

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Department of Correctional Services State of Nebraska</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NUMBER</p> <p style="text-align: center;">115.25</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PAGE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 of 6</p>
		<p><b>Social Work Services</b></p>	

This Administrative Regulation is to be made available in law libraries or other inmate resource centers.

EFFECTIVE: December 31, 2014  
 REVIEWED: November 30, 2015

SUMMARY OF REVISION

Additional language added to the GENERAL section.

APPROVED

  
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 Scott B. Frakes, Director  
 Nebraska Department of Correctional Services

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PURPOSE

To guide the provision of social work services to discharging or paroling inmates within the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) for the purpose of decreasing recidivism, promoting successful community reintegration, and addressing continuity of care among those inmate deemed to have multiple and/or high needs.

GENERAL

Priority inmates who may be served are those who have been identified as having the following risk factors (list is not all inclusive):

- Major Mental Illness
- History of a Sex Offense
- History of Violent Offenses
- History of chronic substance abuse
- Serious and chronic medical conditions

Certified Master Social Workers (CMSW) within the employ of NDCS are certified by the state to provide social work services and have licensure to provide mental health services or they are provisionally licensed as such.

The primary role of the CMSW is to:

- Assist identified high needs inmates with discharge planning.
- Serve as resource persons and consultants to other NDCS staff.
- Provide mental health services to inmates/parolees as a need is identified.

Inmates may obtain social work assistance depending on the number and severity of their risk factors. Other factors that will be taken into consideration for deciding who will receive social work services include the presence or absence of outside supports and financial entitlements which the inmate/parolee may be able to access. Others not identified above may receive social work service if a review of their history and current functioning indicate they are not capable of arranging for their own discharge needs.

Social work practicum students work under the supervision of the program professionals in the institution in which they are placed and under the supervision of their NDCS educational and/or site supervisor. Practicum students are provided placement in accordance with the written agreement between NDCS and the educational institution.

Social Work Services is under the Health Services Chain of Command. The Director of Social Work reports to the Behavioral Health Administrator. While Social Work is a distinct service in Behavioral Health Services, we seek to integrate all of the service components of the individuals with whom we work. Parole Social Workers are dually supervised by Behavioral Health and Parole Administration.

Social Workers will work closely with the Reentry Unit when developing discharge services to ensure such services are included on the inmates Reentry Plan.

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PROCEDURE

I. Referral Process:

Any NDCS Staff can refer an inmate for social work services if staff deems the inmate needs assistance with discharge planning and has multiple needs and/or is high risk.

- A. Submit form DCS-A-mnh-004, entitled: Mental Health/Medical Referral Form (Attachment A), to a social worker serving the institution where the inmate is housed or to the Director of Social Work at the Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP) or call or email the Director of Social Work or a social worker who covers the inmate's institution to discuss the possible referral (form DCS-A-mnh-004 may be requested).
- B. The referral will be reviewed for appropriateness of social work services.
- C. The referring person will be informed of the outcome which could be:
  - 1. The referral is appropriate and a social worker will be assigned to meet with the referred inmate/parole.
  - 2. The referred inmate does not meet the criteria for direct social work assistance.
  - 3. The referral source may be asked to resubmit the request if the inmate's discharge or parole hearing date is more than six months out.
  - 4. Completed referral forms will be uploaded to NiCaMS as part of the inmate's records.
- D. Teams that work specifically in mental health may develop their own process for referrals to social work. Priority will be given to inmates identified with a Major Mental Illness (MMI) as defined in AR 115.23, Section VI. Determination of appropriateness of referral will be based on mental health information found in NiCaMS, information provided by the referring source, a review of outside documentation, if available, and consultation with mental health or medical staff if the referral is from another source. If the referred inmate does not meet criteria for social work involvement, efforts will be made to provide resource information and/or consultation with the referring individual. Inmates can refer themselves for social work assistance and will be helped based on the criteria noted above. Inmates or parolees who have been referred to a social worker will receive services on a voluntary basis.
- E. The social workers who are imbedded in the parole offices will work with parolees referred from other parole officers and the social workers inside the institutional settings as needed. In addition, these social workers will provide consultation and education to the parole officers in their district office regarding resources are available to parolees. Inmates who receive social work services and will be discharging to parole will continue to receive social work assistance through the parole social worker whenever possible.
- F. Substance Abuse Unit (SAU) inmates may get priority CMSW assistance if there is a Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) funded social worker assigned to their unit. These social workers are funded by the federally administered RSAT grant which determines inmate eligibility for grant funded services. RSAT funded social workers will only be able to work with inmates

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who are in or who have successfully graduated from a residential substance abuse treatment program during their current incarceration.

II. Time Frame:

Whenever possible, referrals should be made at least three months or more in advance of discharge to allow the social worker time to investigate the needs of the inmate referred and get assistance in place prior to leaving. It is recognized that it will not always be possible to refer an inmate in this time frame. Later referrals will still be considered, but the assistance that can be offered may be restricted due to time considerations.

III. Scope of services that can be provided as need indicates:

- A. Assistance with obtaining Social Security benefits
- B. Assistance with obtaining Medicaid benefits
- C. Assistance with appropriate living arrangements
- D. Follow-up medication management
- E. Follow-up mental health
- F. Follow-up substance abuse treatment
- G. Assistance in obtaining identification documents
- H. Medical follow-up
- I. Information about clothing resources
- J. Assistance with food resources, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, aka Food Stamps)
- K. Resource and support services information
- L. Veteran's assistance
- M. Information about work assistance resources
- N. Information about education resources
- O. Other services as identified

When inmates are transferred to other institutions within NDCS, the social worker who has started to work with an inmate will continue to provide services when practical to do so; otherwise, the inmate will be referred to another social worker to follow up with discharge planning if further planning is still needed. Social workers maintain the same level of confidentiality as noted in AR 115.23 Section XI paragraph I.

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IV. Documentation:

Documentation of social work services will be maintained electronically on NICaMS on the Mental Health tab.

- A. Direct and collateral contacts will be noted and entered into NICaMS at the earliest convenience but no later than by the end of the month in which the contact took place.
- B. Releases of Information will be obtained to document the inmate's/parolee's consent to obtain or share information with outside entities and the releases will be scanned into NICaMS.
- C. Documents, such as a discharge information form or releases of information, will be uploaded and stored electronically.
- D. Inmates/parolees who are offered services, but decline to accept will be asked to complete a Social Work Services Refusal Form (Attachment B). The original of the completed form will be given to the inmate and a copy will be uploaded on to NICaMS in the Mental Health section.
- E. No clinical records will be taken off-site except for between facilities as necessary for the provision of services in institutions that are not where the social worker maintains their primary office. Reasonable efforts will be made to minimize the need to take any clinical records outside of any institution. Any paper documentation will be securely stored as noted in AR 115.23 section XI paragraphs G & H.

V. Suicide prevention/intervention:

- A. Any social worker who has concerns about an inmate/parolee being suicidal or aggressive either because of statements made by the inmate or because of behavioral changes noted by the social worker will notify staff as outlined in AR 115.30 section II, paragraphs A-1 and A-2.
- B. Any concerns about suicidal or aggressive behaviors and the steps taken to address these concerns will be documented as outlined in AR 115.30, section II, paragraph A-3.

VI. Hand-off communication: The social worker will notify the inmate that discharge plans and needs will be shared with Parole Administration and the Parole Board as relevant when leaving on parole. In addition, the inmate will be encouraged to give consent (Attachment C) for the social worker to share discharge plans with relevant community agencies and family/supports.

REFERENCES

I. ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

- A. AR 115.23 Mental Health Service
- B. AR 115.09 Substance Abuse Treatment Programming, Detoxification and Chemical Dependency
- C. AR 209.01 Release Preparation
- D. AR 206.01 Social Services and Counseling

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- E. AR 115.30 Suicide Prevention/Intervention
  - F. AR 210.02 Discharge Planning for Segregated Inmates
  - G. AR 115.12 Special Needs Inmate Programs
- II. AMERICAN CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION STANDARDS – 4-4433
- III. ATTACHMENTS:
- A. Mental Health/Medical Referral Form: DCS-A-mnh-004 (11/98)
  - B. Social Work Services Refusal Form
  - C. Release of Information: DCS-A-adm-009-pc REV 7/12