State of Iowa Department of Corrections

Policy and Procedures

Policy Number: IO-HO-04
Applicability: Institutions
Policy Code: Public Access
Iowa Code Reference: N/A
Chapter3: INATITUTIONAL OPERATIONS
Sub Chapter: HOUSING
Related DOC Policies: IO-HO-01, IO-SC-18, IO-SE-04, IO-SH-02
Administrative Code Reference: N/A
Subject: GENERAL POPULATION HOUSING
PREA Standards: N/A
Responsibility: Nick Lamb
Effective Date: October 2024
Authority:

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines regarding general population housing operations in Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) institutions.

POLICY

The Iowa Department of Corrections' housing for general population incarcerated individuals is intended to provide a structured environment that encourages incarcerated individuals to make appropriate choices, supports personal accountability, and promotes positive interaction with others in order to maintain safety and security reduce victimization and prepare incarcerated individuals to be prosocial members of society. This will be accomplished in the least restrictive environment consistent with the custody designation of the institution and the custody status of the incarcerated individual.

CONTENTS

A. Housing Assignment

B. Housing Unit Orientation

C. Operations – Security

D. Operations – Out-of-Cell Time

E. Operations – Movement

F. Operations – Managing Incarcerated Individual Behavior

G. Operations - Leisure Activities

H. Operations - Programs and Services

I. Operations – Housekeeping

J. Unit Documentation

PROCEDURES

A. Housing Assignment

1. Incarcerated individuals are assigned to general population housing unless there are individualized circumstances requiring specialized housing. Assignment to specialized housing shall be based on a documented need.

2. Institutions shall establish procedures consistent with **IO-HO-01**, *Unit Management* for assigning incarcerated individuals to a housing unit, living unit, and cell/room. Such assignments shall consider, at a minimum:

    a. Security custody status

    b. Sexual violence propensity

    c. Vulnerability concerns

    d. Keep separates

    e. Level program assignment

    f. Programmatic requirements

    g. Physical, cognitive and/or mental disabilities

3. Procedures shall outline at a minimum:

a. Initial housing assignment

b. Housing reassignment

c. Incarcerated individual request for housing reassignment

d. Immediate measures that may be taken to separate or isolate incarcerated individuals in urgent or emergency situations.

4. Institutions shall develop procedures for periodic review of incarcerated individuals' status and housing assignment. Reviews will occur at least annually and may be accomplished during annual classification reviews. Interim reviews shall be conducted at set intervals and/or on an as-needed basis. Incarcerated individual status reviews shall be conducted in accordance with **IO-HO-01**, *Unit Management*.

B. Housing Unit Orientation

1. All incarcerated individuals shall be oriented to their assigned housing and living units within 72 hours of assignment.

2. Orientation may include written and/or posted materials and shall include the opportunity for incarcerated individuals to seek clarification and receive answers to their questions. Orientation topics shall include, at a minimum:

a. Unit schedule

b. Unit rules/regulations

c. Unit activities

d. Incarcerated individual accountability

e. Incarcerated individual expectations – conduct rules, property, dress, etc.

f. Access to programs and services

g. Avenues for resolving conflict and grievances

C. Operations – Security

1. Institutions shall establish procedures governing the types and frequency of area searches within the unit, and documentation of such.

2. Consistent with **IO-SC-18**, *Searches*, institutions shall establish procedures governing personal searches to include at a minimum:

    a. Entry/exit to/from the living unit

    b. Entry/exit to/from the housing unit

    c. Type of searches

    d. Random searches (and frequency)

    e. Documentation of searches

3. Institutions shall establish procedures to prevent unauthorized access to housing and living units.

4. Institutional procedures shall outline security measures directly affecting unit operations for the following security topics:

    a. Housing Unit Control Center operations

    b. Incarcerated individual counts

    c. Security inspections

    d. Searches

    e. Key control

    f. Tool control

5. In lieu of including these institutional procedures within this policy Institutions may elect to provide the required information in a separate policy and/or within this policy. At a minimum, the corresponding policy and procedure shall be identified.

D. Operations – Out-of-Cell Time

1. Consistent with the institution's custody designation, incarcerated individuals' classification status, level incentive program assignment, and physical plant restrictions or opportunities, institutions shall maximize opportunities for out of cell time for general population incarcerated individuals.

2. Out-of-cell time shall include both formal opportunities such as programs, work assignments and yards, as well as housing unit- or living unit-based activities such as dayroom time, access to exercise yards, and access to unit services.

3. Institutional procedures shall implement out-of-cell time; procedures shall also address quiet hours, lights out, etc. through institutional schedules that reflect the unique physical plant, program opportunities, and other local factors.

4. In collaboration with the Warden, the Deputy Director of Institution Operations may require that institutional operations be adjusted to maximize opportunities for out-of-cell time for general population incarcerated individuals.

E. Operations – Movement

Institutions shall establish procedures governing movement in/out of and within the housing and living units. The movement procedures shall address any documentation accounting for movement that is required. Procedures will address the following types of movement at a minimum:

1. Escorted

2. Directed

3. Observed

4. Restricted Movement

F. Operations – Managing Incarcerated Individual Behavior

1. In order to promote and encourage prosocial incarcerated individual behavior and minimize disruptive incarcerated individual behavior, staff will actively supervise incarcerated individuals. Active supervision of incarcerated individuals requires staff to:

    a. Be a prosocial role model,

b. Clearly communicate expectations for incarcerated individuals,

c. Have positive and appropriate interaction with incarcerated individuals,

d. Resolve incarcerated individual concerns at the lowest level possible,

e. Be approachable and responsive to incarcerated individuals and their needs, and

f. Manage conflict using deescalating techniques.

2. Living Unit Officers shall conduct formal rounds of the living unit observing all incarcerated individuals at least once every 30 minutes on an irregular basis. During rounds, staff will communicate with incarcerated individuals, look for damage and contraband, inspect to identify safety and security issues, resolve minor issues, etc. Formal rounds shall be documented in the appropriate PDA scan points.

3. Staff shall manage incarcerated individual behavior using a variety of strategies that routinely initiate interaction with incarcerated individuals and provide continual visual observation of the living unit. Staff shall:

   a. Monitor all incarcerated individuals and areas,

   b. Respond to incarcerated individual requests in a timely and fair manner,

   c. Investigate any activities or changes in incarcerated individual behavior appearing out of the ordinary,

   d. Recognize potential problems between incarcerated individuals and move swiftly to resolve them,

   e. Enforce facility rules consistently,

   f. Provide feedback that encourages self-assessment and self-correction, and assists in developing personal responsibility by advancing incarcerated individual self-sufficiency, and

g. Communicate with incarcerated individuals in a respectful and courteous manner

4. Living Unit Staff shall be watchful for incarcerated individuals who are not actively participating in unit activities or are not productively engaged and, when appropriate, staff shall work with the incarcerated individual and unit team members to advance constructive use of the incarcerated individual's time.

5. Institutions shall establish procedures that outline the extent of authority Living Unit Staff have regarding modifying of privileges, imposing sanctions (rule violations), developing and administering incentives, addressing negative or noncompliant behavior, etc.

6. Staff shall remain on post in the living unit until properly relieved or directed otherwise by proper authority.

7. The Warden or designee, Deputy Warden, and designated department heads shall visit each housing/living unit at least monthly to promote informal contact with staff and incarcerated individuals and to informally observe living and working conditions. Such visits shall be noted in the appropriate Post Logbook or the appropriate PDA scan points.

G. Operations - Leisure Activities

1. Institutions shall incorporate a wide range of leisure time activities within the housing and living units to keep incarcerated individuals productively engaged, to reduce idleness, to build socialization skills, and to create opportunities for self-awareness, character building and team building. The degree to which activities are offered shall be guided by the institution's transition incentive program (TIP), physical plant, staffing levels, incarcerated individuals' custody status, etc.

2. Leisure time activities will be delivered in a variety of settings within the unit/facility:

    a. Group and individual leisure activities,

    b. Organized events,

    c. Nonscheduled activities,

d. Peer-led activities/events may include, but are not limited to:

1) Television

2) Telephone

3) Games – board, card

4) Computer

5) Exercise yard

6) Publications

7) Late night

8) Books (on-unit library)

9) Self-help groups

10) Arts and crafts

11) Hobbycraft (may require a permit)

12) Special events/activities

13) Personal fitness

14) Community service activities

15) Electronic/Media devices

16) Musical instruments

The Warden shall designate a lead staff member who shall have oversight responsibility for the leisure time activities program. The types of leisure time activities offered shall be informed by incarcerated individual and staff surveys, the results of completed DRAOR assessments, etc. and be reflective of incarcerated individuals' needs and preferences. The leisure time activity program shall be evaluated on a periodic basis as determined by the institution but at least yearly.

3. A range of leisure activities shall be available when access to the living unit's/facility's common area is allowed.

4. Leisure activities shall be available and scheduled at various times during the day/week to accommodate various incarcerated individual schedules.

H. Operations - Programs and Services

1. When feasible, programs and services are delivered at the unit level. This will allow institutions to be more responsive to the needs of specific populations, will increase the frequency and quality of interaction between staff and incarcerated individuals, will create opportunities for unit staff to build rapport and will make certain that program decisions are made by those who are most familiar with the incarcerated individual.

   Institutional procedures shall outline access, eligibility criteria, days and hours of availability, and location for the following unit programs and services.

   a. Meals*

   b. Mail

   c. Laundry

   d. Health care

   e. Personal hygiene

   f. Self-help groups

   g. Commissary

   h. Religious programs

   i. Social services

   j. Education

   k. Counseling

   l. Visits

m. Work assignments (on-unit)

n. Library (on-unit)

o. Laundry (on-unit)

*Meal procedures shall address whether attendance at centralized dining (if applicable) is mandatory or voluntary. If mandatory, procedures shall address what happens when an incarcerated individual refuses to go to dining. If voluntary, procedures shall address whether non-participating incarcerated individuals shall remain in their assigned living unit or other designated location. In addition, meal procedures shall address the provision of meals for those temporarily unable to attend centralized dining due to illness or other authorized reason.

2. In lieu of including these institutional procedures within the policy. Institutions may elect to provide the required information in a separate policy or within this policy. At a minimum, the corresponding policy and procedure shall be identified.

I. Operations – Housekeeping

1. Housing and living units shall maintain a clean and healthy environment in order to mitigate safety hazards and prevent infection and illness, while enhancing incarcerated individual life skills.

2. Institutional procedures shall outline a housekeeping plan for housing and living units consistent with **IO-SE-04**, *Sanitation Procedures*. Institutions may elect to provide the required information in a separate policy and/or within this policy. At a minimum, the corresponding policy and procedure shall be identified.

3. Housekeeping plans shall require, at a minimum:

   a. Daily cleaning and routine sanitizing of occupied cells/rooms

   b. Daily cleaning and sanitizing of dayrooms and common areas

   c. Routine cleaning and sanitizing of unoccupied cells/rooms

   d. Routine cleaning and sanitizing of unoccupied areas

e. Distribution, handling and storage of cleaning supplies/materials

f. Handling and disposal of hazardous materials

g. Sanitation inspections on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis

J. Unit Documentation

1. Unit staff shall be required to document a full range of activities and tasks, including but limited to:

    a. Living unit and cell assignments

    b. Entry/exit of staff, volunteers, visitors

    c. Safety and security rounds begin and end times

    d. Deviation from scheduled unit activities

    e. Critical and unusual incidents

    f. Area searches

    g. Strip searches

    h. Headcounts

    i. Shift activity updates/briefings

    j. Shift changes

2. Institutions shall establish procedures that outline the information to be recorded, the form of the documentation, and the staff post/position responsible for the documentation.

3. Designated supervisor(s) shall review required documentation on a routine, regular basis to determine whether the required information is being properly documented, whether formal rounds are being performed in accordance with established procedure, if there are gaps in scheduled activities/services, trends in unit activity, etc. The

Designated supervisor shall take the necessary steps to resolve any identified discrepancies or deficiencies in documentation.