
Policy Number: 720.020
Title: Education Partner Relationship
Effective Date: 01/02/25

PURPOSE: To provide procedures regarding training, access, communication, and movement for post-secondary education partners and their employees.

APPLICABILITY: All Minnesota correctional facilities and post-secondary education institutions with a prison education program.

DEFINITIONS:

Authorized education partner representative – a professional, supervisory, or managerial staff person who is responsible for processing, negotiating, monitoring, and evaluating a post-secondary education contract, or other agent to which the department is a party (see DOC Policies 106.030, “Processing Contracts and Other Agreements,” and 300.045, “Contractor Relationship to Department”).

Education partner employee – an individual employed by a post-secondary education institution or education-related business working under a formal, written agreement to provide direct, minimal, or intermittent educational services to incarcerated/resident students in exchange for specified consideration.

Direct and ongoing incarcerated/resident student contact (adult facility) – providing post-secondary education services directly with incarcerated/resident students for 17 or more hours per week and on a continuing basis in the education, training, programming, or academic/career advising of incarcerated/resident students.

Direct and ongoing resident student contact (juvenile facility) – as defined in Minn. Rule 2960.0020, Subp. 28, direct contact means “the provision of face-to-face care, training, ... counseling, [or] consultation ... to a resident.”

Education partner employee – an individual employed by a post-secondary education institution or education-related business working under a formal, written agreement to provide direct, minimal, or intermittent educational services to incarcerated student/residents in exchange for specified consideration.

Escort – the corrections staff assigned to ensure visual contact or relatively close proximity contact with non-DOC post-secondary education partner employees while they are within designated areas of the facility.

Minimal or intermittent direct and ongoing incarcerated/resident student contact – providing services in direct contact with incarcerated/resident students for 16 or fewer hours per week for educational purposes.

Prison education program – see Policy 720.010, “Post-Secondary Education Standards for Partnership.”

Sensitive security areas – see DOC Policy 300.045, “Contractor Relationship to Department.”

PROCEDURES:

A. Education Partner – Facilities

1. The representative/designee for the post-secondary education institution must work with the DOC employee development unit to register the employees of the post-secondary education institution for facility orientation and the higher education mini Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) academy. (See DOC Policy 103.420, “Pre-Service and Orientation Training.”)
2. The authorized representative/designee must ensure the education partner employee with ten hours or more of direct incarcerated/resident student contact per week undergoes a test for tuberculosis prior to the start of work and annually thereafter in accordance with DOC Policy 105.180, “Tuberculosis Control for Applicants, Employees, Contractors, Volunteers, and Students.” The authorized representative/designee must retain documentation of tuberculosis testing in the education partner employee’s file or another designated file.
3. Education partner employee training and orientation
 - a) Prior to the beginning of the assignment, education partner employees who have direct and ongoing contact with incarcerated/resident students must attend:
 - (1) The higher education mini academy offered by DOC central office; and
 - (2) An orientation at the facility prior to working independently in any assignment involving direct incarcerated/resident student contact.
 - b) Whenever possible, the authorized education partner representative/designee must notify the facility employee development unit of any new education partner employees at least two weeks prior to the start of a facility orientation date.
 - c) Training for education partner employees with direct and on-going incarcerated/resident student contact must be documented using standardized entries in the approved agency training management system.
 - d) The authorized education partner representative/designee must ensure the education partner employee signs written documentation of participation in a facility orientation, and agreement to follow the rules and procedures. The completed documentation is also retained by employee development, whenever possible through the DOC’s approved electronic training management system.
4. Education partner employees who have minimal or intermittent incarcerated/resident student contact must, at a minimum, attend an orientation at the facility prior to the beginning of the assignment.
 - a) Whenever possible, the authorized education partner representative/designee must notify the director of post-secondary education of any new education partner employees at least two weeks prior to the start of a facility orientation date.
 - b) Education partners with minimal or intermittent incarcerated/resident student contact must receive security and other training consistent with the requirements specified in DOC Policy 300.040, “Volunteer Services Program,” attachment 300.400D, “Volunteers, Contractors, and Interns Orientation Checklist and Agreement.”

- c) The authorized representative/designee must ensure the education partner employee signs written documentation of participation in a facility orientation, and agreement to follow the rules and procedures. The completed documentation is also retained by employee development, whenever possible through the DOC's approved electronic training management system.
6. The authorized education partner representative/designee must ensure that an education partner employee who has negligible contact with incarcerated/resident students (for example, a college/university administration staff member, or a participant in an incarcerated/resident student program on a one-time basis) receives an abbreviated facility orientation which contains only the components the education partner employee needs to know to perform their services.
- a) A record of the training must be retained by the authorized representative/designee. The completed documentation is also retained by employee development, whenever possible through the DOC's approved electronic training management system.
 - b) Education partner employees who have negligible contact with incarcerated/resident students and who have not been trained must be escorted by a facility employee at all times.
7. The authorized representative/designee must ensure that the education partner employee is issued an identification (ID) card at the commencement of the contract or agreement in accordance with DOC Policy 103.013, "Identification Cards – Employees/Contractors/Volunteers/Interns." The authorized representative/designee must ensure that the ID card is returned upon termination of the contract.
8. The authorized representative/designee must recertify the education partner employee annually, which includes:
- a) Current criminal history check;
 - b) Proof of an annual test for tuberculosis (if the education partner provides direct incarcerated/resident student contact services more than ten hours per week); and
 - c) Review of relevant policies and procedures.
9. Training for education partner employees with direct and on-going incarcerated/resident student contact must be documented using standardized entries in the agency-approved electronic learning management system. Training for education partner employees who have minimal or intermittent incarcerated/resident student contact must be documented by the director of post-secondary education or authorized representative/designee. The director of post-secondary education or authorized representative/designee must track training documentation and retain documentation for no less than three years.

B. Escorts and Communication – facilities

- 1. Escorts
 - a) Correctional staff must escort education partner employees in sensitive security areas.
 - b) Education partners have Type 1, "Programming" access according to DOC Policy 300.020, "Access to Correctional Facilities and Other Department Locations by

Non-DOC persons” referenced here also as “yellow badge” access and must be escorted inside the secured perimeter.

2. Communication

The correctional facility staff must ensure that education partner employees have some means of communication with correctional staff, such as by phone or radio.

C. Tool/Materials Control

1. Facility staff performs an inventory on all education partner employee tools/materials upon entry and exit from the facility secured perimeter. Corrections staff and education partner employees must participate in the tool inventory counts.

a) To facilitate this process, the education partner employee must bring tools/materials in advance of the start date of the class to complete the initial inventory count.

b) The number of tools/materials must be kept to a minimum to shorten the amount of time needed for the inventory process.

c) Facility staff must identify whether any equipment, tools, or materials require continuous department staff supervision inside the secured perimeter (see Policy 301.040, “Tool Control”).

2. For work outside the secured perimeter, tool/materials inventories must be taken upon entrance and exit to the facility grounds and randomly during the class.

a) Tools/materials must be kept under observation when in use and secured in a locked gang box or room when not in use. Education partners and their employees must also provide for control and security of materials and products.

b) Tools/materials left inside the perimeter are subject to random tool inventory counts over the course of the class.

D. Training and Orientation

1. When training/orientation is appropriate for education partner employees, training must include at a minimum:

a) An introduction to the DOC and specific facility site;

b) An overview of policies applicable to education partner employees, including such examples as:

(1) Policy 301.060, “Access Control Devices;”

(2) Policy 103.223, “Personal Associations Between Staff and Incarcerated Persons;”

(3) Policy 301.030, “Contraband;”

(4) Policy 301.040, “Tool Control;”

(5) Policy 301.140, “Incident Command System;”

(6) Division Directive 300.020, “Access to Correctional Facilities and Other Department Locations by Non-DOC Persons;”

(7) Policy 202.057, “Sexual Abuse/Harassment Prevention, Reporting, and Response;”

(8) Fire and safety procedures;

(9) Policy 106.210, “Providing Access to and Protecting Government Data;”
and

(10) Site specific instructions pertaining to personal property and vehicle contents.

2. Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Standards

In compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards, any education partner employee who engages in sexual abuse must be prohibited from contact with incarcerated/resident students. The individual must be reported to the office of special investigations, law enforcement agencies, and relevant licensing bodies. Designated facility staff must also take appropriate remedial measures and consider whether to prohibit an individual from further contact with incarcerated/resident students, in the case of any violation of agency sexual abuse or sexual harassment policies.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

- A. The volunteer coordinator or authorized representative/designee must track training documentation and retain documentation for no less than three years.
- B. The authorized representative/designee must retain documentation of tuberculosis testing in the education partner employee's file or another designated file.

REFERENCES:

Minn. Rule 2960.0020, Subp. 28
Policy 103.013, "Identification Cards – Employees/Contractors/Volunteers/Interns"
Policy 103.223, "Personal Associations Between Staff and Incarcerated Persons"
Policy 103.420, "Pre-Service and Orientation Training"
Policy 105.180, "Tuberculosis Control for Applicants, Employees, Contractors, Volunteers, and Students"
Policy 106.030, "Processing Contracts and Other Agreements"
Policy 106.210, "Providing Access to and Protecting Government Data"
Policy 202.057, "Sexual Abuse/Harassment Prevention, Reporting, and Response"
Policy 300.020, "Access to Correctional Facilities and Other Department Locations by Non-DOC Persons"
Policy 300.040, "Volunteer Services Program"
Policy 300.045, "Contractor Relationship to Department"
Policy 301.030, "Contraband"
Policy 301.040, "Tool Control"
Policy 301.060, "Access Control Devices"
Policy 301.140, "Incident Command System"

REPLACES:

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

ATTACHMENTS:

Volunteers, Contractors, and Interns Orientation Checklist and Agreement (300.400D) (public pdf of 300.400D)

APPROVALS:

Commissioner of Corrections