DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Policy Number: **201.012**
Title: **Safety – Field Services**
Effective Date: **1/15/19**

PURPOSE: To provide safety guidelines for field services staff when conducting offender visits to ensure the safety of agents and the offender.

APPLICABILITY: Community services staff

DEFINITIONS: None

PROCEDURES:

A. General

1. Field Services staff must complete agency-authorized safety and defensive tactic training.

2. Field Services staff are only authorized to use equipment issued by the department and must complete department training and/or booster training regarding its use

3. Prior to the issuance of a chemical irritant, handcuffs, or being allowed to transport an offender, field services staff must complete defensive tactic training.

4. District supervisors maintain an electronic record of all safety equipment issued to staff.

5. Supervisors also conduct safety assessments using the Field Services Safety Assessment form (attached) and retain the forms in the staff person's supervisory file.

6. All training must be documented and retained in the agency-approved electronic training management system.

7. Field Services staff must report all incidents, including use of physical force, fully, promptly, and in writing for review as directed in Policy 300.300, "Incident Reports," and forward the incident report to their supervisor. All injuries must be treated promptly and reported in writing.

8. The supervising agency has a process for immediate response, investigation, and further action and support in the event of a critical incident involving an employee.

9. Incident reports and emergencies are analyzed by administration and/or the safety committee and the results are used to initiate or revise policy and/or procedures to prevent future occurrences.

B. Use of Force

1. Field service staff are trained in the use of force continuum that is authorized by the department. Training addresses the practices and use of equipment as approved by the Department of Corrections (DOC).

2. Agents must avoid or leave any situation in which the agent does not feel safe or in which the agent is threatened. In the event that an agent is in a situation in which the offender or

others appear to present a potential or immediate threat to the agent's safety or the safety of others, and the agent is not able to leave or have those presenting the threat leave, the agent is authorized to respond in the agent's own defense or the defense of others and to the extent that the agent has been trained.

3. Agents may use physical force only in instances of justifiable self-defense, protection of others, and in accordance with appropriate statutory authority. Only reasonable and necessary force is employed.

C. Chemical Irritants

Minnesota DOC certified chemical irritant instructors must train field staff before the chemical irritant device may be issued to, and carried by, the field staff person.

D. Body Armor

The supervising agency issues soft body armor to all field staff who conduct offender and collateral contacts in the community. Field staff may request the issue of soft body armor through their supervisor. Staff issued soft body armor must follow DOC policy for use and care of soft body armor. (See also Policy 107.021, Use of Soft Body Armor.")

E. Field Contacts

1. The supervising agency has an office safety plan that includes, training, office configuration, and public contact.

2. The supervising agency has a field safety plan that includes communication with the agency and /or other law enforcement agencies.
   a) A pre-arrest briefing is conducted prior to a planned arrest with all officers and law enforcement agencies involved in the arrest.

   b) The type of action required to locate absconders is specified by the agency and shared with all field staff.

F. Transport of Offenders

1. Field services staff must complete transport training prior to transporting an offender.
   a) When field staff or central transport unit staff transport offenders, they are equipped with authorized restraining and vehicle safety equipment. Staff must ensure the insurance card is in the vehicle.

   b) A qualified individual must conduct an annual inspection of vehicles used in the field in accordance with state laws. The inspection reports must be submitted to the supervisor and retained by the supervisor in an office file for one year.

   c) Safety repairs are completed immediately and vehicles are not used until repairs are made. (See also Policy 104.4615, "Use of State Vehicles.")

2. Field services staff must adhere to all traffic laws when transporting offenders in state vehicles while performing their duties as an employee of the DOC. The use of state vehicles must be consistent with Policy 104.4615, "Use of State Vehicles."

3. All offender transports are recorded electronically by field services staff in the case file or the intensive supervised release (ISR) chrono database as a transport chrono.

G. Personal GPS

When field services agents or transitional caseworkers are assigned a personal GPS device and are working in the field or conducting collateral contacts, they must have the GPS safety devices on their persons so that they are immediately accessible. They must also have their assigned cell phones in their possession at all times.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

A. Training records are retained in the agency-approved electronic training management system.

B. Safety assessments conducted by the supervisor are retained electronically in the supervisory file.

C. Vehicle inspection forms are submitted monthly to the supervisor and retained by the supervisor in an office file for one year.

ACA STANDARDS: 4-APPFS-3A-23, 4-AAPFS-3B-06, 4-AAPFS-3B-07, 4-AAPFS-3B-08, 4-AAPFS-3B-09, 4-APPFS-3G-01,4-APPFS-3G-03, 4-APPFS-3H-01, 4-APPFS-3H-02, 4-APPFS-3H-03

REFERENCES: Minn. Stat. §§ 243.05, subd. 1(d), subd. 1a, subd. 6; 244.13; 244.20; 244.24; 609.06; 609.14; and 609.165
Minnesota Rules of Criminal Procedure 27.04

REPLACES: Division Directive 201.015, "Field Services – Chemical Irritants," 9/1/15;
Division Directive 201.016, "Use of Force and Restraints," 9/1/15;
Division Directive 201.018, "Offender Custody and Transport," 11/3/15;
Division Directive 201.019, "Field/Office Contacts," 10/20/15;
Policy 201.024, "Field Services Use of Soft Body Armor," 10/16/18; and
Policy 201.0245, "Personal GPS Devices," 11/17/15.
All facility and unit policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: Agent Safety Handbook (201.012A) Available only to staff
Field Services Safety Assessment form (201.012B)
Chemical Irritant Advisory (201.012C)
Incident Report—Adult Facilities (300.300A)

APPROVALS:
Deputy Commissioner, Facility Services
Deputy Commissioner, Community Services
Assistant Commissioner, Facility Services
Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support