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<b>Standards for Inmate Programs</b>	<b>ACA Standards: None</b>		
<b>Steven Harpe, Director Oklahoma Department of Corrections</b>		<b>Signature on File</b>	

## Inmate Field Ministry Program

The Oklahoma Department of Corrections (ODOC) may partner with accredited colleges, universities and faith communities that desire to provide long-term inmates with a four-year college education and training, or its equivalent, to serve as inmate field ministers within the ODOC, under appropriate supervision of facility Chaplains and other designated staff. The goals of the Inmate Field Ministry Program are to more effectively meet the needs of the inmate population, to enhance rehabilitation efforts, and to promote positive cultural change.

### I. Definitions

#### A. Inmate Field Ministers

Inmates who have completed the required education/training and have been designated by the Inmate Field Ministry Council to serve as field ministers.

#### B. Inmate Field Ministry Council (FMC)

The council responsible for oversight of the Field Ministry Program within the ODOC.

C. Inmate Field Ministry Coordinator

The ODOC staff person that is responsible for the coordination of the Inmate Field Ministry Program. A designated facility Chaplain will normally serve in this role.

II. Field Ministry Council

A. Field Ministry Council (FMC) Composition

The FMC will be comprised of the following:

1. Chairperson – The Chief Administrator of Classification and Programs.
2. Members of the FMC
  - a. Deputy Chief of Operations or their designee;
  - b. Administrator of Classification and Population;
  - c. Administrator of Programs;
  - d. Agency Chaplain and Administrator of Volunteer Services;
  - e. Regional Chaplains;
  - f. Warden of Lexington Correctional Center;
  - g. Inmate Field Ministry coordinator;
  - h. Representative from the partner college or university that provided the inmate with their education and training; and
  - i. Representative from the outside faith community that has endorsed the inmate (if applicable).

B. Meeting Schedule

The FMC Chairperson will be responsible for scheduling meetings. Meetings will be held as necessary for the success of the program, but at least once per year.

C. Responsibilities of the FMC

The Inmate Field Ministry Council is responsible for the oversight of the Inmate Field Ministry Program, which will include the following:

1. Review, approve, and assign inmate field ministers.
2. Review facility requests for inmate field ministers.
3. Select facilities to receive inmate field ministers.
4. Review concerns, incident reports, and other issues that might impact the status of inmate field ministers. This will include but will not be limited to misconducts, disciplinary issues, interpersonal working relationship concerns, transfers, and medical issues.
5. Reassignment of inmate field ministers when needed.
6. Removal of inmate field ministers.
7. Removal of Inmate Field Ministry Program from a facility.

### III. Inmate Field Ministers

#### A. Eligibility for Inmate Field Ministry

Inmates must meet the following requirements to serve as inmate field ministers.

1. Behavioral/Level Requirements
  - a. Inmates will be level 4.
  - b. Inmates will not have received a Class X misconduct within the past four years.
2. Inmates will hold a bachelor's degree in religion, ministry, theology, or related field from an institution that is accredited by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or equivalent professional level preparation for ministry in faith traditions that do not utilize accredited university training.

#### B. Approval of Inmate Field Ministry Applicants

1. Upon receipt of an "Inmate Field Ministry Program - Inmate Field Ministry Application" ([Attachment A](#)), the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will review the application, interview the applicant, obtain information from staff, educators, and other sources as needed, and develop a recommendation. A representative from the institution that provided the applicant with their education and training will have input on the recommendation.
2. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will submit the recommendation to the Agency Chaplain and Administrator of Volunteer Services for review and approval.

3. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator and the Agency Chaplain and Administrator of Volunteer Services will present the recommendations to the Inmate Field Ministry Council for approval.

C. Assignment of Inmate Field Ministers to Facilities

1. Approval of Facilities to Receive Inmate Field Ministers

- a. Facilities that desire to receive inmate field ministers will submit the “Inmate Field Ministry Program Facility Application Form” ([Attachment B](#)) to the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will present the application to the Inmate Field Ministry Council with their recommendation.
- b. The Inmate Field Ministry Council will approve or deny all facility requests to receive field ministers.
- c. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator or the Agency Chaplain and Administrator of Volunteer Services will inform the facility of the council's decision.

2. Placement of Inmate Field Minister to Approved Facility

- a. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will work with the Classification and Population unit to determine where approved inmate field ministers could be transferred.
- b. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will work with the Agency Chaplain and Administrator of Volunteer Services to prepare recommendations on placements to the Inmate Field Ministry Council.
- c. The Inmate Field Ministry Council will review the recommendations and assign field ministers to approved facilities.
- d. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will inform the inmate field ministers and the facilities of the council's placement decisions.
- e. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will work with the Administrator of Classification and Population to coordinate the transfer of inmate field ministers to their placement facilities.

D. Inmate Field Ministry Duties and Responsibilities

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1. The Inmate Field Ministry Council will determine the specific duties, responsibilities, roles, and services that inmate field ministers will provide at a facility.
2. Inmate field ministers will be issued Inmate Field Ministry ID cards that will be worn by the inmate field ministers while performing their assigned duties.
3. Inmate field ministers will work under the direction of facility Chaplains. The facility Chaplain, staff, and/or designated volunteers will provide supervision of inmate field ministers.
4. Inmates will have the opportunity to opt out of services provided by the Inmate Field Ministry Program by submitting an "Inmate/Offender Grievance Process - Request to Staff" ([DOC 090124D](#)) to the facility Chaplain. This information will be part of the facility inmate orientation on the Inmate Field Ministry Program.
5. Examples of approved field minister duties:
  - a. Facility Community Service Ministry
 

Field ministers may be assigned to facility community service-oriented ministries including but not limited to:

    - (1) Providing information about the Inmate Field Ministry Program during facility inmate orientations;
    - (2) Mentoring/peer support;
    - (3) Tutoring; and
    - (4) Peer facilitated programs – as approved by the facility and the Program Services unit.
  - b. Crisis Ministry
 

Inmate field ministers may be assigned to inmate crisis ministries including but not limited to:

    - (1) Assisting staff with inmate emergency notifications;
    - (2) Grief peer support;
    - (3) Inmate pastoral care;
    - (4) Funeral/memorial services;
    - (5) Geriatric peer support;
    - (6) Facility Medical unit ministry; and

(7) Units on security restrictions.

c. Faith-Based Pastoral Care Ministry

- (1) Pastoral care and support;
- (2) Discipleship classes;
- (3) Preaching;
- (4) Worship service planning and conducting; and
- (5) Teaching.

Inmate field ministers may be granted access to housing units or classroom locations by the facility head to fulfill their field ministry duties. This might include, but is not limited to, special management units, medical units, housing units, and other restricted units.

d. Graduate Assistants

Partner institutions that provide education and training to inmate field ministers may retain up to eight graduates as graduate assistants.

e. Other Duties

- (1) Facility heads and facility Chaplains can propose to the Inmate Field Ministry Council other duties for field ministers assigned to their facility.
- (2) Inmate field ministers, once assigned to a facility, will be allowed to propose new duties to the facility Chaplain and facility head.
- (3) Proposals for other duties will be submitted to the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator who will forward them to the Inmate Field Ministry Council for approval or denial. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will advise the facility head or facility Chaplain of the council's decision.

6. Teleconference Inmate Field Ministry Meetings

Inmate field ministers will participate in regular teleconference meetings facilitated by the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator and supervised by the facility Chaplains.

7. Reports and Feedback

Inmate field ministers will monthly reports on their activities to the facility Chaplain who will forward them to the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator. Feedback and additional information may be requested by the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator and designated representatives of the institution that provided the field minister with their education or training. These requests will be submitted through the facility Chaplain.

8. Opportunities for Continuing Education

Inmate field ministers will participate in continuing education as required by the institution that provided the inmate field minister with their training.

IV. Wardens and Chaplains Meeting

A. Annual Meeting

A meeting of facility heads, or their designee, Chaplains from facilities that have Inmate Field Ministry Programs, and those that have been assigned to receive inmate field ministers will be held annually. The meetings will be scheduled and coordinated by the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator.

V. Inmate Field Minister Disciplinary Issues, Removal, and Reinstatement

A. Inmate Field Minister Disciplinary Issues

1. Any concerns regarding an inmate field minister's behavior or performance of duties will be reported to the facility Chaplain. The facility Chaplain will report these issues to the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator. The Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will be available to help resolve issues if possible or forward the concerns to the Inmate Field Ministry Council for action.
2. Inmates that no longer meet the eligibility criteria set forth in Section III.A will be suspended from Inmate Field Ministry. A report on the issue will be sent to the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator who will forward the report to the Inmate Field Ministry Council for action.
3. The Inmate Field Ministry Council will remove or suspend inmate field ministers when they no longer meet the criteria for service, demonstrated behavior that is detrimental to the program, or are unable to adequately continue to serve as an inmate field minister.
4. Inmate field ministers who are suspended or removed can be reinstated by the Inmate Field Ministry Council when they again meet all eligibility criteria set forth in Section III.A of this policy and have resolved any concerns that led to the removal.

VI. Inmate Field Minister Concerns and Reassignments

A. Concerns

Inmate field ministers who have concerns regarding the Inmate Field Ministry Program at a facility will address those concerns with the facility Chaplain. If the concerns are unresolved, the inmate field minister may forward the concerns to the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator.

B. Reassignments

If the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator determines it is in the best interest of the Inmate Field Ministry Program and the agency to reassign an inmate field minister to another facility, the Inmate Field Ministry coordinator will provide the Inmate Field Ministry Council with a report and recommendation for reassignment.

VII. References

Policy Statement P-090100 entitled "Provisions of Programs and Services"

OP-090124 entitled "Inmate/Offender Grievance Process"

VIII. Action

The Administrator of Programs is responsible for compliance with this procedure.

The Chief of Population will be responsible for the annual review and revisions.

Any exception to this procedure will require prior written approval from the agency Director.

This procedure is effective as indicated.

Replaced: This is a new procedure.

Distribution: Policy and Operations Manual  
Agency Website



<u>Referenced Forms</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Location</u>
<a href="#">DOC 090124D</a>	"Inmate/Offender Grievance Process-Request to Staff"	<a href="#">OP-090124</a>

<u>Attachments</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Location</u>
<a href="#">Attachment A</a>	"Inmate Field Ministry Program - Inmate Field Ministry Application"	Attached
<a href="#">Attachment B</a>	"Inmate Field Ministry Program Facility Application Form"	Attached