



*State of North Carolina
Department of Public Safety
Prisons*

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Section: .0600
Title: **Prison Dog Training
Programs**
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POLICY AND PROCEDURE

.0601 GENERAL

The Prison Dog Training Programs (PDT) are community service programs. They provide opportunities for prison facilities to partner with local government and non-profit agencies. The programs give **offenders** an opportunity to perform community service work while incarcerated. Dogs, that otherwise may be euthanized, are provided an opportunity to be trained to provide assistance, service, therapy or companionship for citizens in North Carolina communities. Preference is given to training dogs to be of assistance or service for the disabled. The program also provides **offenders** a valuable, marketable skill that they may use upon their release to the community. Moreover, the program improves **offenders'** behavior and self-esteem while incarcerated. The Prison Dog Training Programs will help provide gainful use of **offenders'** time and labor while providing the opportunity for their personal growth, skill development, community service awareness and contributions while in prison. Therefore, pursuant to the goals of providing rehabilitative and re-entry programs for **offenders** and forming Community Partnerships to help achieve our goals, the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Prisons Section encourages the participation in this program by its prison facilities and encourages the support of community organizations for the program.

.0602 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the guidelines for standard operation of Prison Dog Training Programs in the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Prisons' facilities that are authorized to operate a Dog Training Program. The procedures are applicable to all models and types of Prison Dog Training Programs. The policy and procedures applies to all **offenders**, Community Partners, employees and others.

.0603 DEFINITIONS

Assistance Dogs – Assistance dogs are trained to perform tasks that assist a life-functioning need. Guiding, signaling, performing physical tasks, alerting to seizures, alerting to situations or problems that are the result of a psychological or psychiatric illness and providing therapeutic companionship, are typically some of those tasks. An individual need not have a visible or discernible disability in order to be partnered and benefit from the use of an Assistance Dog. Assistance dogs are allowed into businesses under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. All categories of Assistance Dogs are granted access by Federal and State Laws.

Community Partner – A local or state government agency such as a county shelter and/or a non-profit organization that provides service or companion dogs for individuals and/or that provides

protection or preservation for animals. Community Partners who physically provide services to the **offenders** must adhere to Prisons' policy.

Companion Dogs – Dogs that are trained to be obedient and loyal pets.

Program Coordinator – An employee within Rehabilitative Services **(RS)** that is designated to provide state-wide monitoring and coordination for the Prison Dog Training Programs.

Dog Bite – Oral contact by a dog that scratches or breaks the skin.

Dog Trainer II – An **offender** who has been properly screened and assigned to serve as the primary handler and trainer for an assigned dog through the Prison Dog Training Programs.

Dog Trainer I – An **offender** who has been properly screened and assigned to serve as the substitute or secondary handler and trainer for an assigned dog in a Prison Dog Training Program.

Facility Primary Program Coordinator – An employee designated by the facility head to manage and coordinate all aspects of a Prison Dog Training Program at the facility level.

Facility Secondary Program Coordinator – An employee who is designated to be responsible for managing and coordinating the program in the absence of the Facility Primary Program Coordinator.

Home Furlough – A brief period of time when a volunteer is allowed to take a dog that is in a Prison Dog Training Program to their home or into the community for socialization or other supportive community training as may be required or needed as a part of the overall training program. Upon conclusion of the furlough, the dog is returned to the prison facility.

Service Dogs – Dogs that are trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Service dogs are allowed into businesses under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

Therapy Dogs – Dogs that are trained to enhance the quality of life for people through visiting and interacting with them in hospitals, rest homes, institutions, etc.

Volunteer **Offender** Trainer – An **offender** who has requested and been approved to participate and provide services in a Prison Dog Training program on a voluntary basis. The **offender** volunteer meets all of the program participation criteria and is not provided compensation for **their** services.

Volunteer Trainer – Professional trainer recommended by the Community Partner and approved by the facility who volunteers their time to teach the Dog Trainer I and Dog Trainer II appropriate methods and techniques of training dogs. All volunteer trainers must adhere to the Prisons' Community Volunteer Program policy.

.0604 PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

(a) Program Administration

- (1) The administration of the program's policies, procedures and standards will be under the direction, in cooperation and collaboration with the prison facility and the Community Partners, of the Prisons Section and Rehabilitative Programs and Services.
- (2) The activity is to be construed as a dual work and program assignment; whereby, **offenders** will be engaged in raising, training and socializing dogs.
- (3) Prior to a prison facility's acquisition and implementation of a Prison Dog Training Program, they must submit a proposal for approval.
- (4) The proposal should be completed by use of the Prison Dog Training Program form, PDT-100. The proposal is to be submitted through the chain of command to the designated Program Coordinator for **Rehabilitative Services**. The Program Coordinator will ensure that the proposed program meets the criteria and will ensure that appropriate approvals are received.
- (5) The prison facility will establish a written Memorandum of Understanding between the facility and the Community Partner(s) for the program prior to implementation of the program. The completed and signed MOU should be forwarded to the **RS** Program Coordinator. The coordinator will review and authorize the MOU for Prisons.

(b) Dogs for Training

- (1) Dogs for participation in the program are obtained from the Community Partners, i.e., county shelters and non-profit canine organizations.
- (2) Wild or aggressive dogs, such as pit bulls, rottweilers, etc. will not be accepted for training in a prison facility.

(c) Pre-Program Orientation

- (1) Prior to implementation of the program, all staff involved in managing the program, other appropriate facility staff and **offender** trainers will participate in an orientation for the program which will include staff that will supervise the program, observing other existing programs.
- (2) It is mandatory that the Facility Primary and Secondary Coordinators attend the orientation.

- (3) Community Partners should assist in providing and/or obtaining the orientation and overview for staff and offenders.
- (d) Training Cycle Length
- (1) The length of time necessary to train dogs will be established and will be governed and regulated by the type and level of the training the program will provide.
 - (2) However, it is essential that programs adhere to a minimum training period of eight weeks and/or a maximum training period of twelve months. The facility must request and have approved any variations in the minimum and maximum program lengths. It is to be understood that only service/assistance dog training programs typically exceed a 12-week training cycle due to the extensive training requirement needed to produce quality-trained service/assistance dogs which are to be trained by a qualified, knowledgeable professional trainer for service dogs.
- (e) Handling, Management and Treatment of Dogs
- (1) There is one offender assigned to each dog as the primary handler and a minimum of one offender assigned per two primary handlers as the secondary handler and trainer. Dogs may be trained periodically by another offender trainer as required by the volunteer trainer. There may be rotating offender volunteer alternates to substitute as necessary.
 - (2) Dogs will not be handled or given to anyone other than the assigned Primary or Secondary Trainer, program volunteers or others involved in the program. In the event of an emergency, any staff may facilitate moving the dogs to a secure location.
 - (3) Dogs will not be left in another offender's room or bed area.
 - (4) An Offender Dog Trainer may allow other offenders to socialize with a dog; however, the offender dog trainer must maintain control of the dog with a leash. It is the offender dog trainer's responsibility to establish limits for any attention from other offenders and he or she must employ appropriate measures to handle any inappropriate attention. Such measures include removing the dog from the area, and/or returning to their dorm and advising the assigned officer of the incident. If it is not possible to remove the dog from the area without further incident, then the assigned trainer must call out to the Yard Officer or other employee for assistance.
 - (5) Proper diet and feeding schedules will be followed for all dogs. Changes will be permitted only with the permission of the Community Partner and/or Coordinators. Dogs will only be fed products that are made for dogs. No human food is allowed to be given to dogs.

- (6) All dogs kept in the dormitory will be exercised and allowed relief prior to the facility lockdown. No **offenders** or dogs will be let out of their cells for relief during count times. If special circumstances arise and an exception is needed, the prison facility staff will use proper judgment in deciding when to give dogs relief.
- (7) The dog's equipment and supplies are subject to all aspects of security procedures, including searches.
- (8) **Offenders** who are not participating in the Program are not allowed in or around the immediate areas where training exercises are being held.
- (9) Dogs may play with or chew only Program purchased items that are specifically provided for these purposes. If an assigned dog chews and/or destroys property other than its own toys, etc., the **offender** trainer will be held responsible and appropriate consequences given as determined by the **Warden**.
- (10) Trainers, staff coordinators and **offender** trainers have a responsibility to control what the dog does. Any **offender** trainer who encourages or attempts to instill in a dog aggressive or attack mode behavior towards any person will be immediately removed from the Program with the dog being returned to the Community Partner for evaluation. In addition, any such **offender** trainer may be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the prison facility staff.
- (11) Employees that are not a part of the Prison Dog Training Programs are not to discipline a dog. **Offenders** that are not a part of the Prison Dog Training Programs are not permitted to discipline a dog. Any unauthorized discipline or abuse of any dog is to be reported immediately to the Primary Program Coordinator and the **Warden**. Any such incident may be handled through the **offender** disciplinary process or the employee disciplinary process and/or the court system.
- (12) At no time will an **offender** Trainer, who has not been trained to utilize the approved discipline methods permitted by the sponsoring training agent or agency, discipline a dog.
- (13) At no time will any dog be crated for any extended period of time as a discipline.
- (14) No staff member or **offender** will taunt or antagonize the dogs or the trainers in any way. All such violations are to be immediately reported.
- (15) Should an employee witness a dog being mistreated they are to immediately report this to the program Primary Coordinator.
- (16) At no time will dogs be left tied out anywhere.

- (17) Dogs will be kept as clean and odor-free as possible and groomed appropriately for their breed.
- (f) Dog Bites or Other Significant Incidents
- (1) The facility will notify the **RS** Program Coordinator by telephone as soon as possible of any significant incidents, e.g., a dog bite, media inquiry etc. that occurs with the program. The facility will follow-up the notification with a written report of the incident and will attach any other written documentation such as forms and statements.
 - (2) Any **offender** or staff bitten by a dog in the Program will be referred to the medical department for immediate medical attention. A refusal to be assessed by medical staff must be supported by a written and signed statement to that effect.
 - (3) **Offender** trainers who are bitten must also complete form DC193 (Report of Accident to **Offender** on the Job). OPUS IS41 (Incident Report) screen must be completed by appropriate staff for **offenders** who are not assigned to the program and are bitten by a dog.
 - (4) DC-WC-4 (Employees Initial Report of Injury) will be completed by any staff that are bitten by a dog.
 - (5) In the event of a dog bite, the trainer will immediately place the dog in a crate. The trainer will immediately notify available prison staff and provide them the name of the person bitten. The Program Coordinators and Community Partners must take appropriate action to ensure that the incident of the dog biting is not a repeated incident by removing the dog from the program.
- (g) Completion of Training
- (1) Upon completion of training, the Community Partner will remove the dog from the prison facility.
 - (2) It is the sole responsibility of the Community Partner to select and/or provide a permanent home or appropriate placement for dogs that have completed training or that are removed from the training program.
 - (3) An employee can not adopt or be the recipient of a dog that is trained at the facility where **they** work. However, the Community Partner may allow an employee to adopt or be the recipient of a dog that is trained at a facility other than where the employee works.
- (h) Fiscal Support

- (1) Funding for dogs' supplies should be provided by the Community Partner; however, donations from Volunteers and Community Resource Councils are also encouraged to be sought to help fund supplies for the dogs.
- (2) When donations are inadequate to obtain and maintain essential items for maintenance of the dogs, then Local Welfare Funds should be used to purchase needed items. However, Welfare Funds should not be regarded as a continuous or permanent source of funding for the Program.

(i) Death of a Dog

If a dog dies on the premises of a prison facility, the Community Partner will be responsible for the removal and disposal of the dog's remains away from the prison facility.

.0605 OFFENDER SELECTION AND REMOVAL CRITERIA

(a) **Offender** Selection

Offenders are selected after careful screening and review by a local committee that may include representatives of the Program's Community Partner. The committee will adhere to the following when considering an **offender** eligible for assignment to the program.

- (1) The **offender** has no current or past conviction or history of a sex related crime.
- (2) The **offender** does not have a conviction, history of abuse or cruelty to animals.
- (3) The **offender's** custody grade and level is appropriate for the requirements of the program and the facility.
- (4) The **offender** has not been certified as a member of a Security Risk Group.
- (5) The **offender** has not had an infraction within the last 90 days.
- (6) The **offender** has at least a 6th grade achievement level as assessed by the Wide Range Achievement Test or other achievement tests available to Prisons.
- (7) The **offender** is able to sign all agreements and acknowledgements for the program.
- (8) The **offender** has no restrictions prohibiting outdoor activities, heavy lifting, standing, squatting or any other physical limitations that would inhibit performance of work tasks that are a part of the program.
- (9) The **offender** has enough time remaining to be served to complete at least one program training cycle.

In addition to all of the above, the referral and selection of **offenders** for participation in the Program should be in consideration of the **offender's** maturity level, overall behavior and attitude and his or her capacity for exercise of good judgment.

(b) **Offender** Removal or Replacement

Offenders may be removed from the assignment for the following reasons:

- (1) Conviction of an infraction.
- (2) A personal request to be reassigned.
- (3) Inadequate work performance as follows:
 - (A) Not keeping the dog on a leash;
 - (B) Leaving dog unattended;
 - (C) Failing to provide adequate training for the dog;
 - (D) Failing to give the dog adequate exercise time;
 - (E) Not spending enough time with the dog;
 - (F) Failing to report incidents such as dog aggression, injuries, etc.,
 - (G) Rough play with the dog, including abuse of the dog;
 - (H) Failure to adhere to a regular bathing schedule in accordance with the approved schedule; and
 - (I) Failure to maintain clean living quarters for the dog, e.g., not cleaning up the area after bathing or feeding a dog.

.0606 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(a) **Rehabilitative Services** Program Coordinator

- (1) Monitors and maintains the program policy, procedures and standards in an up-to-date, current status.
- (2) Ensures that facility staff receive the program orientation prior to their starting a program.
- (3) Ensures that staff and **offenders** receive direction, appropriate training and essential information for operating the program.
- (4) Ensures consistency in program implementation.
- (5) Notifies appropriate Prisons and **RS** managers of any significant incidents that occur in any program.
- (6) Obtains and compiles program statistical and other information and disseminates and reports program statistics and information as appropriate.

- (7) Serves as Prisons' liaison with Community Partners, other organizations and the public.
- (b) Facility Program Coordinator
- (1) The **Warden** will assign a staff person the role of Primary Coordinator for the program and will also assign a staff person the role of Secondary Coordinator for the program.
 - (2) The Primary Coordinator is responsible for managing, supervising, and coordinating the Prison Dog Training Program.
 - (3) The Secondary Coordinator is responsible for being informed, capable and available to manage the program during the absence of the Primary Coordinator. Therefore, the Secondary Coordinator must have a thorough comprehension of the program operations and guidelines at all times.
 - (4) The Facility Coordinator notifies the **RS** Program Coordinator of any changes that occur in the program. The Program Structure or the type of program being offered should not be changed without approval from the **RS** Program Coordinator.
 - (5) Coordinators, especially the Primary Coordinator, are responsible for acquiring sufficient knowledge and understanding of the program to ensure their ability to properly supervise and manage the program.
 - (6) The Primary Coordinator ensures that the Secondary Coordinator is kept informed and abreast of the program.
 - (7) The Primary Coordinator ensures that all staff of the facility understands the operation of the program.
 - (8) The Primary Coordinator leads and coordinates the selection and assignment of **offenders** to the program and ensures that there is an available pool of approved **offenders** to be assigned to avoid any disruption in the program.
 - (9) The Coordinator ensures that **offenders** are appropriately assigned, trained and physically capable of performing the program.
 - (10) Coordinators are responsible for managing, supervising and monitoring the **offender** trainers assigned to their program. They are also responsible for monitoring the overall progress and well being of the dogs in their program.
 - (11) It is the responsibility of the Coordinator to report any dog-related incidents to the **RS** Program Coordinator following the process as described under section .0604, f (1) of this policy and procedures.

- (12) The Coordinator is also responsible for maintaining accurate statistics on the number of dogs participating and released from the program and for reporting this information on a monthly basis to the **RS** Program Coordinator.
 - (13) The Primary Coordinator serves as the prison facility liaison with Community Partners, other organizations and the public.
 - (14) The Primary Coordinator ensures that the Memorandum of Understanding with the Community Partner is current and that the **RS** Program Coordinator has a current copy on file.
 - (15) The Primary Coordinator ensures that the sponsoring Community Partner is notified when supplies for the program are needed. The Coordinator stores and inventories supplies and ensures that there are no shortages at any given time. At no time will the amount of food on hand be less than what is required to feed the dogs for an entire week.
 - (16) The Primary Coordinator ensures that procedures are established with the Community Partner for the rescue, pick-up and/or removal of any dog that repeatedly displays any form of aggression toward any person, including, but not limited to, an **offender**, employee or visitor.
 - (17) The Coordinator should pre-establish methods for restraining and isolating dogs that display aggressive behavior while waiting for their removal by the Community Partner.
 - (18) The Community Partner is responsible for removing any aggressive dog the same day that an incident is reported or within a reasonable timeframe agreed to by the **Warden** and the Community Partner.
 - (19) The Primary Coordinator ensures that the Secondary Coordinator, **Warden** and the **RS** Program Coordinator are informed of all instances of aggression as soon as feasible. All other relevant and applicable rules for reporting an incident will also prevail.
 - (20) Coordinators evaluate the progress of dogs in the training process. If a dog continues to fail in areas of the process, it will be returned to the Community Partner.
- (c) Dog Trainers
- Offenders** assigned to Prison Dog Training Programs are dually assigned to the full-time work code J26001 or J26002 and the part-time program code D52001. The work and training hours are recorded separately. The assignment is rated as gain or earned time III. A Dog Trainer II is paid at the higher rate of incentive wage and a Dog Trainer I is paid

at the entry level. Activities that are construed as work tasks are: feeding watering, bathing, grooming, dog relief, disposal of dog waste, cleaning dog kennel or housing area, and exercising the dog. Work tasks should not normally exceed 40 hours per week. All other tasks performed under this assignment are program activities and should be accounted for and entered under the program assignment code D52001. The facility coordinator is to update the **Offender** Activity screen with work performance ratings and comments, as needed, to ensure that there is a record in OPUS of the **offender** trainer's work performance. Additional management requirements of the assignments and responsibilities of the **offender** trainers are listed below:

- (1) The standard assignment ratio will be a minimum of one Dog Trainer I for every two Dog Trainer II's assigned to the program. Therefore, the Dog Trainer I provides back-up services for two Dog Trainer II's and their dogs at all times. The Dog Trainer II functions as the Primary Trainer and the Dog Trainer I functions as the Substitute or Secondary Dog Trainer.
- (2) The Secondary Trainer will substitute for the Primary Trainer when the Primary Trainer is absent due to illness, hospitalization, leaves and other circumstances including dismissal from the assignment. Therefore, the Secondary Trainer will be assigned to the Program on a full-time basis and will assist the Primary Trainer and provide other services as needed for the operation and maintenance of the program when not performing in a substitution role or as the Primary Trainer.
- (3) **Offender** volunteers should only be allowed to perform the duties of the Secondary Trainers; they should not be allowed to function as or perform the duties of the Primary Trainer.
- (4) The Secondary Trainer is to be regarded as an apprentice who is a trained and available **offender** to be assigned as a Primary Trainer when there is a vacancy or a need for him or her to function as the Primary Trainer.
- (5) Trainers are required to attend and participate in all the trainer's education and training components of the program.
- (6) Trainers are responsible for training assigned dogs.
- (7) Trainers will maintain control of their dogs at all times and not permit the dogs to bark excessively, jump on people, run up and down hallways, lie on beds and engage in playing with others.
- (8) Trainers do not allow dogs to go in any restricted or off-limits areas of the facility.
- (9) Trainers must keep dogs at an appropriate secure distance, set by the **Warden**, away from security razor ribbon.

- (10) Trainers are responsible for keeping kennels and/or the general living quarters for the dogs clean at all times. Corrections staff will report any violations of the sanitation of the dogs or their housing areas directly to the Prison Dog Training Program Coordinators.
 - (11) **Offender** Trainers are responsible for maintaining their dogs on a leash; however, dogs may be trained off leash in areas of the facility as defined by the program coordinators. Any refusal to allow the trainers access to areas designated for off leash training and play is to be reported to the Primary Dog Training Program Coordinator.
 - (12) **Offender** Trainers take dogs out to relieve themselves in the designated areas and for the designated time period. Coordinators must determine the need for trainers to take dogs out for relief after lock-in and communicate this to the facility staff. The yard officer maintains visual contact with the Trainers and dogs during after lock-in relief. No dogs will be taken outside of the dorm for dog relief during count nor will Trainers be out of the dorms working in kennels during count time. Any variation from this recommendation regarding movement during facility counts must have the **Warden's** approval.
 - (13) Trainers ensure that the dogs are properly fed and given water. Trainers do not allow the dog to eat human food.
 - (14) Trainers are responsible for properly disposing of dog waste.
- (d) Community Partner
- (1) The Community Partner will provide dogs for the program.
 - (2) The Community Partner will provide training for staff and **offenders** involved in the program.
 - (3) The Community Partner will provide supplies for the dogs such as, but are not limited to, food, food and water bowls, collars, leashes, ID tags, vests, crates, flea and tick control.
 - (4) The Community Partner will be responsible for ensuring that each dog is properly vaccinated at all times.
 - (5) The Community Partner will transport dogs to routine veterinary appointments. The prison facility will transport during an emergency.
 - (6) The Community Partner will be responsible for paying veterinarian bills.
 - (7) The Community Partner will be solely responsible for placement and/or adoption of the dog upon the dog's completion or removal from the program.

- (8) The Community Partner works closely with the program Primary Coordinator and coordinates furloughs for dogs as part of the overall training. Furloughs should only be done for specific levels of training such as service and/or assistance dog training.
- (9) The Community Partner(s) is able to sign the program's Memorandum of Understanding.

.0607 ROUTINE AND EMERGENCY VETERINARIAN CARE

- (a) The sponsoring Community Partner will ensure that dogs are properly vaccinated before their acceptance in the program and as needed during their participation in the program.
- (b) A veterinary source for routine and emergency care will be identified for each Prison Dog Training Program. The source should be well known to facility staff, especially staff that is likely to be involved in transporting dogs for care.
- (c) The Community Partner should assume the responsibility for all veterinary costs.
- (d) Should an illness be reported during the regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., the Program Coordinator or facility staff should contact the Community Partner who will contact the veterinarian and coordinate treatment. The Community Partner should also transport the dog to the care giver if needed.
- (e) Should an illness be reported after business hours, the Coordinator or the Officer-in-Charge (OIC) should contact the after hours or emergency veterinarian. The Facility Primary Coordinator should ensure that the after hours or emergency veterinarian's number is readily available to the OIC or other appropriate staff.
- (f) If the veterinarian advises that the dog needs immediate treatment, the Coordinator or the OIC will have the dog transported to the veterinarian utilizing available correctional staff.
- (g) The veterinarian's payment information should be pre-negotiated and/or pre-approved and known to the facility staff and the veterinarian.

.0608 APPRENTICESHIP

There are apprenticeship opportunities for qualifying participants in Prison Dog Training Programs. All apprenticeship participants must have a High School Diploma or High School Equivalency Certificate. The Animal Care Provider (Dog Trainer) Apprenticeship, which is available to participants in any of our dog training programs, requires a pre-set number of both on-the-job training and instructional training hours (typically satisfied by completion of a Veterinary Assistant Certificate from the North Carolina Community College System). The Service Dog Trainer Apprenticeship also requires a pre-set number of both on-the-job training and instructional training hours.

Only **offenders** assigned to an approved service dog training program may pursue the Service Dog Trainer Apprenticeship. Both apprenticeship certificate programs require the facility coordinator to maintain and submit the participant's monthly Apprenticeship Trainee/Training Log. The aforementioned completion requirements shall only be amended as a result of a new agreement with the Department of Labor/Commerce with NCDPS Prisons managed by the **RS** Program Coordinator. In the event of a transfer, a training log must be kept and transferred with the **offender** to the receiving facility for the **offender** to complete the apprenticeship. The **RS** Program Coordinator is the authorized point of contact for all matters/inquiries regarding apprenticeship certification and the Department of Labor/Commerce.



Commissioner of Prisons

September 17, 2021
Date

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