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**Reentry and Integration Division**

**Page: 1 of 5**

**Program Guidelines and Processes**

**Supersedes: N/A**

**for Reentry and Texas Correctional Office on Offenders  
with Medical or Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI)**

**Volunteer Services in the Community**

**SUBJECT:** Reentry and TCOOMMI Volunteer Services in the Community

**AUTHORITY:** Director, Reentry and Integration Division (RID)

**PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines for reentry and TCOOMMI volunteer services in the community. To actively encourage volunteers and/or organizations to assist offenders in the following areas once they have reentered the community:

1. Identification
2. Housing
3. Employment and Education
4. Health Care
5. Substance Abuse
6. Transportation
7. Clothing, Food, and Amenities
8. Financial Resources
9. Support Systems
10. Other assistance or support as determined by TDCJ-RID to aid in the transition between confinement and society in an attempt to reduce recidivism.

**REENTRY COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. The ability to work with the TDCJ Reentry Case Manager and/or the TDCJ RID Volunteer Coordinator;
2. Counseling skills related to employment, interpersonal relationships, housing, education, support services and other reentry related issues;
3. The ability to work with a diverse offender population;
4. The ability to serve as a post release resource to offenders involved in reentry program activities; and
5. Reliable and dependable in their routine interactions with offenders.

## **TCOOMMI COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. The ability to work with the TDCJ TCOOMMI Manager, the TDCJ RID Volunteer Coordinator and/or TDCJ TCOOMMI Programs;
2. The ability to work with a diverse offender population;
3. The ability to serve as a post release resource to offenders involved in TCOOMMI program activities;
4. Reliable and dependable in routine interactions with offenders; and
5. Background clearance in accordance with Division guidelines.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **I. RID Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities**

1. Actively work with communities and organizations to encourage reentry and TCOOMMI volunteer services in the community;
2. Maintain records:
  - a. Reentry resource information
  - b. Community reentry and TCOOMMI volunteer applications
  - c. Logs of community reentry and TCOOMMI volunteer hours worked
3. Work with the community reentry volunteers and TCOOMMI Program Directors to obtain the volunteer hours worked logs;
4. Log all community reentry and TCOOMMI volunteer hours worked in the VS00 screen; and
5. Maintain statistical information.

### **II. Reentry and TCOOMMI Volunteer Program Requirements**

1. Individuals who want to participate as a community reentry or TCOOMMI volunteers shall complete and submit the TDCJ Volunteer Application (Attachment A). The volunteer application is also available on the TDCJ website;
2. Upon receipt of the completed volunteer application, the Rehabilitation Programs Division (RPD) staff shall conduct a criminal background check on each applicant through the Texas Crime Information Center (TCIC) and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). Fingerprint cards may be required when deemed necessary;
3. Upon completion of the application and background check, RPD will forward the applicant information to the RID Volunteer Coordinator for final review and approval by RID;
4. The RID Volunteer Coordinator shall notify the appropriate section manager responsible for the review and approval of the applicant within 3 working days of receiving the application;
5. The appropriate section manager will review and send the RID Volunteer Coordinator an approval/denial within 3 working days. All denials require written justification;
6. The RID Volunteer Coordinator will forward the approval to RPD so that the applicant can be notified to attend an approved volunteer training/orientation session if appropriate;
7. If the applicant is denied as a volunteer for a RID program (Reentry or TCOOMMI), the RID Volunteer Coordinator will forward the denial letter that has been signed by the RID division director to the applicant.

NOTE: Applicants denied as volunteers for RID programs, may still be eligible to volunteer within other TDCJ programs;

8. Upon completion of an approved volunteer training/orientation session, the community reentry volunteer shall be assigned an offender who has been released and was enrolled in the Reentry Program prior to release:
  - a. The community reentry volunteer shall make contact with the offender either by meeting him at the local District Parole office, District Reentry Center, or central location in that offender's county of residence.
  - b. The community reentry volunteer shall meet with the offender at least once a month, but can meet with the offender more often as needed.
  - c. The community reentry volunteer shall work with the offender in establishing goals for accomplishments. Goals can consist of the following:
    - √ Securing identification documents;
    - √ Securing housing;
    - √ Securing employment or education;
    - √ Securing food, clothing or amenities;
    - √ Securing financial resources;
    - √ Securing a sense of worth;
    - √ Securing family connections; and
    - √ Other assistance or support as deemed appropriate for the offender to become acclimated back into a community and remain a law-abiding citizen.
9. Upon completion of an approved volunteer training/orientation session, the TCOOMMI volunteer shall work within TDCJ TCOOMMI contracted programs at the direction of the Program Director. Services provided shall be within the scope of the TCOOMMI contracted program guidelines and processes (PGP);
10. Each RID reentry volunteer shall maintain a participation log of the hours worked with the offender or offenders (Attachment B) and submit completed logs via US mail (2 Financial Plaza, Suite 650, Huntsville, Texas 77340) or fax (936-437-4214) or email [rid@tdcj.state.tx.us](mailto:rid@tdcj.state.tx.us) to the RID Volunteer Coordinator by the first working day of each week; and
11. Each TCOOMMI Program Director utilizing volunteers shall submit an attachment B, Monday of each week for the time worked the preceding week for each volunteer via US mail (2 Financial Plaza, Suite 650, Huntsville, Texas 77340) or fax (936-437-4214) or email [rid@tdcj.state.tx.us](mailto:rid@tdcj.state.tx.us) to the RID Volunteer Coordinator.

### III. Reentry Program Overview

1. Reentry planning services shall be provided to TDCJ offenders who are within six months of their maximum expiration date or who are within six months of their targeted release date, have FI-1, FI-2 or FI-3R parole approval votes, and score medium, high or very high risk on the Texas Risk Assessment (TRAS) instrument;
  - a. **FI-1:** Release when eligible
  - b. **FI-2:** Release during a specified target month
  - c. **FI-3R:** Release during a specified target month and contingent upon completion of a rehabilitation tier program, i.e., CHANGES/Lifeskills, Voyager, Segovia pre-Release Center (Segovia PRC), or any other approved rehabilitation tier program.

2. When conducting Reentry planning, Casemanager will plan for the offender's release to the address he/she submitted during their parole interview. Reentry planning will be conducted with the assumption that this plan will be approved and this is where the offender will reside upon release. The offender should inform the Reentry Casemanager if the plan they submitted is denied and an alternate plan is submitted. When this occurs, the Casemanager should monitor this alternate plan on the Parole Plan Update (PPU) screen to determine if it is approved.

NOTE: Discharging offenders will not have a parole plan posted on the TDCJ PPU screen:

3. Explain what is provided by the Casemanager (what service planning is done); and
4. At the time of release from the TDCJ, reentry enrolled offenders will be transferred to a post release Reentry Casemanager in the community where the offender will reside. The post release Casemanager will coordinate with volunteers in the community to link reentry enrolled offenders to an approved volunteer. For offenders who will reside in a community where no post-release Reentry Casemanager is available, the pre-release Reentry Casemanager will work with the RID Volunteer Coordinator to identify an approved volunteer in the community where the offender will reside post release.

#### **IV. TCOOMMI Program Overview**

TCOOMMI volunteers shall work within TDCJ TCOOMMI contracted programs at the direction of the Program Director. Services provided shall be within the scope of the TCOOMMI contracted program guidelines and processes (PGP).

#### **V. Data Entry in the VS00 Screen**

1. The VS00 is accessed through the TDCJ Mainframe System; this screen keeps account of the volunteer service hours worked by a volunteer;
2. The RID Volunteer Coordinator shall enter all the hours worked by a community reentry or TCOOMMI volunteer into the VS00 mainframe screen using the participation logs submitted by volunteers; and
3. VS00 data entry shall be completed weekly.