)**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: Internship in Criminal Justice

Supervising Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Internship: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Members in Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

During the dates shown above, I will be performing my student internship for the course shown above at the University.

I understand that I will not be paid for my internship and that no employer-employee relationship will exist between me and the supervising organization, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice ("TDCJ"). Instead, I will be performing this internship to gain experience that will help me in my college education at the University. I will be performing this internship voluntarily and upon my own initiative, risk, and responsibility.

In consideration for the permission extended to me by TDCJ to obtain this experience, and, in further consideration for the University and TDCJ facilitating this arrangement, I (for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators) release, discharge, and agree to indemnify the University, TDCJ, the Texas Board of Criminal Justice, The State of Texas and all of their employees, representatives and agents, acting officially or otherwise, from any claims on account of my death or on account of any injury to me or for damage to my property which may occur from any cause in connection with this internship, regardless of whether such death, injury or damage is caused by the negligence of TDCJ or the University. I intend that the indemnity provided for in this agreement is indemnity by me to indemnify the University, TDCJ, the Texas Board of Criminal Justice, The State of Texas, and their agents and employees from the consequences of their negligence, whether that negligence is the sole or concurring cause of the death, injury or damage.

Dated this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 200 .

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
Volunteer Review Committee Form**

Volunteer's Name:	Date:
Unit/Office of Service:	
Volunteer's Division/Department of Service:	
Summary of event to be reviewed:	
Volunteer's requested accommodation:	
References from Volunteer Plan that support or oppose the request:	
Submitted by Name:	Title:
Signature:	Date:
Director//Designee of Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division Decision: <input type="checkbox"/> Approve Request <input type="checkbox"/> Deny (state reason)	
Signature:	Date:
Director//Designee of Correctional Institutions Division Decision: <input type="checkbox"/> Approve Request <input type="checkbox"/> Deny (state reason)	
Signature:	Date:
Director//Designee of Parole Division Decision: <input type="checkbox"/> Approve Request <input type="checkbox"/> Deny (state reason)	
Signature:	Date:
Representative from Volunteer's Division/Department Decision: <input type="checkbox"/> Approve Request <input type="checkbox"/> Deny (state reason)	
Signature:	Date:

Volunteer Plan  
Appendix M



## Texas Department of Criminal Justice

Brad Livingston  
Executive Director

### *Letter of Orientation for Special Volunteers*

Dear Special Volunteer:

Welcome to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) volunteer program! Prior to service as a Special Volunteer with TDCJ, you are required to read and become familiar with the following rules of conduct. These rules are not inclusive of all TDCJ policies, but will help ensure the safety and security of facility operations as well as the welfare of our volunteers, staff and offenders. Professional behavior and good common sense are essential to your participation. Because you have requested to participate in a system that promotes positive change in offender behavior, you are encouraged and expected to demonstrate integrity in everything you do. We hope that your experience is very rewarding.

#### **RULES OF CONDUCT:**

- You cannot perform volunteer services on a facility where a relative or friend is incarcerated or if you or a friend or relative is the victim of an offender assigned to the facility.
- You or a representative from your group must submit a list of items you intend to bring into the facility to the facility administrator for approval prior to the event. Electronic musical devices (including PA systems/components) are allowed as well as lap top computers that are without broadband capability.
- TDCJ has a zero tolerance policy for all contraband (cell phones, alcohol, tobacco products, narcotics or any other prohibited item). Do not bring more than \$20.00 in to the facility. All individuals entering a secure facility are subject to pat-down searches. Anyone found in possession of a prohibited item(s) will be referred for prosecution.
- Firearms, or other instruments designed/used as a dangerous weapon or having explosive substance, are not allowed on TDCJ property. The exception is for those persons licensed to carry a handgun under Chapter 411, Subchapter H of the Texas Government Code to possess a handgun on TDCJ property if the *un*-loaded gun is secured in the locked trunk of a vehicle, or locked compartment if the vehicle does not have a trunk, prior to entering TDCJ property.
- You must be dressed in a manner appropriate for the occasion and service. Do not wear provocative/suggestive clothing or any attire that is of extreme design, revealing in nature, or any attire or haircut style that conveys messages of a derogatory or offensive nature through language, logos or symbols or jewelry on the facial area. Keep accessories simple and avoid wearing expensive jewelry. Wearing all white clothing on a secure facility is prohibited.
- Cold weather clothing (e.g., coats, gloves, scarves, hats, boots, etc.) shall be secured as determined by facility/department staff. Do not leave clothing or any other personal items unattended.
- If you have a prescription and/or non-prescription drug that you must take during your visit, you must provide a written statement to the appropriate staff beforehand indicating the name of the drug and prescribing health care provider and the possible side effects. You may only carry into the facility the amount needed during your visit and it must be in the original container.

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*Our mission is to provide public safety, promote positive change in offender behavior, reintegrate offenders into society, and assist victims of crime.*

P.O. Box 99  
Huntsville, Texas 77342-0099  
936-437-4977  
[www.tdcj.state.tx.us](http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us)

*Letter of Orientation for Special Volunteers, continued*

- All special volunteers/volunteer groups are under the direct oversight of the appropriate staff. You must stay with your group during your visit. Volunteers do not supervise offenders.
- Do not mail any items, correspondence, etc. for offenders. Do not carry messages from offender to offender or to the offender's family members.
- Do not give money to an offender or his family, either directly or indirectly. Do not deposit money into an offender's trust fund account.
- Do not accept personal gifts from or give personal gifts to offenders.
- Refer all offender requests to the department/division volunteer staff and/or facility/office staff.
- You are required to report (immediately) any misconduct that you witness or any information that is revealed to you by an offender that is criminal in nature.
- Do not disparage the faith of any offender, nor deliberately seek to influence a change in any offender's denomination. Religious programs will not be used to proselytize from any group.
- TDCJ has a zero tolerance policy for sexual misconduct. Individuals that violate the rights of an offender or engage in sexual misconduct will be referred for prosecution.
- In the event you are taken hostage, the Department will not bargain for your release. Also, TDCJ will not be held liable and/or responsible in the case of personal injuries while you are on the facility.
- In the event that you are sued as a result of performing services, the State of Texas will not indemnify you and will not provide a defense to such litigation.
- Uniformed officers' orders are to be obeyed at all times. They are trained to protect and insure the safety of all individuals (visitors, staff and offenders) on the facility.
- Information gathered and maintained by TDCJ in connection with the supervision of offenders is confidential and privileged by statute, and shall not be disclosed to anyone other than those persons entitled to receive such information under Texas law.
- Some information related to substance abuse treatment is further made confidential by federal law, and may not be disclosed to anyone except as provided by that law.
- You may not communicate TDCJ business to the media without prior approval.

If you have any question or concern regarding policy and procedure or if a situation arises about which you are in doubt, **ASK BEFORE YOU ACT!**

Thank you for your interest and participation in the TDCJ volunteer program. The investment of your time is a generous contribution. It provides valuable interaction between the criminal justice system and the community and is a key element in the rehabilitation process. Should you be interested in becoming an Approved Volunteer, you can find the volunteer application on-line at [www.tdcj.state.tx.us](http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us). Go to Quick Links and click on Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division. Please note that as a Special Volunteer you are allowed no more than four (4) visits system-wide in a year's time.

Sincerely,

Debbie Van Dyke  
Director of Volunteer Services  
Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division



**Texas Department of Criminal Justice**

**Mentoring Plan**

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE (TDCJ)  
MENTORING PLAN

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# Texas Department of Criminal Justice

## Mentoring Plan

### I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Mentoring Plan is to establish consistent guidelines and standard operating procedures throughout all departments/divisions of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) for the administration, coordination, and reporting of mentoring services. This Plan establishes the guidelines for TDCJ approved volunteers who serve as mentors to incarcerated or released offenders in an effort to enhance the offender's successful reintegration and rehabilitation.

Each TDCJ department/division that utilizes mentors shall abide by the Mentoring Plan, which establishes operational procedures and recording methods for TDCJ approved mentors. All mentoring services offered to offenders supervised by the Agency shall be approved by the designed department/division staff. All approved mentors shall adhere to TDCJ policies, rules, and regulations, the TDCJ Volunteer Plan and the TDCJ Mentoring Plan.

### II. DEFINITIONS:

**Mentor** – An approved volunteer who meets Agency-approved mentor criteria and is recommended by TDCJ program staff. An approved employee volunteer shall not serve as a mentor.

**Mentoring** - A one-to-one (same gender) relationship that focuses on the rehabilitative needs of the mentored offender which fosters caring and support, encourages personal development, assists in personal visioning, and assists in the transition to the community by developing active community partnerships. Programs utilizing husband and wife teams may be allowed to mentor an individual offender.

**Approved Volunteer** - A person who provides a service or who participates in volunteer activities on a regular basis and has been approved through the application process and has completed the volunteer training and orientation.

**TDCJ Volunteer Coordination Committee** – Members of the Volunteer Coordination Committee (VCC) shall consist of representatives designated by TDCJ department/divisions. The Division Director or designee of the Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division (RRPD) serves as Chairman of the committee. All volunteer and mentoring services for the Agency shall be coordinated through the VCC.

**Ex-Offender** – An individual convicted of any crime (excluding traffic violation) and no longer incarcerated; has completed parole, community supervision, or mandatory supervision, and all requirements under the law.

**Offender** – An individual in the custody of or under the supervision of a city, county, judicial district (probation), state or Federal agency. These individuals include but are not limited to patients, parolees, individuals under mandatory supervision, and incarcerated individuals.

**Releasee** – An individual convicted and sentenced for any crime (excluding traffic violations), and currently on community supervision, parole or mandatory supervision.

### **III. TDCJ Mentoring Program:**

The TDCJ Volunteer Coordination Committee (VCC) shall be responsible for the development of an Agency-wide mentoring plan, policy and procedures handbook. The Mentoring Plan, along with the Administrative Directive and Mentoring Handbook, shall be the guide for developing, implementing and managing mentors within the Agency. Guidelines to include selection/approval procedures: training; record keeping; confidentiality rules and policies; and other similar categories will be included in the Mentoring Plan. Each department/division shall be responsible for compliance with the Agency-wide Mentoring Plan.

- A. The Agency may decline the services of a volunteer/mentor for any reason other than race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, genetic information or age (mentors must be 21 year or older).
- B. Mentors must be an approved TDCJ volunteer and not currently serving community supervision (adult probation).
- C. Releasees or ex-offenders must demonstrate eighteen months of successful reentry within the community before applying to be a volunteer or mentor. A letter from their supervising parole officer concurring with the releasee's participation in the Mentoring Program must be provided. Current background references may be requested and checked and a personal interview may be conducted at the discretion of the appropriate Division Director or designee. An individual's criminal record may affect acceptance as a mentor. The possession of a criminal record, or of specific offenses on record, may be used to determine placement or denial of the applicant.
- D. TDCJ approved volunteers that request to be a mentor will have a current Texas Crime Information Center (TCIC) and National Crime Information Center (NCIC) check completed. For the purpose of this policy, current background check refers to a check that has been completed within the previous twelve months. If the criminal history check reflects any period of jail time, probation, or incarceration for any offense except traffic tickets during the previous 18 months the applicant will not be approved as a mentor and his volunteer status will be changed from approved to denied. The volunteer shall be notified that his/her volunteer status has been changed to denied.

due to recent criminal history.

- E. Any mentor who has been inactive as a volunteer and mentor for a period of one year or longer must reapply to be an approved volunteer first and attend volunteer training prior to reapplying as a mentor.
- F. Placement of a mentor shall be made with the Warden/Office Administrator's approval. Placement of a mentor may not be denied by the Warden/Office Administrator without written justification for review by the Volunteer Review Committee (Appendix C, Volunteer Review Committee Form).
- G. Mentors will not serve at a location where they were previously incarcerated/supervised, or where a family member or friend (relationship established prior to incarceration) is housed/supervised. If a mentor is serving on a unit/office where a family member or friend is later assigned, the volunteer staff shall be notified immediately and the mentor will be reassigned to another location. Exceptions to these practices may be made by the appropriate Division Director/Unit/Office Administrator if the decision is in keeping with sound correctional practices.
- H. References may be requested and/or a personal interview may be conducted at the discretion of the appropriate volunteer staff.

**Mentor Selection:**

- A. It is the policy of the TDCJ to permit approved volunteers to be matched with offenders in order to establish mentoring relationships.
- B. Approved volunteers applying to be mentors must be recommended by TDCJ staff, complete the Mentoring Acknowledgement of Training and Pledge of Service (Appendix A) and participate in mentoring training.
- C. Mentors will participate in training, scheduled debriefings, and periodic retraining in order to ensure compliance with agency policies and procedures. The mentoring handbook will provide an outline of suggested topics that will enhance the effectiveness of mentoring sessions.
- D. For the purpose of maintaining sound correctional practices, mentors will be of the same gender as their matched offender. A husband and wife team may serve as a mentor to one offender but the opposite sex member of the team shall not mentor without their partner present.
- E. All approved mentors shall agree to participate in a mentoring session at least one time per month

for a period of at least twelve months.

#### **IV. GUIDELINES:**

- A. Mentors are allowed to correspond with their matched offender. (1) Correspondence shall not include any references that are sexual, or refer to criminal behavior, gang-related information, contraband or any other actions that are inappropriate in nature. Such exchange shall terminate the mentor/volunteer approved status. (2) When corresponding with an incarcerated offender, part of the return address should include the word "VOLUNTEER" and the area in which the mentor provides mentoring services, such as (Chaplaincy, Parole). Volunteers/mentor may choose to use a P.O. Box or the address of the church or group which they represent.
- B. No mentor shall contact the victim of any offender, including a family member who may be the victim. The offender may state that he wants to reconcile with or "make it up" to the victim. It is the responsibility of the TDCJ mentor to notify volunteer staff if the offender has made such a request, but the mentor is not to act upon the offender's request. While it is understood that restoration, forgiveness, and reconciliation are important aspects of rehabilitation, the right of the victim will always take precedence over the desire of the offender. The victim, if and when he or she chooses to come face to face with his or her offender, can contact Victim Services Division to arrange mediation. Contact with the offender's family may only occur after consent is obtained from the offender's family (Appendix B, Permission to Contact Family Form). The offender's family, if they choose to do so, along with approved community groups, can play a role in promoting rehabilitation for the offender and a continuum of care upon reintegration into the community.
- C. If the nature of the relationship between a mentor and an offender is believed to present a potential threat to the personal safety of the mentor or offender, compromise the security of the institution, or be a violation of policy, TDCJ staff will terminate the mentoring relationship.
- D. Information revealed by an offender to a mentor that is criminal in nature or could impact public/unit/office safety must be reported immediately to Agency staff.
- E. Mentors may, at any time, terminate their mentoring relationship with a matched offender. Mentors shall notify TDCJ staff of this decision.
- F. Mentors and their matched offenders (after release from incarceration) may exchange personal phone numbers, if desired by the mentor, in order to foster communication and assistance for rehabilitative purposes.

- G. The mentor may not give gifts/money or put money into their matched offender's trust fund or give money to the offender's family while the offender is incarcerated. After the offender has been released, the mentor may give gifts to their matched offender that foster aftercare objectives (e.g. pair of steel-toed shoes that are required for his job, tools, or reading glasses). It is strongly recommended that no money be given to the matched offender even after his release. Although it might appear to help, the mentor is encouraged to counsel the releasee to obtain needed funds through employment, community based organizations, support groups or faith-based organizations.
- H. Mentor-offender visits will be scheduled and recorded by the appropriate volunteer staff. No mentor will be allowed to visit an incarcerated offender during regular unit visitation (Exceptions, family members or individuals where a relationship was established prior to incarceration and declared to the appropriate volunteer staff).
- I. Mentoring activities conducted on TDCJ premises shall be approved by the Warden or parole office supervisor, as appropriate.
- J. Mentors shall be scheduled, at least monthly, to attend a debriefing session with TDCJ staff (i.e., Chaplain, Parole Officer or other appropriate program staff). This meeting shall be a time to process, reflect, and give feedback on topics that were discussed or issues that arose during a mentoring session.
- K. Mentors may transport released offenders for rehabilitative purposes (such as job fairs, interviews, housing arrangements, church meetings, or support groups).
- L. Mentors may assist a released offender in obtaining housing; however, no releasee may reside in a mentor's private residence (Exceptions, family members or individuals where a relationship was established prior to incarceration and declared to the appropriate volunteer staff).
- M. The purpose of mentoring is to establish a healthy relationship between the mentor and the offender. To that end, the Agency recognizes that long-term relationships may develop. It shall be the policy of the Agency that an approved (non-employee) volunteer may serve as both a volunteer and mentor with incarcerated and released offenders simultaneously.
- N. Communication with the media regarding volunteer activities, offender information or any TDCJ business, shall be approved by the TDCJ Public Information Office prior to contacting the media or dissemination of information.
- O. An approved volunteer may observe a mentoring session but will not provide mentoring services

until mentoring training has been completed. No special volunteers shall participate in scheduled mentoring sessions.

- P. A TDCJ staff member will be assigned to each mentor. Coordination and direct oversight of the mentor is provided by staff. Direct oversight does not necessarily imply that the staff member must be physically present while the mentoring activity is being performed.
- Q. Supervision of offenders is a staff function. Mentors shall not, under any circumstances, supervise or manage offenders or other volunteers. However, mentors may assist TDCJ staff in the coordination of mentoring activities.

## **V. Responsibilities and Duties**

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice responsible, committed, individuals willing to establish a healthy,

Mentoring relationship with an offender.

- A. Mentors must make a commitment to be consistent and dependable, to maintain a steady presence in the offender's life.
- B. Mentors must be flexible when dealing with unit/office schedules.
- C. Mentors must pay attention to changes in offender behavior.
- D. A goal of the mentor will be to create trust between two strangers establishing a friendship with boundaries.
- E. The mentor's role is to provide a positive role model to the offender.
- F. Mentors provide a bridge from incarceration to the community.
- G. Mentors must attend debriefings scheduled by TDCJ staff.
- H. Mentors shall comply with all TDCJ operational procedures.
- I. Mentors shall assist releasees in accessing available community resources.
- J. Mentors should be aware of barriers that exist for offenders upon reentry.

## Appendix

### **A. Acknowledgement of Training and Pledge of Service**

*Purpose:* This form shall provide an acknowledgement of training, and their pledge to fulfill their responsibilities as a mentor. The form will be completed at the time of the mentor's training and shall be part of their permanent file. Receipt of this form will change their approved volunteer status to reflect their status as a mentor.

### **B. Permission to Contact Family Form**

*Purpose:* The purpose of this form is to gain consent from the family member in order that the TDCJ mentor may occasionally contact them for rehabilitative purposes. This form is sent from the offender to the family member and returned to the unit to acknowledge their consent.



*Permission to Contact Family*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you desire to be a part of the mentoring team which may include occasional phone calls or written correspondence from my mentor, please sign the consent form and return to me.

Offender Name \_\_\_\_\_ TDCJ# \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_, desire to be a part of the mentoring team, I understand and  
(Printed Name)  
agree that as a part of the mentor team I may receive occasional phone calls or written correspondence from the TDCJ mentor.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Family Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

Appendix B