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POLICY NUMBER: 27.1		
CHAPTER 27: RELEASE PREPARATION		
	STATE of MAINE DEPARTMENT of CORRECTIONS Approved by Commissioner: 	PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: See Section VIII
	EFFECTIVE DATE: February 1, 2002	LATEST REVISION: June 21, 2022

I. AUTHORITY

The Commissioner of Corrections adopts this policy pursuant to the authority contained in 34-A M.R.S.A. Section 1403.

II. APPLICABILITY

All Departmental Adult Facilities

III. POLICY

The Department of Corrections utilizes a structured approach to releasing adult facility residents that is consistent with legal requirements, professional standards, and departmental policies, is in the interest of public safety, and provides reentry planning to assist residents in a successful transition into the community. *5-ACI-5F-01*

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. Current custody release date - the release date calculated with detention time credit and with all good time (deductions) awarded and not lost up to the prior month. It also takes account of the restoration of lost good time (deductions) if that occurred any time up to the prior month.
2. Earliest possible release date - the release date calculated with detention time credit and with all possible good time that the resident could earn credited. It assumes that the resident will be awarded all possible good time under the good time code applicable to their sentence and will not lose any of it.
3. Projected release date - the release date calculated by starting with the current custody release date and then projecting how much good time (deductions) the resident could earn based on the applicable good time code and their current job or program status during the rest of their sentence.
4. Staff - for purposes of this policy, Department employee or a person in a facility providing services to an adult resident or a juvenile resident by agreement with or under contract with the Department (e.g., facility health care staff), but not including a volunteer, student intern, delivery person, etc.

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VI. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Reentry Plan
- Attachment B: Release to Community Supervision Reporting Form
- Attachment C: Certification of Release of Resident from Sentence of Imprisonment with the Maine Department of Corrections (paper/fillable)

VII. PROCEDURES

Procedure A: Classification Staff Responsibilities 5-ACI-5F-06

1. At least monthly, the appropriate classification staff shall provide written notice to facility Chief Administrative Officers, or designees, Unit Managers, facility law enforcement officers, case managers, Institutional Probation Officers, and other designated facility staff, the Department’s Director of Classification, or designee, the Department’s Director of Victim Services, or designee, the Department’s Director of Adult Community Corrections, and the Regional Correctional Administrators, or designees, of all adult residents who have a projected release date of 120 days or less.
2. The classification staff shall ensure that written notice to the above persons is provided no later than a week after any change to the projected release date of any resident who has a projected release date of 120 days or less.
3. At least fourteen (14) days prior to the resident’s projected release date, the classification staff shall review the resident’s administrative record and ensure an electronic records check is conducted for any outstanding detainers, warrants, other pending holds, or notification requests and, if applicable, shall notify the appropriate authority of the resident’s projected release date by telephone or email, followed, within two (2) working days, by a notice sent by certified mail. A copy of the electronic check shall be placed in the resident’s Administrative Record.
4. If, as a result of the above electronic records check, the classification staff becomes aware of a suppressed (unserved) protection from abuse order or protection from harassment order, the staff shall notify a facility law enforcement officer.
5. At least seven (7) days prior to the resident’s projected release date, classification staff shall confirm the accuracy of the release date calculation.
6. If applicable, classification staff shall notify the resident of their legal obligation to register as a sex offender with the State Bureau of Identification as set forth in Department Policy 6.2, Adult Sex Offender Registration and Notification.

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7. If applicable, classification staff shall notify the State Bureau of Identification of the resident's release date as set forth in Department Policy 6.2, Adult Sex Offender Registration and Notification.

Procedure B: Release and Reentry Planning by Case Managers

1. For a resident who is not being released to the community, i.e., is being released to a jail, to a correctional facility in another jurisdiction, or to a psychiatric hospital, the resident's case manager shall, at least three (3) months prior to the resident's projected release date or as soon thereafter as it becomes known that the resident will not be released to the community, meet with the resident to initiate release planning, to include, but not be limited to, preparing the resident for release to the receiving facility, and shall meet with the resident thereafter, as necessary. All release planning shall be documented in CORIS.
2. For a resident who is being released to the community, the resident's case manager shall fulfill the following responsibilities in connection with reentry planning. The case manager may request reentry planning support/services from other Department staff involved in release and reentry planning in order to facilitate the resident's reentry to the community upon release. All reentry planning shall be documented in CORIS.
3. Periodically, either individually or in group settings, case managers shall provide residents or ensure that residents are provided information about the following resources available in the community and from other government agencies:
 - a. Career Centers and other employment resources;
 - b. educational and vocational programs;
 - c. housing programs;
 - d. financial management/budgeting programs;
 - e. MaineCare coverage;
 - f. social security disability benefits, if applicable;
 - g. veterans' services, if applicable;
 - h. other available government benefits, including, but not limited to: vocational rehabilitation, Section 8 (of the Housing Act), Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), women, infants, and children (WIC), etc., if applicable; and
 - i. any other relevant information.
4. Each resident's case manager is responsible to check CORIS periodically in order to be aware of when the resident is approaching nine (9) months prior to their earliest possible release date.
5. At least nine (9) months prior to a resident's earliest possible release date, the resident's case manager shall:
 - a. meet with the resident to initiate reentry planning, to include, but not be limited to discussing with the resident:

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- 1) housing or a means to locate appropriate housing by contacting family members, homeless shelters, or other community agencies for assistance, etc., if necessary;
 - 2) employment or a means to find employment or to pursue education or vocational training;
 - 3) progress toward achieving case plan objectives and addressing needs that were not met while incarcerated;
 - 4) available financial resources, including funds in the resident's facility accounts; and
 - 5) any applicable community resources that may be available in the community;
- b. have the resident sign the applicable authorization forms for release of information;
 - c. verify that the resident has two (2) forms of identification acceptable for employment purposes (driver's license, official state identification, or identity verification form and a social security card, birth certificate, or a certified application for a social security card) or a current passport and, if not, assist the resident in obtaining the necessary document(s); and
 - d. document the meeting in CORIS.
6. The resident's case manager shall continue to meet with the resident at least on a monthly basis to monitor and, as necessary, assist the resident in their reentry planning. Each meeting shall be documented in CORIS.
 7. To aid in the development of the resident's reentry plan, the case manager may use reentry planning worksheets that have been approved by the facility Chief Administrative Officer, or designee.
 8. At least six (6) months prior to the resident's earliest release date, the case manager shall:
 - a. confirm the proposed housing plan to determine if the address is valid and complies with any applicable court conditions;
 - b. if the resident is planning to reside at another person's home, confirm that the person is willing and able to provide housing for the resident;
 - c. if the resident has no viable housing plan, assist the resident with a housing search; and
 - d. document these actions in CORIS.
 9. Each resident's case manager is responsible to check the written notice provided by the facility classification staff in order to be aware of when the resident is approaching three (3) months prior to their projected release date.
 10. At least three (3) months prior to the resident's projected release date, the case manager shall: **5-ACI-5F-05**
 - a. coordinate with facility Health Services Administrator, or designee, to obtain the information needed for the case manager to schedule health care appointments

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in the community, including, if applicable, an appointment with a Medications for Substance Use Disorders (MSUD) provider;

- b. assist the resident with their housing search, as necessary, including, if applicable, by discussing with the resident the possibility of their applying to participate in the transitional living program as set out in Department Policy (ACC) 9.3, Transitional Living Program;
- c. assist the resident with their employment search, as necessary;
- d. assist the resident with their educational or vocational training pursuits, as necessary;
- e. assist the resident in making transportation arrangements from the facility for the day of release;
- f. assist the resident in determining outstanding balances for restitution and fines, if requested by the resident;
- g. assist the resident with coordinating with the appropriate community resources and other government agencies for post-release programs and services, as necessary, including, if applicable, a community recovery coach; and
- h. document these actions in CORIS.

11. At least fourteen (14) days prior to the resident's release, the case manager shall:

- a. reconfirm the proposed housing plan to determine if the address is valid and complies with any applicable court condition;
- b. coordinate with the business office to ensure that the business office makes arrangements for gate money and transportation funds, if applicable;
- c. ensure the resident's Reentry Plan (Attachment A) has been finalized and upload it into CORIS; and
- d. document these actions in CORIS.

12. At least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the resident's release, the case manager shall:

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- a. contact facility classification staff to verify the release date;
- b. contact facility health care staff to verify that the Health Care Discharge Summary, as set out in Department Policy (AF) 18.5, Health Care, has been completed;
- c. request the resident to again provide their address upon release;
- d. confirm transportation arrangements;
- e. notify mailroom, or other designated staff, of the address for forwarding of mail;
- f. check for any pending disciplinary action, in order to ensure it is finalized prior to the resident's release;
- g. check for any pending grievance, in order to ensure it is finalized prior to the resident's release, if possible;
- h. check for any harassment notice, protective order, and/or firearms relinquishment order served by any facility law enforcement officer on the resident and notify law

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enforcement in the community as required by Department Policy 6.5, Harassment Notices, Protective Orders, and Firearms Relinquishment Orders;.

- i. verify with the business office staff the need to reconcile and close out the resident's accounts;
- j. if the resident is being released to supervision by the Department in the community, forward to adult community corrections staff all applicable documentation;
- k. ensure the resident has appropriate clothing to wear upon release, if applicable; and
- l. document these actions in CORIS.

Procedure C: Requirements Specific to Residents Being Released to Supervision in the Community 5-ACI-5F-05

1. If an adult resident is to be released to supervision in the community on probation or supervised release for sex offenders, the Institutional Probation Officer, upon receiving the written notice from the classification staff, shall determine who will be the resident's supervising probation officer.
2. The Institutional Probation Officer shall complete and ensure the resident signs the Release to Community Supervision Reporting form (Attachment B) and shall forward copies of the form to the Regional Correctional Administrator, or designee, the supervising probation officer, appropriate classification staff, and the case manager.
3. In addition to the other responsibilities of the case manager, at least three (3) months prior to the resident's projected release date, or as soon thereafter as possible if the supervising probation officer has not yet been determined, the resident's case manager shall:
 - a. coordinate reentry planning with the supervising probation officer;
 - b. if the resident is required to register as a sex offender and housing in the community has not been confirmed, continue coordination with the supervising probation officer, as needed, but not less than twice monthly, until housing is confirmed; and
 - c. document the coordination in CORIS.
4. In the case of a resident being released to parole, the resident's parole plan shall be coordinated on an individual basis by the Department's Director of Adult Community Corrections, or designee, in conjunction with the Parole Board. The resident's case manager shall assist in reentry planning, as requested by the Department's Director of Adult Community Corrections, or designee. The parole plan and related reentry planning shall be documented in CORIS.
5. In the case of a resident being released to supervised community confinement, the resident's supervised community confinement program plan will be coordinated in accordance with Department Policy 27.2, Supervised Community Confinement.

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Procedure D: Responsibilities at Time of Release 5-ACI-5F-05

1. At the time of the resident’s release, designated facility staff shall:
 - a. verify the resident’s identity by personal recognition, photograph and IRIS scan. If any of these methods of verification fail or produce a discrepancy, facility classification staff and any other appropriate staff shall be notified, and the resident shall not be released until the resident’s identity is verified to a complete certainty;
 - b. take a release photograph of the resident and upload it into CORIS;
 - c. take possession of the resident’s facility identification card;
 - d. ensure the resident does not have any property belonging to any other person or the Department;
 - e. ensure the resident’s property (including personal legal documents, e.g. driver’s license, social security card, etc.) has been collected from storage, from their cell or other housing, and from any other area, has been inventoried, and has been given to them or, if applicable, that other arrangements have been made, in accordance with Department Policy (AF) 10.1, Resident Allowable Property;
 - f. provide the resident with their Certification of Release of Resident from Sentence of Imprisonment with the Maine Department of Corrections (Attachment C);
 - g. provide the resident with sex offender notification and registration documents, in accordance with Department Policy (AF) 6.2, Adult Sex Offender Registration and Notification, if applicable;
 - h. issue a check for any funds from the resident’s accounts that have been cleared from hold and have not been collected as obligations, in accordance with Department Policy 2.12, Resident Accounts;
 - i. provide gate money, in accordance with Department Policy (AF) 27.6, Money upon Release (Gate Money), if applicable;
 - j. confirm release transportation arrangements or provide transportation, in accordance with Department Policy (AF) 27.6, Money upon Release (Gate Money), if applicable;
 - k. provide release clothing/shoes/voucher to the resident, if applicable;
 - l. make temporary housing arrangements, if applicable; and
 - m. provide naloxone, fentanyl test strips, and overdose prevention information, and, if applicable, medications for substance use disorder, in accordance with Department Policies (AF)18.7, Pharmaceuticals & (AF) 18.24, Medications for Substance Use Disorder.
2. These release steps shall be documented in CORIS, the resident’s electronic health care record, the resident’s account record, or other record as applicable.
3. The resident’s release photograph and resident’s facility identification card shall be placed in the resident’s Administrative Record.

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VIII. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

ACA

- 5-ACI-5F-01 Written policy, procedure, and practice provide that all inmates have access to a program of release preparation prior to their release to the community.
- 5-ACI-5F-05 Written procedures for releasing inmates at the end of their term include, but are not limited to, the following:
- verification of identity verification of release papers
 - completion of release arrangements, including notification of the parole authorities in the jurisdiction of release, if required:
 - return of personal effects or contraband
 - check to see that no facility property leaves the facility
 - arrangements for completion of any pending action, such as grievances or claims for damages or lost possessions
 - medical screening and arrangements for community follow-up where needed
 - instructions on forwarding of mail
- 5-ACI-5F-06 Written policy, procedure and practice provide that consistent with the law of the jurisdiction, there is a system for providing notification to the registered victim(s) of a crime prior to any release from confinement of the convicted inmate and/or escape from custody. Follow up notification to victim(s) occurs when escapees are returned to custody.
- 4-ACRS-5A-13 Offenders are aided with their transition to the community, including referrals to assist offenders in locating suitable housing.
- 4-ACRS-6A-13 Release practices are defined.

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