

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS Standard Operating Procedures		
Policy Name: Case Management-Records Maintenance		
Policy Number: 219.01	Effective Date: 10/27/17	Page Number: 1 of 6
Authority: Commissioner	Originating Division: Inmate Services Division	Access Listing: Level I: All Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

It is the policy of the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) to maintain adequate and appropriate records of offender contacts with behavioral observations of these contacts and to document the offenders' progress or lack of progress towards meeting the needs identified on the case plan. This policy also governs institutional file and SCRIBE management which includes, but is not limited to, the establishment, use of content, privacy, security, preservation and destruction of institutional files.

II. Authority:

- A. GDC Board Rules: 125-1-1-.09, 125-2-4-.03, 125-2-4-.05, 125-4-1-.06, and 125-4-1-.07;
- B. O.C.G.A. §§ 42-5-36(c) and 50-18-70, *et seq.*;
- C. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOP): 210.05 Inmate Probation Programs, 219.03 Access to Facility Inmate/Probationer Records, 107.04 Risk & Needs Assessment, 107.01 Purpose and Objectives-Counseling Services, 220.03 Classification Committee; and
- D. ACA Standards: 2-CO-1E-01, 2-CO-1E-03, 2-CO-1E-09, 4-4095, 4-4096, 4-4098, and 4-4099.

III. Definitions:

- A. **Behavioral Terms** - In writing about the offender, words and phrases that describe the offender's behavior observed in objective terms.
- B. **Case Plan** - For all facilities, the Next Generation Assessment is used to assess needs and develop a case plan.
- C. **Next Generation Assessment (NGA)** - GDC's assessment tool to identify programming for the offender population.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

This policy is applicable to all administrative and counseling staff in all State, County, Private Facilities, Probation Detention Centers (PDC), Transitional

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Centers (TC), Residential Substance Abuse Treatment facilities (RSAT) and Integrated Treatment Facility (ITF) where Counseling Services are available.

A. An on-going record of offender contacts and behavioral observations will be recorded in SCRIBE case notes. These notations shall track at a minimum, behavior recommended services and strategies toward meeting the offender’s case plan, as well as institutional/center adjustment. These records will provide a progressive recording of the offender’s progress or lack of progress towards meeting the identified needs from the case plan.

1. The date of arrival of the offender to the facility will be recorded as part of the initial entry in SCRIBE and in the institutional file.
2. There shall be a minimum of one (1) meaningful contact utilizing DAP format (every 90 days) for State and Private facilities. For Transitional Centers, Offender Boot Camps, Pre-Release Centers, Probation Detention Centers, and Probation Boot Camps there will be one (1) meaningful contact utilizing DAP format per month. These contacts will be done in accordance with SOPs 107.01, Purpose and Objectives - Counseling Services and 220.03, Classification Committee.
3. The initial interview counseling session (this is not the Admissions and Orientation (A & O) contact) will be conducted within seven (7) working days of assignment to the permanent counselor’s caseload and documented in SCRIBE. The initial interview will include, but is not limited to: program referrals, goals for reaching program needs, offender individual goals, etc.
4. Case note entries will include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Actions taken by the offender and/or counselor toward addressing the case plan identified needs including groups, programs and work details currently involved with or completed, referrals, and follow-up activity.
 - b. Summary of contacts with the offender regarding progress or lack of progress written in behavioral terms, to include: disciplinary reports (date, offense, disposition), program coordination, family contacts,

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counseling sessions, classification, job performance as rated on the work activity performance report, case conferences, etc.

- c. Significant contacts by anyone other than the counselor will be documented and discussed with the offenders' counselor if it involves an unusual situation or if the counselor needs to be notified immediately. Significant contact can be contact by family members, teachers, detail officers or other staff members reporting positive or negative behavior.
 - d. Pertinent outside agencies contacted concerning the offender, including phone conversations regarding these services.
5. If the offender has been re-assigned a new counselor, this new counselor will document:
- a. The date the offender was added to their caseload.
 - b. Conduct a face to face contact with the reassigned offender within fourteen (14) business days from assignment to caseload, during the face to face contact a review of the case plan must be done. Counselors will be responsible for documenting the 90-day meaningful contact for this face to face interaction.
 - c. If a new counselor assumes a newly assigned caseload from a previous counselor and the caseload is too large for all offenders to contacted within seven (7) days of assignment, the counselor will be responsible for making a statement in SCRIBE indicating the following:
 - i. The date of assignment for each offender on the caseload;
 - ii. The date the case-plan for each offender was reviewed; and
 - iii. Whether the 90-day meaningful contact for each offender was in compliance. If a 90-day meaningful contact is not in compliance with DAP standard the counselor will have 30 business days from assignment to caseload to make the meaningful contact.

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- d. Offender records will be maintained, organized and reviewed per established departmental procedures and utilized to plan counseling strategies, as well as for professional consultations with other treatment staff.
6. Counselors will provide documentation necessary for use by the Facilities Division, the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Parole (P&P), or others as requested.
- B. The offender institutional files shall contain all documents, orders, and actions taken concerning the offender. The files must be uniformly organized per Attachment 3, Organization of Offender Files, to assure necessary access, retrieval or audit of specific information and adequate maintenance. Audits of offender institutional files shall be conducted with the expectation that all such files are organized and maintained as directed. A minimum of 10% of the institutional files and SCRIBE case files for the offender population at each facility shall be audited annually by the Deputy Warden of Care & Treatment or the Warden's/Superintendent's designee. It is also the responsibility of the Counseling Supervisor to review a minimum of five (5%) percent case file review in SCRIBE on each counselor monthly. Any patterns of irregularities shall be noted and reported to the Warden/Superintendent. The Warden/Superintendent of each facility will be responsible for compliance.
- C. All offender institutional files shall be organized and maintained in a legal size (8 ½ X 14") file folders and stamped "Confidential" in RED letters on the outside of the folder.
- D. When an offender is received from another facility, the offender records room staff shall mark a starting point for the entries for the facility. This "flagger" will state " "Facility Name" records begin here", along with the date of the offender's arrival to facility.
- E. Offender records are confidential state secrets under O.C.G.A. § 42-5-36(c) and must be kept in a locked file cabinet behind a locked door. Access to offender records is restricted. The Warden/Superintendent will designate appropriate staff to be granted access to the records room. A list of these staff

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will be posted on the door. Offender records will be signed out by the Records Clerk to appropriate requesting staff. Under no circumstances should an offender record be kept after 3:00 p.m. on the day it has been signed out without prior approval by the Deputy Warden of Care & Treatment/Assistant Superintendent or Warden/Superintendent.

- F. As outlined in the Open Records Act, O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70, *et seq.*, the public and, as their representatives, the media have the right to inspect "public records" of government agencies. Those records are defined as "material prepared and maintained or received during the operation of a public office or agency." Offender institutional files, including SCRIBE entries, remain in the official custody of the Georgia Department of Corrections and are classified as confidential state secrets. All requests for offender related records (SCRIBE, central and inmate institutional) shall be immediately forwarded to the GDC Office of Legal Services for review and processing.
- G. A "Release of Information" consent form that complies with applicable federal and state regulations will be used prior to release of any releasable offender information, such as case plan progress or lack of progress, to any family member or other such person that may need such information. The offender is required to sign the consent form prior to the release of information and a copy of the form will be maintained in the offender's institutional file and documented in SCRIBE case notes.
- H. Upon receipt of a transfer order to transfer an offender to another state prison the offender's updated Institutional File, Medical File, and Mental Health File must be moved with the offender. Confidentiality of the Medical File and Mental Health File shall be maintained. Under no circumstances should offender files be delayed longer than 72 hours.
- I. Upon release of an offender from GDC custody, the facility will package all offender files and maintain as noted in the Department's Records Retention Schedule.
- J. Refer to Offender Release Procedures policy for special instructions concerning sex offender release file processing.

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K. Other files or records (i.e. medical, general office, or special programs, etc.) are not included in the above requirements.

V. Attachments:

Attachment 1, Five Percent (5%) Review Form
 Attachment 2, Institutional Review Form
 Attachment 3, Organization of Offender Institutional File.

VI. Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:

Upon completion, Attachments 1 and 2 shall be maintained for two (2) years in the chief Counselor's office and then destroyed. Attachment 3 is an example only and shall be maintained as instructed in this SOP until obsolete and replaced. The offender institutional file shall be retained in accordance with the Department's Records Retention Schedule.