DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Policy Number:	**103.2217**
Title:	**Honor/Color Guard and Memory Guard**
Effective Date:	**01/30/25**

PURPOSE: To provide procedures and consistent standards for Minnesota correctional facilities (MCF) to have an honor/color guard or memory guard.

APPLICABILITY: All facilities

DEFINITIONS:
Honor/color guard – a team of corrections officers performing ceremonial duties at DOC or community functions.

Honor/color guard coordinator – a member of the team (supervisory and above) selected by the warden/designee to oversee all administrative duties, selection of team members, training, maintaining equipment, and coordinate all team activations, etc.

Memory guard – one or more corrections officers who are selected by the warden/designee to participate in posting at the funeral home, memorial services, or serving as pallbearer(s).

PROCEDURES:

A. Each MCF warden may establish a uniformed honor/color guard or use memory guard participants to represent the department at authorized functions, including: wakes, funerals, memorial services, serving as pallbearers, folding the flag at gravesites, ground breakings, academy graduations, dedications, retirements, parades, recruitment events, and other department of corrections (DOC) or community functions as requested.

B. In the event of the death of a current or retired DOC employee, the deceased person's family may request a uniformed honor/color guard or memory guard at the wake, funeral, or memorial service.

C. Command structure

1. Honor/color guard

a) The honor/color guard team consists of a minimum of six members, including five team members and the coordinator.

b) The honor/color guard coordinator or designee oversees the honor/color guard team members.

c) Request for services must be directed to the coordinator, who coordinates instructions to the team regarding time and location of detail, and activities to be performed.

d) The honor/color guard coordinator or designee works with the family of a deceased staff person, explaining the services the honor guard can perform, such as casket guard, door guards, flag ceremony, etc., ensuring the family’s wishes are met whenever possible.

e) Honor guard services are not available for employees who lose their life committing a criminal act.

f) The warden/designee must give final approval for any honor/color guard detail.

g) Only mock rifles are used for the event and no firearms are discharged by the members of the honor/color guard.

2. Memory guard

a) The family of a deceased DOC active or retired staff may request certain officers who were friends of the deceased to participate in the memory guard.

b) No command structure exists for the memory guard. Instead, the individuals volunteer to participate upon approval by the warden/designee.

c) These volunteers are not required to be members of the honor/color guard.

D. Initial selection criteria:

1. Each honor/color guard member:

a) Must be a non-probationary corrections officer 2 or above who has completed one year of service with the DOC.

b) Must have no discipline in the employee's personnel file.

c) Must fully meet or exceed standards on performance reviews.

d) Must be willing to commit to the team for at least three years.

e) Must be available on short notice to perform in honor/color guard activities.

f) Must maintain physical appearance and decorum projecting a professional image.

g) Must be able to march and stand for extended periods.

h) Must possess teamwork skills and strive towards uniformity.

2. Memory guard

The participants must volunteer and be approved by the warden/designee.

E. Uniforms

1. The Class A honor guard uniform must follow the standards set in the Class A Honor Guard Uniform Guidelines (attached).

2. Uniform standards, appearance, and fit must follow the standards in the Honor Guard Uniforms, Standards, and Appearance Guidelines (attached).

3. Memory guard uniform

a) Memory guard teams wear the standard DOC corrections officer long-sleeve uniform, including blue DOC tie.

b) The memory guard participants are responsible to wear a uniform that is clean, pressed, and presentable.

F. Retention/termination and completion of service for honor/color guard:

1. The facility honor/color guard coordinator may review each member of the honor/color guard and recommend whether to continue the member on the team for another year.

2. The facility honor/color guard coordinator may remove members from service for failure to maintain compliance with any of the criteria listed in this policy or its attachments. In the event a member is to be removed from their team, the DOC honor guard captain and policy chair must be notified. If the DOC honor guard captain agrees with the decision to remove, they will work with the facility executive team ensuring agreement regarding the process.

3. Members may reapply once the appropriate criteria are met.

4. At the completion of a member's tour of service with the honor/color guard, the member is required to turn in all equipment and additional uniform items listed in Procedure E.

5. If an honor guard team member promotes to a non-uniformed position, they may be retained on the team at the direction of the team commander and facility executive team.

6. The facility honor guard coordinator must ensure all uniform and other items issued to team members are returned to the facility and stored properly upon completion of service or removal from the program.

G. Compensation

1. As determined by the supervisor, the honor/color guard detail may be considered work time and employees may be compensated for hours worked/expenses incurred pursuant to labor agreements.

2. The memory guard detail is on a volunteer basis only and the participants are not compensated for hours worked/expenses incurred.

H. Training

1. The facility honor/color guard coordinator works with their facility scheduler and executive team to ensure that training takes place. The DOC honor guard captain works to offer training opportunities in order to get facility honor guard teams together for joint training when possible.

2. No specific training is required to participate in the memory guard detail.

I. If a request is made for a memory guard or honor/color guard services, the staff person receiving the request must notify the facility honor guard commander who will work with the warden/designee to determine if services may be provided.

1. If the warden/designee approves services, the facility honor/color guard coordinator informs the requestor of the details.

2. If services are not approved, the facility honor/color guard coordinator must include the reasons for the denial in the response.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

A. Documentation of honor guard/color guard activities are retained by the honor/color guard coordinator according to the retention schedule.

REFERENCES: Minn. Stat. § 241.01, subd. 3a (h)
Policy 103.221, "Uniforms, Attire, and Personal Hygiene"
Policy 103.2215, "Uniforms and Attire - Facilities"
Division Directive 103.2216, "Corrections Officer Standardized Equipment"

REPLACES: Policy 103.2217, “Honor/Color Guard and Memory Guard,” 8/6/19.
All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means, regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: Class A Honor Guard Uniform Guidelines (103.2217A)
Honor Guard Uniforms, Standards, and Appearance Guidelines (103.2217B)
Honor Guard Event Roster (103.2217C)

APPROVALS:
Commissioner of Corrections