
Policy Number: 205.121
Title: Parenting Education Transition Program for Mothers
Effective Date: 3/17/20

PURPOSE: To provide a structured transitional release program that allows incarcerated pregnant women and new mothers to reside in work release facilities or other approved programs/residences in the community and work at paid employment, seek employment, or be involved in vocational programming or educational programs while receiving person-centered interventions, parenting education, and support under the supervision of the work release unit, and while continuing to serve their terms of imprisonment.

APPLICABILITY: Minnesota Correctional Facility – Shakopee (MCF-SHK); incarcerated adult women; work release unit; work release facilities.

DEFINITIONS:

Other approved programs/residences – Participants may be allowed to reside in applicable programs or residences other than release facilities (as defined below), while monitored by electronic surveillance, as approved by the work release director.

Release facilities –Residential community corrections facilities that have been approved by both the department’s licensing and inspection unit or are under a Minnesota Department of Human Services licensing rule, with which the department contracts to provide housing and programming for offenders in the work release program.

PROCEDURES:

A. Parenting Education Release Program Management

The program is managed by the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) work release unit, which:

1. Works collaboratively with the Minnesota Correctional Facility – Shakopee (MCF-SHK) staff to screen potential participants and to design community-based, person-centered program plans and interventions;
2. Reviews and approves applications from those who want to participate in the program;
3. Administers contracts with work-release facilities or other approved programs/residences to house and provide programming for program participants;
4. Establishes program guidelines for release facilities; and
5. Oversees supervision of participants accepted into the program.

B. Parenting Skills Release Program Criteria

1. Applicant eligibility requirements

Applicants must:

- a) Have served at least one half of their incarceration time and have no more than 12 months remaining;
- b) Be currently at medium or minimum classification;

- c) Be pregnant with a due date during their incarceration time or postpartum and gave birth within eight months prior to the date of commitment; and
- d) Have parental rights for care and custody of their infant(s) (i.e., their parental rights are not terminated, nor is a termination pending).

2. Eligibility considerations and exclusions

Work release unit staff consider the following when reviewing applications to determine whether applicants are candidates for this structured release program:

- a) Institutional program participation, directives and program recommendations
 - (1) Substance use disorder (SUD) treatment program directives;
 - (2) Progress toward literacy mandates and education goals;
 - (3) Participation in cognitive-behavioral interventions, facility parenting classes, and self-improvement opportunities, including available work assignments; and
 - (4) Availability of community programs or interventions to meet applicant needs, referenced above.
- b) Exclusions for institution discipline history

Whether the applicants:

 - (1) Have engaged in any escape-related conduct within the last five years, including such examples as: escape from custody, absconding from non-custody placement, or absconding from bail;
 - (2) Have received discipline resulting in restrictive housing or received extended incarceration time within the last six months;
 - (3) Have a pending discipline report; or
 - (4) Have received suspended segregation within the past 30 days.
- c) Exclusions for other court or criminal-justice obligations

Whether an applicant:

 - (1) Has a detainer or is wanted by another jurisdiction;
 - (2) Has a current sentence from a state other than Minnesota;
 - (3) Is serving a sentence authorized by a statute that precludes early release; or
 - (4) Has committed a new criminal offense while on an early release program during this incarceration.
- d) Other exclusionary criteria

Applicants will not be accepted into the program if they:

 - (1) Are required to have victim impact/community notification;
 - (2) Are required to be reviewed by the end of confinement review committee (ECRC) for predatory offender registration;
 - (3) Are physically or mentally incapable of work or educational/vocational programming in ways that cannot be resolved through reasonable accommodations;
 - (4) Have a current recidivism risk of very high, or are at a close custody or higher classification; or
 - (5) Have been denied transitional release status by the work release unit, a release facility, or the hearings and release unit (HRU).

C. Referral Process

Health services staff must notify the facility parenting coordinator of potential program participants (women who are currently pregnant or who had a baby within eight months prior to

commitment). The parenting coordinator must coordinate with applicable facility and work release staff to initially screen potential participants using the participant criteria. If potential participants meet the basic criteria, the parenting coordinator must discuss the potential release opportunity with, and provide an application to, eligible candidates.

D. Procedures for Approving Participation

1. Application

Applicants must complete a Parenting Education Transition Program Application, provided by the MCF-Shakopee parenting coordinator. A fully completed application contains a release of information for applicable staff to exchange information in the screening, care coordination, and case planning for program participation.

2. Screening

The parenting coordinator must assure the application provides all appropriate signed releases of information. The coordinator then sends the application to a work release agent who carefully screens each application and the participant's electronic file to determine program eligibility. If SUD needs are identified, the work release agent refers the application to the facility SUD program director or release planner. If the applicant fully meets criteria with no SUD referral, the work release agent makes a recommendation to the work release director.

3. SUD referral

If the applicant has identifiable SUD needs, the work release agent refers the application to the facility SUD program director or release planner for an appropriate assessment and recommendation for appropriate interventions. This may result in a referral to a community-based, family-focused SUD treatment provider, and to the need for additional community treatment coverage and approval. Once a plan is developed and accepted for SUD interventions, the SUD program director or release planner notifies the work release agent, who then makes a recommendation to the work release director.

4. Referral to release facility

If the work release director approves the application, work release unit staff refer the application to a release facility or other approved program for placement and retain the referral packet in the applicant's electronic file. The release facility may accept or reject an applicant for placement.

5. Notification

The work release unit notifies the applicant by a letter of acceptance or denial decision, and enters the notification letter into the applicant's electronic file. The application and notification letter are retained in the applicant's electronic files.

6. Program review team approval

Once the program release facility approves the placement, the applicant's facility caseworker prepares, and the program review team (PRT) approves, a work-release release plan in the correctional operation management system (COMS).

7. Pre-Release reentry team meeting

The parenting coordinator must schedule a team meeting with the approved applicant, DOC staff, and community partners to explain the expectations and requirements of the program and agreed-upon release conditions.

8. Transport to release facility

Participants must be transported to the approved release facility and remain there until they are transferred to supervised release or to another approved residence/program.

- a) The caseworker must arrange participant transportation to the release facility.
- b) Prior to transfer, the offender must sign the release agreement and conditions of release (see Policy 106.112, "Approval and Modification of Release Plans").
- c) The parenting coordinator must work with the infant's (or infants') temporary care giver to provide required transportation for the infant(s) to the work release facility.

9. Termination from the release program

The work release director may rescind a participant's release status at any time if new information is discovered that makes the offender ineligible, including if the offender has a medical condition that prevents full participation in the programming at the approved facility. Additionally, any behavior which is seen as putting the child's safety or welfare at risk may result in program termination. The program release facility establishes and follows protocols related to care of the child in cases of program termination.

10. Consequences for rule violations

Participants who violate any of the rules of their supervision are subject to:

- a) Having the rules of their supervision restructured and additional rules imposed;
- b) Revocation of their release status;
- c) Imposition of extended incarceration time under the Offender Discipline Rules;
- d) Prosecution for escape under Minn. Stat. § 609.485

11. Program completion

Participants complete the program when they reach their supervised release date without program termination.

12. Records of application

Work release unit staff, caseworkers, and sentence administration unit staff retain signed applications, approval and denial letters, conditions of work release, and program completion or termination reports in offenders' electronic files; and PRT reports, case notes, discipline records, and custody status and sentence administration information in the offender document system (ODocS).

E. Rules for Released Participants in the Parenting Education Transition Program

1. All participants on release status must:

- a) Reside at the approved release facility;
- b) Fully participate in and successfully complete the program;
- c) Obey all the rules and regulations of the release facility or program in which they reside; and
- d) Obey all the rules included in their individual release agreement.

2. Consequences for rule violations

Participants who violate any of the rules of their supervision are subject to:

- a) Having the rules of their supervision restructured and additional rules imposed;
- b) Revocation of their release status;
- c) Imposition of extended incarceration time under the Offender Discipline Rules; and
- d) Prosecution for escape under Minn. Stat. § 609.485.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

- A. The signed application, program approval or denial letter, release agreements, release conditions, and completion and termination reports are retained in the participant's electronic file.
- B. Case notes, PRT reports, discipline records, custody status, and sentence administration are recorded and retained in ODocS.

ACA STANDARDS: 4-4463

REFERENCES: Minn. Stat. §§ [241.26](#); [609.485](#)
[Policy 106.112, "Approval and Modification of Release Plans"](#)
[Policy 303.010, "Offender Discipline"](#)
[Offender Discipline Rules \(English\)](#) (303.010I)
[Offender Discipline Rules \(Spanish\)](#) (303.010I(Spanish))

REPLACES: All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: Parenting Education Transition Program Application (available from the MCF-SHK parenting coordinator)
Parenting Education Transition Program Manual (available on the DOC intranet [Work Release site](#))

APPROVALS:

Deputy Commissioner, Community Services

Deputy Commissioner, Organizational Services

Assistant Commissioner, Facility Services

Assistant Commissioner, Office of Strategic Planning, Implementation, and Employee Development

Assistant Commissioner, Criminal Justice Policy, Research, and Performance