

## YOUTH SERVICES POLICY

<b>Title:</b> Religious or Faith-Based Programs and Services <b>Next Annual Review Date:</b> 07/29/2017	<b>Type:</b> B. Classification, Sentencing and Service Functions <b>Sub Type:</b> 8. Youth Related Services <b>Number:</b> B.8.4
<b>Page 1 of 4</b>	
<b>References:</b> ACA Standards 2-CO-5E-01, 2-CO-5E-02 (Administration of Correctional Agencies); 4-JCF-5F-01, 4-JCF-5F-02, 4-JCF-5F-03, 4-JCF-5F-04, 4-JCF-5F-05, 4-JCF-5F-06, 4-JCF-5F-07, and 4-JCF-5F-08 (Performance-Based Standards for Juvenile Correctional Facilities); YS Policies A.2.18 "Criminal Record Check", A.2.24 "Staff Development and Training Plan", B.2.3 "Secure Care Direct Admission", B.3.1 "Composition /Location/Retention of Active and Inactive Secure Care Youth Records", and B.8.3 "Volunteer Services Program"	
<b>STATUS: Approved</b>	
<b>Approved By:</b> Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary	<b>Date of Approval:</b> 07/29/2015

I. **AUTHORITY:**

Deputy Secretary of Youth Services (YS) as contained in La. R.S. 36:405. Deviation from this policy must be approved by the Deputy Secretary.

II. **PURPOSE:**

To establish the religious or faith-based programs and services for youth housed in a YS secure care facility.

III. **APPLICABILITY:**

Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Undersecretary, Chief of Operations, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Family Liaison, Regional Directors, and Facility Directors.

IV. **DEFINITIONS:**

*Louisiana Child Abuse Registry (LCAR)* – A centralized database maintained by the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) that compiles records from all investigations of child abuse, and categorizes such cases as substantiated, inconclusive, or invalidated.

*Volunteer* - An individual who donates time and effort to enhance YS' activities and programs. Volunteers may include student interns, job services training program participants, senior citizens, faith-based organizations, and others who serve without financial remuneration.

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#### **V. POLICY:**

It is the Deputy Secretary's policy that all youth be given the opportunity to practice their faith on a voluntary basis, limited only when necessary to accommodate other legitimate interests, and consistent with the safety, security, and orderly operations of the facility.

Youth shall not be subjected to coercion, harassment or ridicule due to religious affiliation.

Where applicable, chaplains shall have access to all areas of facilities to minister to youth.

The Family Liaison shall be responsible for supporting and strengthening the secure care volunteer and faith-based services.

#### **VI. PROCEDURES:**

A. Religious or faith-based programs shall be established in conformity with the requirements of ACA Standards and YS Policies. Such programs should have the potential to facilitate youth secure care adjustment, help youth assume personal responsibility, and to reduce recidivism.

Each Facility Director shall develop "Standard Operating Procedures" (SOPs) for religious or faith-based programming to meet the needs of their youth population to include the following:

1. All volunteers shall undergo a criminal record check, which includes a Louisiana Child Abuse Registry (LCAR) check, prior to the initiation of volunteer services pursuant to YS Policy No. A.2.18;
2. Information about the qualified senior staff member designated to serve as the facility's Volunteer Services Coordinator for community-based and faith based volunteer services, pursuant to YS Policy No. B.8.3;
3. Notification to all youth regarding the availability of religious services and spiritual programs, including non-denominational programs, services and activities, and information on the "Religious Food Preference Form" pursuant to YS Policy No. B.2.3. (Note: Information about a youth's religious background is documented on the Initial Intake Form attached to YS Policy No. B.3.1.);
4. Process for youth to address any special needs or requirements to practice their faith, i.e. certain ceremonies, baptisms, work restrictions and authorized communal sacramental rites (providing such rites do not conflict with existing facility SOPs or jeopardize the security and orderly running of the facility); and to allow them to change religious preferences;

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If a youth is under the age of 18, a “Baptism Permission Letter” [see Attachment B.8.4 (c)] addressed to a youth’s parent/guardian and the “Baptism Permission Form” [see Attachment B.8.4 (d)] requesting permission from a parent/guardian for a youth’s baptism are needed.

5. Conditions and circumstances under which clergy privileged communications exists and under which privileged communication in a secure care facility does not apply, in consultation with Legal Services;
  6. Coordination and supervision of the program;
  7. The use of specific areas to conduct religious or faith-based programs and services;
  8. Availability of adequate religious aids, equipment and materials; and
  9. Process for chaplain or designated staff member, with the authority of the Facility Director/designee, to solicit for donations of equipment and materials for use in religious programs, and for maintaining records of all donations according to acceptable accounting practices.
- B. Pursuant to the procedures outlined in YS Policy No. B.8.3, each unit shall recruit and strive to maintain an adequate number of volunteers to minister to its youth. Community linkages should be developed with churches, synagogues, mosques, and other faith-based institutions to enhance the services offered to youth and to better prepare them spiritually for a productive life.

When an individual makes application to serve as a volunteer in ministry to youth, and the request is denied following review of the information provided, the “Volunteer Regrets Letter” [see Attachment B.8.4 (b)] shall be completed, signed by the unit’s Volunteer Services Coordinator, and forwarded to the volunteer applicant, pursuant to YS Policy No. B.8.3.

- C. The “Volunteer Reporting Form” [see Attachment B.8.4 (a)] shall be completed by the Ministry/Organization Leader and submitted to the Volunteer Services Coordinator following each visit.

## **VII. STAFF DEVELOPMENT:**

- A. All volunteers shall receive orientation training prior to providing services and annual training pursuant to YS Policy No. B.8.3.

## **VIII. QUALITY ASSURANCE:**

The Family Liaison shall be responsible for monitoring the secure care “Volunteer Services Program” to ensure criminal record checks, LCAR checks and appropriate training are conducted prior to services being rendered.

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**Previous Regulation/Policy Number:** B.8.4  
**Previous Effective Date:** 07/29/2013

**Attachments/References:**

July 2015.doc



- B.8.4 (a) Volunteer Reporting Form
- B.8.4 (b) Volunteer Regrets Ltr July 2013.doc
- B.8.4 (c) Baptism Letter to Parents July 2015.docx
- B.8.4 (d) Baptism Permission Form July 2015.docx