

NH DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE DIRECTIVE	CHAPTER <u>Resident Programming</u> STATEMENT NUMBER <u>7.08</u>
SUBJECT: FAMILY CONNECTIONS CENTER PROPONENT: <u>Joseph Diament, Director</u> <i>Name/Title</i> <u>Community Corrections 271-5601</u> <i>Office Phone #</i>	EFFECTIVE DATE <u>05/30/14</u> REVIEW DATE <u>05/30/15</u> SUPERSEDES PPD# <u>7.08</u> DATED <u>05/10/13</u>
ISSUING OFFICER: <hr/> <i>William Wrenn, Commissioner</i>	DIRECTOR'S INITIALS _____ DATE _____ APPENDIX ATTACHED: YES _____ NO _____
REFERENCE NO: See reference section on last page of PPD.	

I. PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for the Family Connections Center.

II. APPLICABILITY:

To all inmates, staff, consultants and visitors of the New Hampshire Department of Corrections.

III. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Department of Corrections (NHDOC) to offer inmates services that promote successful re-entry into society. The mission of the Family Connections Center is to strengthen the connections between incarcerated parents and their families. This programming is voluntary and a lack of participation is not sent to the Parole Board nor does it have any impact on an inmate moving through and out of the Corrections system. The Family Connections Center staff also teaches separate family and relationship classes to all inmates who are required to attend and complete the class as a result of the NH DOC assessment. These separate classes can be mandated to any inmate who scores high on the family domain of the NH DOC assessment process, regardless of their crime.

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. Inmate Eligibility and Participation:

1. Family support services vary at NH DOC facilities and will follow operational practices for safety and security.
2. Inmates may request consideration for participation in the Family Connections Center (FCC) programming by sending an Inmate Request Slip to the FCC.
3. FCC services are available to inmates who are parents and non-parents who have not been convicted of a sexual crime against any child under the age of 14 or have been convicted of a charge relating to child pornography.
4. Priority enrollment is given to those inmates who are parents of minor children. Participation in all additional family support programming, available only after completing the parenting education

class, is restricted to inmates who are parents of minor children and who are behaving positively in the facility.

5. Inmates may be refused participation in some or all of the FCC programming elements due to the nature of their crime or institutional behavior. Final determination or eligibility for participation will be rendered by the Administrator of the Family Connections Center.
6. Inmates may be removed from FCC programming due to disciplinary actions, failure to meet program requirements and any behavior deemed inappropriate by the Administrator of the Family Connections Center.
7. Participation at the FCC is voluntary for inmates and will not impact the rate at which the inmate moves through the corrections classification system.
8. All inmates must maintain positive, respectful behavior in their living units, NH DOC programs, in the visiting room, on telephone calls and through their mail correspondence in order to remain eligible to participate at the FCC.
9. Parenting education classes are open to parents and non-parents. Priority enrollment is given to those inmates who are parents. Participation subsequent to the parenting education class is restricted to inmates who are parents.
10. Inmates are eligible to participate in parenting classes if they are a biological parent, a legal stepparent, legal adoptive parent or expecting the birth of their child.
11. Rules for FCC participants must be followed to continue in the FCC programming.

B. Staffing

1. FCC program staff is defined as any staff/intern working at the FCC, whether they are through various partnerships that the FCC enters into, including, but not limited to existing partnerships with the University of New Hampshire and Child and Family Services.
2. Program staff will be trained in family relationships, parenting education and/or child development with additional training in monitoring parent and child visits/interaction.
3. All program staff will receive direct supervision from a staff member previously approved to supervise inmates until new program staff completes the NH DOC Corrections Academy and/or NH DOC Volunteer training.

C. Programming Elements

1. Upon completion of FCC classes and any other prerequisites as defined by FCC program staff; inmates are eligible for the following services, if appropriate and where available:
 - a. Weekly family relations and/or parenting support groups;
 - b. Recording of books on audiotapes or CD to send home to their child(ren);
 - c. Monthly newsletters identifying community resources and FCC events. Newsletters will be provided to both the participating inmate and their family or caregiver;
 - d. Seminars and classes offered by community agencies focusing on family relations and parenting;
 - e. Semi private visits or video visiting between the inmate and their child(ren) is to be held at the FCC—these visits are in addition to any other regular authorized visits;
 - f. Outreach to institutions working with the inmate's family members and child(ren) to help facilitate a healthy relationship between the inmate and their child;
 - g. Access to the FCC's family library;
 - h. General support related to family and parenting issues; and
 - i. Assistance with establishing other community supports for the child(ren's) caregiver and for the inmate in preparation for her/his release.

D. Video Visits

The following apply to Virtual Video Visits (Internet visits) between the inmate and their child(ren):

1. The inmate is responsible for complying with all responsibilities that are outlined in the inmate's application for video visits. If they do not comply, visits may not start and/or may be discontinued once they start.
2. All visits will be documented in an inmate FCC folder. Inmates and their child(ren) (through their legal guardian) must provide consent to any assessments that will be evaluated by a non-DOC researcher.

3. FCC will work with inmates and their child's caregivers to set up mutually acceptable visiting times.
4. Biological and adopted children ages seventeen years or younger are permitted to visit; with a notarized letter from the biological parent, a legal step parent can visit with the children.
5. These visits are to include only the inmate and their child(ren) with a quick check-in with the caregiver about the child, if needed.
6. If child(ren) is (are) under the care of Division of Children, Youth and Family (DCYF), that agency will be contacted for approval of visits.
7. A child's legal guardian or representative must agree to allow the child to visit his or her parent through FCC Video Visits.
8. All contact information regarding the visiting child(ren) and their caregivers will be maintained in the FCC inmate file folder as well as the FCC database.
9. Appropriate dress, subject matter and language must be exhibited during these visits. If at any time anything appears inappropriate, FCC staff may end the visit.
10. The New Hampshire Department of Corrections visiting guidelines as outlined in PPD 7.09 will be utilized as guidance for families involved in program and Internet visits.

E. Semi-Private Program Visits

The following apply to Program Visits between the inmate and their child(ren) in FCC:

1. The inmate is responsible for complying with all responsibilities outlined in the inmate's application for program visits. If they do not comply, the visits may not start or may be discontinued once they start.
2. All visits will be documented in an inmate FCC folder. Inmates and their child(ren) (through their legal guardian) must provide consent to any assessments that will be evaluated by a non-DOC researcher.
3. FCC will work with inmates and their family member(s) or caregivers to set up mutually acceptable visiting times.
4. Biological and adopted children ages seventeen years or younger are permitted to visit; with a notarized letter from the biological parent, a legal step parent can visits with the children.
5. These visits are to include only the inmate and their child(ren).
6. If child(ren) are under the care of Division of Children, Youth and Family (DCYF), that agency will be contacted for approval of visits; only NHDOC approved DCYF Parent Aids will be authorized to accompany the child(ren).
7. A child's legal guardian or representative must agree to program visitation at the FCC.
8. If the legal representative wishes to authorize another adult to transport the child(ren), they need to list the transporter's name and pertinent information on a notarized consent form.
9. Transporters will accompany the visiting child into the facility. The transporter must leave the facility unless authorized to stay by the Administrator of the Family Connections Center.
10. If funding allows, FCC will provide a variety of healthy snacks and juices for the visiting child. Prior staff approval is required for store-sealed snacks, fast food meals or store-sealed drinks to be brought into the FCC. Store-sealed baby food and formula with a clear plastic baby bottle may be brought in. All foods are for the child(ren)'s consumption unless the inmate's classification allows her/him to accept such food also.
11. If an inmate is eligible for program visits and has court ordered visits and if scheduling and program rules permit, they may take place in the FCC.
12. All contact information regarding the visiting child(ren) and their caregivers will be maintained in the FCC inmate file folder as well as the FCC database.
13. The New Hampshire Department of Corrections' visiting guidelines as outlined in PPD 7.09 will be utilized as guidance for families involved in program visits.

- F. Any modifications to this policy will be based upon review of the participant's circumstances, and FCC programming involvement and must be approved by the FCC Administrator and the Division of Community Corrections Division Director/designee.

REFERENCES:

Standards for the Administration of Correctional Agencies
Second Edition Standards

Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions
Fourth Edition Standards

Standards for Adult Community Residential Services
Fourth Edition Standards

Standards for Adult Probation and Parole Field Services
Third Edition Standards

Other

Bylaws of Family Support - NH Definition of Family Resource Centers - Section 3
Standards for Family Support Centers – Family Support American
Principles of Family Support Practice # 1-9
Children of Incarcerated Parents, A Bill of Rights
San Francisco Partnership for Incarcerated Parents, 2003 (www.sfcipp.org)

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