

<b>GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</b>		
Standard Operating Procedures		
<b>Functional Area:</b> Facility Operations	<b>Reference Number:</b> IID03-0003	<b>Revises Previous Effective Date:</b> 7/15/02
<b>Subject:</b> VISITATION OF RESIDENTS		
<b>Authority:</b> Donald/Adams	<b>Effective Date:</b> 7/01/04	Page 1 of 15

**I. POLICY:**

Each Transitional Center shall provide visitation privileges for residents guided by procedures found herein. Visits by official visitors to the Center shall be documented.

**II. APPLICABILITY:**

All Transitional Centers

**III. RELATED DIRECTIVES:**

- A. O.C.G.A.42-5-56
- B. GDC Rules: 125-2-4-.15, 125-3-2-.02, 125-3-2-.04(f)(6), 125-3-4-.02, and 125-4-7-.03.
- C. GDC-SOPs: IIA05-0001, IIA07-0007, IIA10-0001, IIB01-0005, IIB01-0013, IIB01-0022, IIB02-0003, IIB02-0004, IIB09-0001, IIB12-0002, IIB12-0003, IIB12-0004, IIB13-0003, IIB15-0001, IIB16-0001, IIC03-0002, IIC02-0003, IID03-0001, IID03-0004, IID04-0001, VD01-0014, VA01-0019, VG01-0008

**IV. DEFINITIONS:**

- A. Significant Other: A member of an inmate's extended family, a friend, or some other person having a meaningful relationship with the inmate.
- B. Next of Kin: For purposes of this SOP, the person designated by the inmate to receive his or her remains or the person designated to make emergency medical decision in the event the inmate is unable to make medical decisions. In the event the inmate fails to so designate, the person reasonably designated by staff.

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- C. Designated Beneficiary: The person designated, by the inmate, to receive the inmate's personal property and funds which are left under the custody and control of the Department in the event of the inmate's death.
- D. Sexual Offense-O.C.G.A.42-5-56: As used in this Code section, the term "sexual offense" means a violation of Code Section 16-6-1, relating to the offense of rape; Code Section 16-6-2, relating to the offenses of sodomy and aggravated sodomy; Code Section 16-6-5.1, relating to the offense of sexual assault against a person in custody; Code Section 16-6-22, relating to the offense of incest; or Code Section 16-6-22.2, relating to the offense of aggravated sexual battery, when the victim was under 18 years of age at the time of the commission of any such offense; or a violation of Code Section 16-6-3, relating to the offense of statutory rape; Code Section 16-6-4, relating to the offenses of child molestation and aggravated child molestation; or Code Section 16-6-5, relating to the offense of enticing a child for indecent purposes, when the victim was under 16 years of age at the time of the commission of any such offense.
- E. Resident: The word RESIDENT, as used in this SOP, is meant as a generic term to encompass all offenders incarcerated at centers designated in the Applicability section of this SOP.

**V. ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment 1 - Resident Visitor's Register
- Attachment 2 - Significant Other Application
- Attachment 3 - GCIC/NCIC Consent Form for Visitors

**VI. PROCEDURE:**

**A. Awareness**

1. Visitation procedures must be included in the Center rules and regulations (resident handbook) and explained to the resident during orientation.

**B. Visitation Hours**

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1. Regular visitation hours shall be established by the Superintendent for Saturdays and Sundays as well as observed state holidays. A minimum of two hours visiting time (preferably, four hours) should be provided unless a visitor's late arrival makes this impossible due to termination of visiting hours. Additional visiting hours may be established at the discretion of the Superintendent if they do not interfere with the operation of the Center.
2. Regular visiting hours should not interfere with either the routine functions or scheduled activities of the Center. A schedule of the designated visiting hours shall be posted permanently and conspicuously.

C. Authorized Visitors

Note: As part of the process for authorizing a visitor, the Superintendent may require a prospective visitor to sign attachment 3, (GCIC/NCIC Consent Form for Visitors of GDC Facilities), authorizing the release of driver and criminal history information to the Georgia Department of Corrections. This information may serve to assist in determining the approval or disapproval of a prospective visitor to a Transitional Center. This process may be used at the discretion of the Superintendent.

1. The number of visitors on a resident's approved visitor list is limited to twelve. Resident's having large families will be considered on an individual basis. Persons who are not immediate family members and yet would like to be on the approved list should make this known to the resident who may make the request to the Superintendent. All visitors are subject to approval or disapproval by the Superintendent of the facility or his/her designee. All visitors, regardless of age, shall be approved and listed on the resident's visiting list. The only exception will be a special visit approved in advance by the Superintendent/designee. Categories of visitors may include the following:

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2. Members of an inmate's immediate family, (parents, brothers, sisters, spouse, grandparents, children, and stepchildren) upon request and after verification, may be placed on the resident's approved visitor list.
3. Significant others may also be included on the approved visitor list. Significant Others may be defined in two (2) basic categories: pre-incarceration relationships and relationships formed after incarceration began, including friends and employers or other relationships which have the potential for rehabilitative capabilities. The Significant Other must complete and submit the "Significant Other Application for Visitation Privilege". The Superintendent/designee will review and approve/disapprove the applications. The term Significant Other does NOT imply automatic approval for visitation from romantic involvement. Rehabilitative potential must still be established. See definition on page one of this SOP.
4. Inmates, ex-inmates, probationers, and parolees will be excluded from the approved visitor list unless approved by the Superintendent.
5. After a person's name has been placed on the approved list, prior approval is not necessary on regular visiting days. An adult must accompany visitors under the age of sixteen on the visiting list.
6. One resident's visitors will not be allowed to visit with another resident or his/her visitors.
7. Any resident with a current or prior conviction for any sexual offense as defined in the Definition Section of the SOP shall not be allowed visitation with any person under the age 18 years unless such person is the spouse, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandson, or granddaughter of the inmate and such person is not the victim of a sexual offense for which the inmate was convicted. If visitation with a minor is restricted by court order, only the

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court issuing such order may grant permission for special visitation with the minor.

8. Counselors will review all resident administrative files assigned to their respective caseloads to ensure compliance with Section VI.C. and make necessary corrections to the identified resident(s) visiting list(s). The review will be documented on the notes or on the visitation form in the administrative file.

**D. Visitor Register**

The Resident Visitor Register (Attachment 1) will be used by each Center to record resident visitation. Correctional staff are responsible for determining whether or not an individual is an authorized visitor to any resident by referring to the individual resident's list of authorized visitors. Only authorized persons shall be admitted.

**E. Visitation Area**

1. The facility shall maintain a visiting area where residents may have contact visitation with their authorized visitors. Restroom facilities shall be provided for visitors in or adjacent to the visiting area. Videotaping of the visitation area is permitted as an added measure to ensure the safety, security and integrity of security operations during visitation periods. The Assistant Superintendent or Chief of Security should review the visitation videotapes by the end of the first business day following the visitation. The Superintendent will be notified immediately if anything unusual or outside the parameters of SOP's occurred. Should an investigation result from violations observed on the videotape, tape will not be reused until complete resolution of the investigation. Reviewed videotapes that do not reveal any unusual circumstances or have a security value may be reused after sixty days. Visitors will not be allowed in resident rooms. The OIC or duty officer will monitor visitation to ensure compliance with Center and departmental rules.

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**F. Visitor List Change**

A resident may request to add or delete a name on his/her visitor list by contacting his/ her counselor and providing the necessary information. The counselor will forward this request to the Superintendent or his/her designee who will be the authorizing agent for such changes. Transitional Center Visitor lists may only be changed every six (6) months. During the six (6) month review the Counselor will verify and/or change the Designated Beneficiary and Next of Kin, at the request of the resident, as applicable in each case.

**G. Notification of Loss of Visitation Privilege:**

The facility shall notify any authorized visitor and the resident when his/her name has been removed from an authorized visitor list and give reason thereof.

1. The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for notifying the visitor, in writing, of their removal from the authorized visitor list. The notification shall include the reason for and length of the removal.
2. A copy of the visitor notification shall be forwarded to the resident and placed in the resident's file.
3. When a resident has lost visitation privileges for any reason, they may notify the authorized visitors via a center form letter. This is to minimize the inconvenience and frustrations of potential visitors.
  - a. The form letter shall be provided to the resident at the conclusion of the disciplinary hearing.
  - b. The resident will provide postage unless he or she is indigent.
  - c. If the United States Mail would not reach the family in time to prevent an unnecessary trip, the resident may request that notification

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occur by phone (collect call for long distance). Postal notice will also be given.

**H. Visitor Identification**

Visitors are required to present positive identification prior to their admission for visiting.

1. A driver's license with picture, a photo id card issued by the Department of Public Safety, or other acceptable photographic identification card will be required of visitors age sixteen and over.
2. A temporary driver's license issued by the Department of Public Safety will be acceptable when accompanied by some other form of appropriate picture identification.
3. I.D. cards will be maintained in a secure area outside the actual visitation area and will be returned at the conclusion of the visit.

**I. Attorneys:**

1. For the purpose of visitation, the term attorney includes a resident's attorney of record or any other attorney licensed to practice in State or United States Courts, Court of Appeals, or the Supreme Courts with whom the resident has or is attempting to establish an attorney-client relationship. (GDC Rule 125-3-4-.07 and SOP VD01-0014)
  - a. An attorney must produce an active State Bar Card and a driver's license or an acceptable photo ID card.
  - b. Attorneys shall be permitted to visit their clients at the center during prescribed visiting periods with prior approval.
  - c. In addition, reasonable flexibility shall be exercised in permitting attorneys, by prior appointment, to visit with their clients during normal business hours.

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- d. Residents shall be instructed to advise their attorneys that appointments are required to visit except in bona fide emergencies.
  - e. Appointments must be made through the Superintendent's Office at least twenty-four hours in advance.
  - f. Correctional staff shall maintain surveillance and general supervision during the visit. The correctional staff member shall be positioned so as to permit the attorney and client to converse privately and maintain the privileged nature of their relationship.
  - g. No special provisions will be made for attorneys during normal visiting hours.
2. A paralegal, investigator or law assistant employed by an attorney may visit a resident if prior arrangements have been made with the Superintendent or his/her designee.
- a. Before allowing such a visit, the attorney will contact the Superintendent/designee and identify the person.
  - b. At each visit the Superintendent/designee will require the presentation of a letter, dated no later than one week prior to presentation, signed by the attorney and identifying the holder and the resident to be visited. This letter should be placed in the resident's file.
  - c. The Superintendent/designee may refuse permission of these visits for cause. Cause may include misrepresentation made by the attorney, paralegal or investigator concerning the visits, as well as, the existence of facts, which give the Superintendent/designee reason to believe that the visit would pose a threat to facility security.

**J. Other Visitors and Facility Tours**



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1. The Superintendent/designee may authorize individuals or groups such as representatives of civic groups, church committees, students or rehabilitative groups to visit the center. Prior to any such visit the Superintendent/designee will establish procedures necessary to govern the visit, safeguard the visitors and provide for security of the facility. Tour group members must be at least sixteen (16) years of age unless prior approval has been obtained from the DC/TC Field Operations Manager or higher authority.
2. The Commissioner or his/her designee may authorize the media to visit the facility. Prior to any such visit the Superintendent/designee will establish the procedures necessary to govern the visit, safeguard the visitors and provide for security of the facility.
3. Special Visitors: The name, title, address, and telephone number of any official or special visitor from agencies other than the department shall be recorded. This primarily refers to law enforcement personnel, government personnel, attorneys and other officials. The Superintendent shall be notified immediately of special or official visitors. A log recording all visitors other than resident visitors will be maintained by each Center. Each visitor shall be required to sign in and sign out.

**K. Conducting the Visit**

Normally, there will be no restrictions placed on the length of visits during the center's established visitation periods, however:

1. The OIC or Duty Officer has the authority to adjust the length of visitation times allotted to individual residents or to terminate visits during times of overcrowding.
2. The OIC or Duty Officer may also terminate individual visits because of improper conduct or failure to abide by regulations. An Incident Report

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shall be completed documenting the reason(s) for the termination of the visit.

- a. If a resident has more than one visitor on a given day, individual visitors may be limited to a lesser time.
- b. If overcrowding requires the termination of visitation, the residents who began visiting earliest, will normally be the first to have their visits terminated. However, such factors as relationships, frequency of visits, distance traveled, etc. will be taken into consideration.
- c. The staff member on duty will be responsible for maintaining proper order and supervision of the visitation area. Each resident will be responsible for the conduct of their visitors and any improper behavior or violation of Center rules by visitors may result in cancellation of visiting privileges and disciplinary action for the resident. Visitors who appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be admitted to the Center. In the event of disturbance, the staff member on duty shall take appropriate action to have individuals removed from the premises. All incidents shall be documented on an Incident Report (Form PI-1006) and provided to the Superintendent. If necessary, written statements may be obtained from witnesses.
- d. Visitors are responsible for their children. Visitors who do not follow this policy will be required to leave the Center. Visitors shall not use Center recreational facilities, unless a planned, supervised activity is involved. Residents are responsible for any damage by visitors. Incidents resulting in damage to property will be documented on an Incident Report (P-1006) and provided to the Superintendent.

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- e. Each Center will ensure that the standard departmental warning notice regarding contraband and searches is permanently posted at the entrance to the facility. Searches of a visitor's person should not occur unless ordered by the Superintendent or designee.

**L. Reporting for Visits**

**1. Residents**

- a. Residents will be positively identified and are subject to a personal search of their body and personal effects when entering and leaving the visiting area.
- b. Residents will be clean and neat, have their hair neatly trimmed. Male residents will be clean-shaven or in compliance with the shaving profile.
- c. Residents will be allowed to wear a religious medal on a necklace, and a wedding band/ring into the visiting room. Necklaces with no religious pendant are contraband per SOP IIB06-0001, "Inmate Property Standards." No watches will be permitted to enter or leave the visitation area on the person of an inmate.
- d. Residents will be properly dressed. Coats and jackets will not be taken or worn to the visitation area.

**2. Visitors**

ALL VISITORS will be required to sign in and out on the Resident Visitor's Register (Attachment 1). The adult visitor responsible for a small child will sign in the minor. The register shall be dated and countersigned by the correctional officer in charge and subsequently shall be maintained on file at the facility.

- a. Each page of the Visitor's Register shall reflect the statement contained in GDC Rule 125-3-4-.06-(3). In addition, the statement

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contained in this rule will be posted on a sign in a visible area at the entrance of the facility for all visitors to read.

b. Visitors are allowed to bring only those items identified by the facility (i.e., identification card, car keys).

- 1) No food or drink will be brought into the facility from the outside
- 2) Funds from visitors will be accepted only through the mail.
- 3) Musical instruments, radios, pets, cameras, or tape recorders will not be allowed in the visiting area.

c. Visitors will be logged out as they depart the visitation area.

**M. Supervision of Visits**

Visiting Room officers will supervise visits to insure strict compliance with all applicable regulations and procedures. *This supervision may include monitoring with a camcorder or closed circuit television system.*

1. Specific areas of the facility are designated for visitation. Residents and their visitors are required to remain in the area to which they are assigned. Any violation of these parameters may result in the immediate termination of the visit.
2. During visitation, Security will maintain an accurate accountability of all residents and visitors present. Residents will be accounted for prior to their visitor's departure.

**N. Parenting Program**

1. Children brought into the facility by a caretaker or guardian to visit resident/parent as part of a parenting program (if available), shall remain with the caretaker/guardian until the resident/parent

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arrives in the visiting room. At this point the resident/parent will assume responsibility for his or her children.

**0. Conduct and Responsibility of Inmates and Visitors**

1. Residents may greet their visitor(s) upon identification and clearance by Security. Residents and the visitor(s) will take a seat and will remain seated except to go to the rest room, to get something from the vending machines or to speak to the officers. No visiting from table to table or corner to corner will be permitted. Visitors and/or residents may not leave the visiting area once the visit begins unless they desire to terminate the visit.
2. Personal contact such as hand shaking, embracing or kissing is permitted only at the beginning and conclusion of the visit. Excessive, frequent or prolonged embracing, kissing or other inappropriate behavior is strictly prohibited. If a resident and/or visitor exhibit these behaviors they will be warned. If after being warned, the resident and visitor(s) refuse to comply with the rule, the visit will be terminated and the resident will receive a disciplinary charge commensurate with the offense. Repeated offenses may result in the visitor's name being removed from the resident's visitation list.
3. All visitors will sit in an upright position with their feet on the floor and their shoes on. There will be no lying down across two or more chairs; no leaning or lying across residents or visitors; no sitting between one another's legs; nor placing one's feet in the lap of another individual. Also, any other behavior that can be considered to be intimate physical contact shall be prohibited.
4. No jackets, coats, etc. will be draped across the laps of residents and/or visitors. Such items must be worn in a normal manner or folded neatly and put away during the visit.

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5. Visitors will be responsible for keeping children under their control and within the bounds of the visitation area. Visitors under the age of sixteen (16) will not be permitted to visit with residents other than the resident being visited by their parent or guardian. All minors will be kept under the immediate control and jurisdiction of the adult who brought them to the facility.
6. Conspicuous inebriation or drinking of alcoholic beverages prior to visiting will not be permitted nor will the introduction of alcoholic beverages be allowed within the facility's guard lines. Detection of any use of alcoholic beverages will result in disapproval of the visit and/or termination of any visit in progress.
7. The use of illegal drugs or the possession of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited. The detection of illegal drugs will be grounds to disapprove and/or terminate any ongoing visit without warning.
8. The introduction, or attempted introduction, of any form of contraband into the visiting area or within the center's Guard Line will result in appropriate action being taken by both the Visiting Room and administrative staff.
9. Any violation of these regulations may result in immediate termination of the visit. Residents are responsible for advising visitors of all current visitation policies.

**P. Clothing:**

1. Residents are required to wear appropriate clothing and to be neat and clean in appearance in accordance with facility's guidelines. Residents will keep on all items of clothing including shirts and shoes during the visitation period.
2. Visitors are also required to wear appropriate attire. Shoes are required of all visitors, including children, at all times. Male visitors will be required to wear shirts and full-length trousers. If a visitor is wearing clothing not considered

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appropriate by the Security, they shall immediately notify the OIC or the Duty Officer. The OIC or the Duty Officer shall have the authority to do the following:

- a. Require the prospective visitor to change into appropriate attire
- b. Ask the visitor to wear a cover-up such as a sweater, jacket, or other type of concealing garment during the visit,
- c. Terminate the visit entirely, especially if the visitor refuses to cooperate with staff in this matter. In the event the visit is terminated the OIC shall notify the Duty Officer.

3. Inappropriate clothing shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Dresses or tops with thin straps which expose shoulders or chest area in any manner;
- b. Tube tops or halters of any type;
- c. Any type of clothing which reveals the stomach or midriff area;
- d. Any type of clothing that is made of sheer or transparent material;
- e. Shorts of any kind or any kind of slacks that are above the knee. Children twelve (12) years or under may wear shorts. Divided skirts less than two inches above the knee are not considered shorts.
- f. Dresses, skirts or other similar garments that are more than two (2) inches above the knees;
- g. Females are required to wear foundation type garments such as bras, panties, and slip;
- h. Male visitors are not permitted to wear tank tops or short tops of any kind, nor see-through tops made of net or mesh webbing. Shorts are

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not permitted. Children twelve (12) years or under may wear shorts.

- i. Any other type of clothing that is suggestive or revealing in any way shall be prohibited.
4. Residents may not allow a visitor to wear any of the resident's clothing at any time. Residents may not wear any of the visitor(s) clothing while in the visiting room or any of the visitor(s) jewelry or have in his possession anything owned by the visitor(s). This procedure will be strictly adhered to and will be enforced by Security.

**Q. Vehicles**

1. All visitors' vehicles will be parked in the center's designated visitor parking lot. All windows must be closed and doors locked. Visitors will not park in any of the restricted areas, which have been marked.
2. No persons or pets will be left in vehicles parked in the parking lot on State property for any reason.

**R. Disturbances**

1. Visitors may be barred from the facility during facility's disturbances or emergency situations.

**S. Denial of Visit**

1. The OIC or Duty Officer possesses first authority to deny visits. When in doubt, staff should request guidance from the Duty Officer. Denial of a visit may be the result of a visitor not being on the approved visiting list, inappropriate dress, detection of use of alcohol or drugs, or other situations that the Superintendent/ designee believe will endanger the security of the facility. Any visit that is denied must be documented on the Resident Visitor Register (Attachment 1). Use at least two lines on the log: one for the resident and one for each visitor denied. State the name of the resident to be visited, the visitor's name, action taken and the reason for denial of visit. Forward a



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copy of the log to the Assistant Superintendent or Chief of Security.

**T. Rights Of The Department of Corrections**

1. Under the rules of the Board of Corrections, visitation is a privilege and not a right. Georgia Department of Corrections has the right to refuse visitation to anyone who is suspected of, is caught on the premises with contraband, attempts to or introduces contraband onto/into the premises of Georgia Department of Corrections facilities, or who has been repeatedly warned about a particular action. Moreover, GDC may suspend or revoke a resident's visitation privileges as a disciplinary sanction for violations of visitation rules. GDC also may temporarily suspend visitation privileges to meet special security needs of the facility.

**VII. RETENTION SCHEDULE:**

Attachment 1 - Resident Visitor's Log will be kept locally for one year and then destroyed.

Attachment 2 - Significant Other will be placed in the inmate case history file and will be kept according to the official retention schedule for case history files.