

*TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
VOLUNTEER SERVICES*

**HANDBOOK  
FOR VOLUNTEERS**



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## Texas Department of Criminal Justice

Bryan Collier  
Executive Director

Dear Criminal Justice Volunteer:

Welcome to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. We are committed to the active recruitment and retention of concerned volunteers with the qualifications and commitment to accept the challenge inherent in a correctional rehabilitative setting.

The goal of our volunteer programs is to continue with assisting the agency in achieving a reduced recidivism rate, improving vocational and life skills, and changing the attitudes and actions of those who will be released to our communities. By partnering with our staff, you will become an integral part of our ongoing rehabilitative efforts.

This handbook has been prepared to give you, the volunteer, an overview of the department and to set forth pertinent rules, regulations, and guidelines which must be followed in order to promote public safety. In carrying out your vital role as a volunteer, you will be expected to understand and follow these requirements as well as local rules of operation. Please ask staff for clarification if you have any questions or concerns.

We have found that community citizens, staff, and offenders alike have deeply moving and rewarding experiences through volunteer programming within our agency. We are very grateful for your interest, time, and commitment as we work together for a safer and better Texas.

Sincerely,

  
Bryan Collier  
Executive Director

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*Our mission is to provide public safety, promote positive change in offender behavior, reintegrate offenders into society, and assist victims of crime.*

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# ***HANDBOOK for VOLUNTEERS***

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**The mission of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice is to provide public safety, promote positive change in offender behavior, reintegrate offenders into society, and assist victims of crime.**

### **Volunteer Services Philosophy:**

We endeavor to optimize the use of volunteers across divisions within the TDCJ to promote positive social change for inmates to increase public safety and reduce victimization.

The objectives of this handbook are to state the mission of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ); provide an overview of the volunteer program; provide an understanding of TDCJ policy regarding the volunteer program; and to promote an understanding of the dynamics involved with volunteering in a TDCJ facility.

## **OVERVIEW**

The TDCJ has enjoyed a long history of volunteer participation. Program areas in which a volunteer can participate include, but are not limited to:

- literacy and educational programs
- life skills-
- job skills
- parent training and marriage classes
- drug and alcohol rehabilitation or education programs
- support groups
- arts and crafts
- faith based classes and programs
- mentoring
- assist staff with administrative duties
- internship programs
- restorative justice programs
- other programs designed to assist in the transition between confinement and society and to reduce the incidence of recidivism.

TDCJ divisions and departments will recruit and partner with volunteers and volunteer groups who:

- come from culturally and socio-economically diverse backgrounds and geographic areas of the state;
- have a positive and continuing influence on the behaviors of inmates, which promote public safety and reduce recidivism;
- share experiences and strengths, provide direction and guidance in assisting inmates to meet their goals and treatment needs, employment opportunities, abstinence from drugs and alcohol, and to reconnect with family and community;
- will join the TDCJ in building a statewide network of volunteers who can provide services to inmates, helping them become responsible and productive members of their communities; and
- will help promote community awareness and involvement while benefiting departments in need of additional resources and assistance.

## **USEFUL DEFINITIONS:**

**Approved Volunteer** – A person who has been approved through an application process and has completed volunteer training/orientation within the last two years.

**Certified Volunteer Assistant (CVA)** – An approved volunteer who has received additional training and security clearance. The CVA is certified by the appropriate department of the TDCJ and will work closely with the assigned department to provide administrative support. The CVA may serve other facilities with the approval of the appropriate department head or warden.

**Certified Volunteer Chaplain's Assistant (CVCA)** – An approved Chaplaincy program volunteer who has received additional security and Chaplaincy policy training. The CVCA assists the chaplain at the facility in accordance with the TDCJ Rehabilitation Programs Division (RPD) *Chaplaincy Department Manual* CM-14.04, "Certified Volunteer Chaplain's Assistant."

**Chaplain** – An employee at a facility who is responsible for all religious programming as well as coordination of volunteers and volunteer activities associated with religious programming.

**Community Partner Program Volunteer** – An individual employed by any Community Outreach Program, state, federal, or law enforcement agency, and compensated to perform an official duty.

**Contraband** – Any item not permitted in the secured perimeter of a facility, or in some cases, at any TDCJ facility, any item brought into, or taken out of a facility, or in the possession of an inmate, visitor, or employee as defined in the Texas Penal Code § 38.11, or any item prohibited by the rules and regulations of the TDCJ.

**Correspondence** – Communication by e-message, letter, or memo.

**Departmental Volunteer Authority (DVA)** – An administrator of a department responsible for oversight of volunteers and volunteer activities.

**Departmental Volunteer Coordinator (DVC)** – An employee designated by the (DVA) to coordinate volunteers and volunteer activities not associated with religious programming.

**Employee Volunteer** – An individual who has been approved and has completed training as a volunteer but is also employed by the TDCJ and donates time and services outside of their normal job functions and required working hours. An employee volunteer shall not serve at the facility to which they are currently assigned, unless approved by the facility administrator. They shall not serve as mentors, and shall not correspond with inmates, unless during the course of their job function.

**Enemy** – One who is identified as a member of an opposing security threat group or clique or has been actively opposed or hostile to the volunteer.

**Ex-Offender** – An individual convicted of any crime, excluding traffic violations, who has discharged their sentence. For example, this would include a person who is no longer incarcerated or has completed parole, community supervision, or mandatory supervision, and all requirements under the law.

**Facility Volunteer Authority (FVA)** – An assistant warden, major at smaller facilities that do not have an assistant warden's position, or parole supervisor who is responsible for oversight of volunteer and volunteer activities.

**Facility Volunteer Coordinator (FVC)** – An employee at a facility who has been designated by the facility volunteer authority to coordinate volunteer and volunteer activities not associated with religious programming.

**Field Minister** – Inmates selected by the Field Ministry Advisory Council (FMAC) and who are graduates of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) College at the Memorial Unit with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biblical Studies or equivalent from an institute that is accredited by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

**Inmate** – An individual in the custody of or under the supervision of a city, county, judicial district (probation), state, or federal agency.

**Mentor** – An approved volunteer who meets TDCJ approved mentor criteria, is recommended by the TDCJ program staff, and has completed on-line mentor training or training provided by authorized personnel. Employee volunteers may not serve as mentors.

**Mentoring** – A one-on-one, same gender relationship that focuses on the rehabilitative needs of the mentored inmate. The mentor may be assisted by a spouse. The mentor fosters care and support, encourages personal development, and assists with re-entry into the community upon release.

**Non-Unit-Based Intern** – An individual who will not be working with or around inmates.

**Peer Support Volunteer (PSV)** – An individual who holds a certification or designation in a peer support specialty from a recognized certification entity and who has been approved by the Volunteer Services Department to volunteer in that recognized area. A releasee who has served as a field minister may be eligible to serve as a PSV.

**Personal Information** – Includes information related to an identified or identifiable person, personal address, personal telephone number, personal e-mail address, or financial information.

**Releasee** – An individual convicted and sentenced for any crime, excluding traffic violations, who currently on community supervision, deferred adjudication, parole, or mandatory supervision.

**Sensitive Personal Information** – Information such as a social security number, date of birth, criminal history records, and biometric data such as fingerprints.

**Sexual Abuse** – Includes any of the following acts, with or without consent of the inmate:

- Contact between the penis and vulva or the penis and anus, including penetration, however slight;
- Contact between the mouth and penis, vulva, or anus;
- Contact between the mouth and any body part where the employee or other individual has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;

- Penetration of the anal or genital opening, however slight, by a hand, finger, object, or other instrument, that is unrelated to official duties or where the employee or other individual has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;
- Any other intentional contact, either directly or through the clothing, of or with the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or the buttocks, that is unrelated to official duties or where the employee or other individual has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;
- Any attempt, threat, or request by an employee or other individual to engage in the activities described above;
- Any display by an employee or other individual of his or her uncovered genitalia, buttocks, or breasts in the presence of an inmate; and
- Voyeurism by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer, is an invasion of privacy of an inmate, detainee, or resident by staff for reasons unrelated to official duties, such as peering at an inmate who is using the toilet in her or her cell to perform bodily functions; requiring an inmate to expose his or her buttocks, genitals, or breasts; or taking images of all or part of an inmate's naked body or of an inmate performing bodily functions.

**Sexual Harassment** – is repeated verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature to an inmate by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer, or other individual including demeaning references to gender, sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body or clothing or obscene gestures.

**Special Volunteer** – Any individual who has provided a service or participated in volunteer activities no more than four times. After the fourth visit as a special volunteer, the individual will be required to become an approved volunteer for future visits. An exception will be made for individuals that participate in crusades but participate in no more than four crusade events in a calendar year. Ex-Offenders and releasees are eligible to participate as a special volunteers 6 months after their release from incarceration. The use of special volunteers is beneficial in recruiting approved volunteers.

**Sponsored Volunteer (SPV)** – An ex-offender or releasee on supervision who has been approved by the Volunteer Review Committee to serve as a volunteer. SPVs shall be accompanied by an approved volunteer, community partner, or staff member at all times.

**Sponsoring Volunteer Organization (SVO)** – A volunteer organization or ministry that has approval by the Volunteer Review Committee to sponsor ex-offenders and releasees who have participated in programming the organization provided while the inmate was incarcerated in the TDCJ.

**Staff Supervised Volunteer (SSV)** – An individual who has been approved to volunteer in a select department or division, but by virtue of their role and/or lack of inmate contact, are not required to participate in the formal Volunteer training/orientation. Instead, these individuals complete a Staff Supervised Volunteer Orientation Letter (Appendix W) and attend any orientation as required by the division/department. Staff supervised volunteers shall always be under the direct supervision of the respective division/department staff when they have any contact with an inmate(s).

**Student Intern** – An individual who has been approved through an application process and has completed training and orientation of the Division they plan to intern.

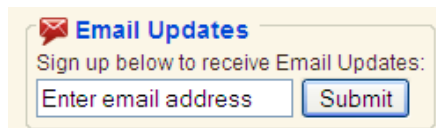
**Unit based intern** – An individual who, while working as an intern, may be in close proximity to and/or will spend some time working with inmates at a facility.

**Victim** – An individual or family member directly or indirectly affected by the unlawful behavior of an inmate, ex-offender, or releasee.

**Volunteer Services Department** – A department within the RPD that serves as the coordinator of the TDCJ volunteer program.

**Volunteer Training/Orientation** – The official instruction for an individual to become an approved volunteer with the TDCJ. Topics include: safety and security; rules of conduct; the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA); definition and examples of contraband, cultural sensitivity, emergency situations, confidentiality, lines of communication, liability, and other pertinent information. Additional training similar to on-the-job training may be required by specific program areas, such as the Parole Division, Reentry and Integration Division, Windham School District, or Victim Services Division before the volunteer is allowed to begin volunteer service within that program area. Volunteers are required to retrain every two years.

### **STAY CONNECTED with the TDCJ Volunteer Services Department**



Please take the time to subscribe to Volunteer Services' enhanced email communication system. To sign-up visit the TDCJ website at [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Volunteer tab → and subscribe to receive information such as our newsletter and important notices specific to the facilities you serve. The TDCJ does not share your email information.

### **STATISTICAL INFORMATION**

The TDCJ is one of the nation's largest state agencies with 98 major institutions. Approximately 24,000 dedicated employees serve an inmate population of over 118,000, as well as approximately 78,711 paroled offenders.

Over 353,000 individuals are under the supervision of the Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD), also known as adult probation. There are 123 CSCD offices that serve 254 counties in Texas. These are not part of the TDCJ.

Under the Parole Division, there are 67 district parole offices and 12 District Reentry Centers (DRC).

The recidivism rate after three years for inmates released in 2017 was 20.3% with nearly 80% not returning.

The average cost of housing an inmate per day in a state operated prison was approximately \$69.27 in fiscal year 2020.

TDCJ Prison Inmate Profile:

Average age: 41 years old

Average Educational Achievement: 7.8 grade level

Average Prison Length of Sentence: 21.3 years

Many have been in repeated trouble with the law.

Many claim some faith preference.

*(Statistical information provided by the TDCJ Executive Services- 6/6/2022)*

## **AREAS FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Chaplaincy Department** - The chaplaincy volunteer program extends services to inmates of all faiths, who are supervised or incarcerated within a TDCJ-operated or contracted unit/facility and provides reasonable and equitable opportunities to pursue religious beliefs and participate in religious activities and programs that do not endanger the safe, secure, and orderly operation of the agency. The following is a list of services a volunteer can provide with the chaplaincy volunteer program:

|                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Specialty Programs           | Visitation/Hospitality House |
| Rehabilitation Programs      | Family Programming           |
| Spiritual Growth Programs    | Building Projects            |
| Mentoring                    | Faith Based Dorms            |
| Reentry Programs             | Inmate Pastoral Visits       |
| Clerical assistance to staff | Ministry to Staff            |

**Parole Division** – The Parole Division is responsible for the supervision of inmates released from prison on parole or mandatory supervision. Its mission is to promote public safety and positive client change through effective supervision, programs, and services. The following is a list of services a volunteer can provide with the Parole Division volunteer program

|                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| AA/NA                        | Substance Abuse Education          |
| GED                          | Pre-Employment Classes             |
| Parenting Classes            | Mentoring                          |
| Adult Basic Education (ABE)  | English as a Second Language (ESL) |
| Faith Based Programming      | Life Skills Classes                |
| Financial Management Classes | Internship Programs                |
| Clerical assistance to staff | New Arrival Class                  |

**Sex Offender Rehabilitation Programs (SORP)** – The SORP consists of two types of programs.

- Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP)
- Sex Offender Education Program (SOEP)

Due to the therapeutic nature of Sex Offender Treatment Programming, and the requirement for treatment providers to possess specific professional licensures, volunteer participation is limited to non-therapeutic related functions such as, life and parenting skills, substance use and classes to address specific needs such as pre-release preparation and sex offender registration requirements in the State of Texas.

Volunteers seeking educational practicum experience could be utilized in:

- Presenting psycho-educational material in conjunction with current staff
- Assist with case management functions under the supervision of qualified staff

**Substance Use Treatment Program (SUTP)** - The substance abuse volunteer program offers a variety of recovery groups to inmates such as:

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)  
Twelve-Step Programs  
Narcotics Anonymous (NA)  
Cocaine Anonymous (CA)

Celebrate Recovery  
Sponsored Volunteer  
Winners' Circle  
Secular Organization for Sobriety (SOS)

It all began with an AA group over 50 years ago. A Texas prison is the host of the second oldest on-going in-prison AA meeting in the world. It started in the 1940's at the Huntsville Unit (The Walls) in Huntsville, Texas. There are as many as 2,400 volunteers approved to visit the prisons and to carry the message of recovery to thousands of inmates.

**Victim Services Division** – The Victim Services Division (VSD) provides constitutionally and statutorily mandated services to victims of crime, including notification and services provided by the Texas Crime Victims Clearinghouse (TxCVC) and the Victim Offender Mediation Dialogue (VOMD) programs. The VSD Notification section utilizes the Integrated Victim Services System (IVSS), to provide registrants with notification regarding several stages of an inmate's incarceration and supervision, if applicable. The VSD Notification staff is available during the normal business hours through a toll-free hotline. The TxCVC serves as a central source of information for crime victims, criminal justice professionals and victim service professionals. The TxCVC is mandated to revise the Victim Impact Statement (VIS) after every legislative session and collect VIS statistics from each district and county attorney's office. In addition, the TxCVC provides training for criminal justice and victim service professionals as well as direct services to crime victims, including execution accompaniment and assistance to victims who serve as panelists for victim impact panels. The VOMD program provides victims and surviving family members of violent crimes an opportunity to initiate a meeting with the inmate responsible for their victimization. The volunteer programs available under this division include:

Victim Impact Panel  
Internship Programs  
Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse

Victim-Offender Mediation/Dialogue  
Clerical assistance with Notification and Program staff

**Due to the possible conflict of interest, those who volunteer with the Victim Services Division may be prohibited from volunteering with inmate programs.**

**Windham School District (WSD)** **Windham School District (WSD)** – The WSD provides a variety of educational programs to eligible residents within the TDCJ. The programs are designed to meet the unique needs of adult residents and address the legislatively mandated goals of reducing recidivism, reducing the cost of confinement, promoting positive behavior during confinement, and increasing residents' success in obtaining and maintaining employment. In addition to providing traditional academic and vocational education, WSD also has several life skills, cognitive, problem solving, and behavior oriented educational programs designed to meet the needs of the resident population. Annually, over 80,000 residents participate in the various educational programs. The WSD primarily seeks regular volunteers to help with academic instruction on a routine basis. Special volunteers typically serve as guest speakers for the life skills programs.

**Reentry and Integration Division (RID)**- Reentry volunteers aid inmates in their return to the community by providing assistance in those errors commonly serving as barriers to successful reentry, including:

- Obtaining proper identification
- Housing
- Employment and education
- Health care
- Substance Abuse

- Transportation
- Clothing, Food and Amenities
- Financial Resources
- Support Services, and
- Other assistance or support as determined by TDCJ-RID to aid in the transition between confinement and society in an attempt to reduce recidivism.

## **HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER**

Individuals interested in becoming an approved TDCJ volunteer shall complete an application and a volunteer training/orientation session. The online volunteer application can be found at → under → [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Volunteer tab.

Once the application has been processed, if no additional information is required, the applicant will be sent notification of their approval or denial. If you choose to send in your application prior to attending a training session, once the application has been processed, the applicant will be notified of the next step. The approval process cannot be finalized until training/orientation has been completed and the applicant's application has been processed.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers play a significant role in the criminal justice setting. Because of their firsthand experience and/or devoted interest in their field, volunteers are able to gain the attention and respect of inmates in a unique way.

Volunteers are key players in programs designed for rehabilitation and reentry of inmates into the community. The transition process seeks to produce inmates who are law-abiding citizens with the strengths and skills to successfully manage the problems they will face daily. Volunteers are the role models for this journey and are an invaluable addition to the rehabilitative opportunities that the TDCJ offers.

### ***"What is the role of a volunteer?"***

- To provide programs and services to assist with the TDCJ's mission to provide public safety, promote positive change in offender behavior, to reintegrate offenders into society and assist victims of crime.

Placement, or facility assignment of volunteers is based on the needs of the institution, needs of the inmate population, space availability, existing program schedules, and the proposed volunteer activity. Volunteers must not interfere with the custodial responsibilities of the TDCJ.

## **PROGRAM PROPOSAL INFORMATION**

Volunteers must submit a Program Proposal Form for Service Providers to the Rehabilitation Programs Division and include any curriculum to be presented. The Program Proposal Form for Service Providers is available on the TDCJ website at → [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Volunteer tab.

## RULES OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are subject to sanctions for failure to abide by the TDCJ rules and regulations or failure to perform responsibilities in accordance with the assignment description or expectations. Being a volunteer is a privilege. Breaking the rules can end that privilege.

- A. A volunteer must be respectful of the needs and requirements of each department or division. Volunteer activities shall be consistent with sound correctional practices for security and orderly operations. It is important to remember that security always takes precedence. Volunteers should exercise patience when delayed due to security activities. Please remember these procedures are for you, the staff and the inmate's safety. When you are in the facility you should remain in the area designated for the program/activity. If you must leave the designated area let a staff member know where you are going and the purpose.
- B. Respect the authority of staff. If you have a disagreement with a staff member discuss this in private **not in front of inmates**. Be mindful that offenders are always observing your actions. Additionally, you may speak to a facility/departmental authority for clarity.
- C. While volunteering, it is appropriate for a volunteer to engage in meaningful, appropriate interactions with inmates. However, volunteers are prohibited from forming intimate or personal relationships. All activities should directly relate to the inmate's successful reentry and rehabilitation. *Refer to the section titled: **How can you tell if an inmate is getting to you?***
- D. Volunteers may correspond with an inmate (s). Appropriate correspondence should be focused on rehabilitation and reentry efforts and in line with approved volunteer programming. Promoting of illicit behavior may lead to termination of the volunteer's approved status. Unless it is specifically approved correspondence shall **not** include:
  - disclosure of intimate information
  - providing legal and/or financial-advice (*other than through an approved program utilizing approved content*)
  - promoting of inappropriate sexual activity
  - correspondence that circumvents security
  - use of or transfer of contraband
  - establishing inappropriate relationships
  - promoting actions that are inappropriate, such as soliciting money

**TDCJ employee volunteers** will only correspond with inmates during the course of their job function(s).

**Victim Services volunteers** may only correspond with inmates through the Victim Services Division, and only while performing duties related to their volunteer assignment.

E. A volunteer is required to use a postal box address or the address of the organization, program, or church they represent as the return address and include the word "Volunteer" as part of the return address on all correspondence. A volunteer may utilize JPay as long as they clearly identify themselves as a volunteer in all correspondence. Volunteers are reminded that they are prohibited from sharing personal information with inmates such as personal address, personal email address or personal telephone number. As such, any JPay correspondence should be sent from their organizations' email account.

|                                  |         |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Volunteer</b> John Doe        | <stamp> |
| <b>Organization address (or)</b> |         |
| <b>PO Box</b>                    |         |
| Inmate John Smith #123456        |         |
| TDCJ Unit Address                |         |

- E. A volunteer shall not mail any items of correspondence for an inmate. This includes correspondence between inmates, family members, victims, friends, or enemies.  
***Do not take anything from an inmate or take anything off a facility without prior permission from the facility/departmental volunteer coordinator.***
- F. A volunteer shall not carry or pass messages or items from inmate to inmate; the inmate's family; their victims or their victim's family in written or verbal form. This includes making or accepting personal calls for or from an inmate's family member. Volunteers are not allowed to receive telephone calls from inmates. [Exception: *TDCJ approved mentors or any family member or individual with whom a relationship was established prior to incarceration and declared to Volunteer Services*]  
***Do not take anything from an inmate or take anything off a facility without prior permission.***
- Texas statutes, court orders and TDCJ policies and programs may prohibit an inmate from contacting a victim or the victim's family, either directly or indirectly. Volunteers must remember that a victim may be the family member of an inmate. It is a serious violation to contact an inmate's family.**
- G. A volunteer shall not contact a victim or the victim's family unless a Victim Services Division volunteer is contacting a victim based on a victim-initiated service that does not conflict with a "no contact" statute, order, policy, or program. The inmate may state that he wants to reconcile or make amends with the victim. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to notify staff if the inmates have made such a request, but the volunteer is not to act upon the inmate's request. While it is understood that restoration, forgiveness, and reconciliation are important aspects of rehabilitation, the rights of the victim will always take precedence over the desire of the inmate. If a victim chooses to meet with the inmate responsible for their victimization, the victim may contact the Victim Services Division to request mediation through the victim inmate mediation dialogue program.
- H. A volunteer is required to acknowledge on their application if a family member, friend, victim, or enemy is assigned to a TDCJ facility. A volunteer is responsible for immediately reporting to the Volunteer Services Department at 936-437-3026 or you may send notification to, [volunteerservices.tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:volunteerservices.tdcj.texas.gov) or to PO Box 99, Huntsville TX, 77340-0099, when a family member, friend, victim, or enemy becomes incarcerated after the volunteer begins their volunteer service.
- I. Volunteers shall not remove any item from the facility without prior approval.
- J. Access to telephone service at a facility is limited to emergency use only. Excluding volunteers who are approved Certified Volunteer Chaplain's Assistants (CVCA) for the purpose of making authorized calls. All calls from the facility may be monitored by TDCJ personnel.
- K. A volunteer is not allowed to serve on a facility where a family member, friend, enemy, or victim resides or is supervised. If, once you arrive on the facility, you discover a family member, friend, enemy, or victim is assigned to that facility, or is later moved to that facility you are responsible for immediately reporting to the volunteer authority or a facility/department official, as well as the Volunteer Services Department. The volunteer may be reassigned to another facility.
- L. There are inherent risks that I may encounter as a volunteer due to the nature of the Agency's mission. I assume all risks that may result from the operation of the facility.

- M. As a participant in the TDCJ volunteer program, volunteers are not TDCJ employees and therefore, are not entitled to any compensation or employment benefits. Volunteers are not covered by worker's compensation, retirement or leave accrual. Volunteers will not be reimbursed for mileage, parking, meals, or other volunteer-related expenses.

### **DRESS CODE**

- N. A volunteer is required to dress in a conservative and responsible manner appropriate for the volunteer assignment being performed and adhere to the grooming standards established herein. Regardless of the volunteer assignment, any attire considered to be of extreme design, revealing in nature, or that conveys messages of a derogatory or offensive nature through language, logos, or symbols is prohibited. This includes signs or symbols of apparent membership in a Security Threat Group or clique as evidenced by tattoos or other signs or symbols of membership in such groups. Any extreme haircuts, styles or colors are also prohibited.

Items that will not be allowed on a facility are:

- a. jewelry items (to include male and female) worn on the facial areas such as earrings or studs in the nose, tongue, lips, or eyebrow;
  - b. any attire, to include skirts or dresses, shorter than three (3) inches above the middle of the knee while standing;
  - c. any attire with a slit higher than three (3) inches above the knee while standing;
  - d. capri pants shorter than three (3) inches below the knee while standing
  - e. shorts of any length
  - f. sweat suits and wind suits unless they are appropriate for the activity being conducted;
  - g. any attire that exposes midriff or shoulders or any portion of the undergarment
  - h. halter tops or tank tops;
  - i. slacks and pants worn below the waist;
  - j. any attire that is considered to be see-through, low-cut in the front or back or tight-fitting
  - k. white shirt and white pants or skirt worn together
  - l. flip-flops or shower shoes, which are any sandal with the top portion consisting only of a strap that divides the toe;
  - m. no open-toe shoes for male volunteers
- O. For security reasons, taking photographs or video recordings of TDCJ secured structures (such as towers, gates houses, or perimeter fences, etc.) is prohibited without prior approval.
- P. A volunteer shall immediately report an injury to the assigned staff member.
- Q. A volunteer shall not be permitted to perform any activity involving the actual receipt or handling of money, (for example cash or readily negotiable documents such as checks, money orders, state warrants, or stamps) while performing volunteer services for the TDCJ. It is prohibited for volunteers to participate in the transfer of stamps to inmates.

- R. Volunteers shall not accept or give personal gifts to inmates. If an inmate states he needs a religious text such as a Bible, Torah, Quran or other faith-based text, encourage the inmate to contact the chaplain, **do not give an inmate anything without prior approval. If you wish to donate faith-based texts to the agency you may contact the TDCJ Chaplaincy Department.**
  - S. A 501(c)(3) organization may receive unsolicited donations from an inmate; however, it is prohibited for volunteers to solicit funds from an inmate or inmate's family.
  - T. A volunteer or their family members may not deposit money into an inmate's Trust Fund Account or purchase items for inmates through the eCommDirect service. [Exception: *Family member or individual with whom a relationship was established prior to incarceration and previously declared to Volunteer Services Department.*]
  - U. A volunteer may not visit an inmate in regular visitation. [Exception: *Family member or individual with whom a relationship was established prior to incarceration and previously declared to Volunteer Services Department.*]
  - V. A volunteer may not allow a releasee (see definition for releasee) to reside at their personal place of residence. [Exception: *Family member or individual with whom a relationship was established prior to incarceration and previously declared to Volunteer Services Department.*]
  - W. A volunteer may not have releasees visit in their home [Exception: *Group meetings or events such as AA group meetings, faith-based study groups, and faith-based fellowships.*] It is encouraged whenever possible, that these be held at a public meeting place, such as a public library or community center. A volunteer may attend special events involving milestones and achievements if attendance promotes restoration and reintegration into the community.
- A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself if the activity is within the mission of your duty as a volunteer. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact Volunteer Services.***
- X. A volunteer may transport releasees to assist them in searching for work or housing, or going to appointments, church, or other places consistent with successful reentry. Volunteers shall only transport releasees of the same sex. Employee volunteers may only transport releasees during the course of their job function. ***A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself if the activity is within the mission of your duty as a volunteer. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact Volunteer Services.***
  - Y. Volunteers may not supervise or manage inmates or other volunteers. Supervision of inmates and volunteers is a staff function. However, CVCAs may coordinate and facilitate programming.
  - Z. A volunteer is required to report immediately to the appropriate authority any information revealed by an inmate that might result in harm to any individual, that is criminal in nature or could impact public or facility safety.

## **ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

The TDCJ has **zero tolerance** for sexual abuse or misconduct. Volunteers are prohibited from establishing or continuing personal relationships with inmates, including engaging in, or attempting to engage in, any form of consensual sexual misconduct with inmates, or forcing or attempting to force inmates to participate in non-consensual sexual misconduct.

It is a felony offense if anyone, including a volunteer, at a TDCJ facility violates the rights of a person in custody or engages in sexual contact or sexual intercourse with a person in custody. Volunteers who violate this policy will not be allowed to continue to perform services for the TDCJ and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Acts of sexual misconduct include any of the following acts, with or without consent of the inmate:

1. Engaging in sexual abuse with an inmate;
2. Sexual harassment of an inmate;
3. Requiring or intentionally allowing an inmate to engage in sexual abuse for any reason;
4. Influencing, attempting to influence, or communication intent to influence an inmate's conditions or status, including an inmate's safety, custody, parole status, privacy, housing, privileges, work assignment, or program status in exchange for sexual favors or because an inmate refused to submit to a sexual advance. This includes putting money into or promising to put money into an Inmates Trust Fund or bringing in or offering to bring in contraband for an inmate in exchange for sexual favors.
5. Having sexual contact or sexual intercourse with an inmate;
6. Requiring or intentionally allowing an inmate to engage in sexual contact, sexual intercourse, or other sexual conduct for any reason, such as the sexual gratification of another employee or other individual;
7. Attempting, threatening, or requesting an inmate to engage in a sexual act;
8. Displaying uncovered genitalia, buttocks, or breasts in the presence of an inmate;
9. Committing voyeurism;
10. Masturbating in front of an inmate;
11. Making obscene or sexual advances, gestures, or comments toward an inmate or being receptive to any advances, gestures, or comments made by an inmate toward another employee or other individual;
12. Touching of self in a sexually provocative way to solicit a response from an inmate or while located in any area where inmates might be located, for instance an office when an inmate cleaning crew is present;
13. Conducting any verbal communication of a sexual nature with or within potential hearing range of an inmate;
14. Providing written communication or photographic items of a sexual nature to an inmate.

A volunteer with knowledge of any such misconduct, either by personal detection or being confided in by an inmate, is required to report the misconduct immediately to one or more of the following: facility staff, administrator, warden, the appropriate departmental authority, Volunteer Services Department, Office of Inspector General – Investigations Division in Huntsville, TX; or the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Ombudsman Office in Huntsville, TX.

A volunteer shall not be subject to harassment, retaliation, intimidation, or coercion for reporting a personal employee-inmate relationship or any incident of sexual misconduct.

**“Sexual Abuse”** is forcing another person, by violence, threats of violence, or coercion, to perform a sexual act (a sexual act is any intentional contact between the genitals of one person and genitals, mouth, anus, or hands of another person), sexual fondling, or sexual assault with an object, without

the effective consent of that person. For the purpose of this manual, the term “sexual abuse” shall also include:

**“Sexual Assault”** is the contact of any person without their consent, or of a person who is unable to consent or refuse, as described in Texas Penal Code §§ 22.011 and 22.021.

**“Sexual Fondling”** is the intentional touching either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person, or of a person who is unable to either consent or refuse, for the purpose of sexual gratification.

**“Improper Sexual Activity with a Person in Custody”** is the act constituting improper sexual activity by a public servant with a person in custody as described in Texas Penal Code §39.04. For the purpose of this Manual, definition includes staff sexual misconduct.

**Sexual abuse** does *not* include the following:

- Custodial or medical personnel gathering physical evidence, or engaged in other legitimate medical treatment, in the course of investigating prison rape.
- The use of a health care provider's hands or fingers or the use of medical devices in the course of appropriate medical treatment unrelated to prison rape.
- The use of a health care provider's hands or fingers and the use of instruments to perform body cavity searches in order to maintain security and safety within the prison or detention facility, provided the search is conducted in a manner consistent with constitutional requirements.
- The use of a correctional officer's hands or fingers for the purpose of legitimate searches.

**“Sexual Harassment”** is repeated verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature to an inmate by a staff member, contractor, volunteer, or other individual including demeaning references to gender, sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body or clothing, or obscene gestures.

AA. Communication with the media by volunteers regarding any TDCJ business shall be approved by the TDCJ Communications Department and coordinated with the facility/department volunteer authority prior to contact and dissemination of any information.

BB. If a volunteer is required to take a prescription or non-prescription medication while at a facility, the medication shall be taken into the facility in the original container. If the medication causes side effects that may affect the volunteer's service, a written statement that includes the name of the prescribed drug, the name of the prescribing physician, and possible side effects shall be submitted to the appropriate authority.

CC. A volunteer is required to notify the Volunteer Services Department when there is a change in their name or contact information, specifically address, and phone number.

DD. A volunteer is required to notify the Volunteer Services Department within 48 hours if they have been arrested. Your continued status as a volunteer will be determined depending on the circumstances of the arrest. Volunteer Services periodically reviews criminal background checks and if you are found to have not disclosed an arrest within 48 hours your status as a volunteer could be affected.

EE. A volunteer may not persuade or encourage someone to convert to their faith or recruit someone to join their political party, while serving as a volunteer. A volunteer must not disparage the faith of any inmate, nor deliberately seek to influence a change in any inmate's denomination or political party.

FF. A volunteer may bring in electronic musical devices, including PA systems and components, such as microphones and speakers; portable music players needed for background music; amplifiers and instruments used with amplifiers; and laptop computers without broadband capability. Before a laptop computer is allowed at a facility, the volunteer will sign an Affidavit of Computer Broadband Capability (Appendix L) stating that the laptop computer does not have broadband capabilities. No cell phones, broadcast or transmission equipment, wireless communication devices, or any other electronic equipment used to communicate with a third party are allowed at a facility at any time.

GG. Some professions can be considered a conflict of interest, for example, if you are a lawyer, please do not solicit clients or give legal advice while you are serving as a volunteer. To maximize your effectiveness as a volunteer, please keep your personal interests separate from your volunteer service.

## **MENTOR SERVICES**

An approved volunteer wishing to receive "additional training" to become a mentor should speak to the facility or department volunteer coordinator. A mentor is an approved volunteer who meets TDCJ approved mentor criteria, is recommended by TDCJ program staff, and has completed on-line mentor training or training provided by authorized personnel. Employee volunteers may not serve as mentors.

Mentoring is a structured and trusting relationship that brings an inmate together with an experienced volunteer who offers them guidance, support, and encouragement that is aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee. A mentor is not a parent, therapist, parole officer or a cool peer.

A copy of the TDCJ Mentor Handbook is available on the TDCJ under website → [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Volunteer tab.

## **CONTRABAND**

Contraband is defined as any item not permitted in the secured perimeter of a facility, or in some cases, at any TDCJ facility. It is also any item brought into, or taken out of a facility, or in the possession of an inmate, visitor or employee as defined in the Texas Penal Code, Section 38.11, or is prohibited by the rules and regulations of the TDCJ.

Contraband includes:

- paper money or coins in excess of \$25.00,
- credit or debit cards,
- alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, cigarette lighters, matches or any tobacco products,
- controlled substances or unauthorized medications,
- cell phones and any component of a cell phone,
- pager,
- smartwatches,

- laptop computers, cameras, digital recorders, or similar personal electronic communication devices,
- firearms,
- pocketknives,
- explosives,
- escape implements, or dangerous weapons; or
- correspondence to or from an inmate,
- documents, legal materials, and sensitive information not received through authorized channels.

Chapter 38 of the Texas Penal Code was amended to add Section 38.114, making it an offense to provide contraband to an inmate in a correctional facility. Anyone who provides contraband to an inmate commits the offense of a Class C misdemeanor. Providing certain types of contraband to an inmate may be punishable as a felony offense. If an employee of the facility or a volunteer commits this offense, it is a Class B misdemeanor. The TDCJ has a **zero-tolerance** policy towards contraband on its facilities.

Volunteers may be permitted to bring into the facility or be in possession of:

- a pair of eyeglasses/sunglasses,
- a clear purse or bag, feminine hygiene products,
- a small notepad,
- un-opened beverages in clear plastic (up to 32 oz.),
- as well as items related to the performance of their service, such as:
  - binders, workbooks, folders, books and pens and pencils.

Additional items or materials may be brought in with the prior approval of facility administration.

All items or materials the volunteer will be using during their program/service must be approved and coordinated with the appropriate volunteer authority before entry into the facility.

A volunteer shall not carry or pass messages from inmate to inmate, the inmate's family, their victims, or their victim's family in written or verbal form. This includes making or accepting personal calls for or from an inmate's family member.

All individuals entering a TDCJ facility are subject to pat-down searches. This includes a search of the vehicle, personal belongings, or person, and can include a physical search.

Firearms, or other instruments designed/used as a dangerous weapon or having explosive substance, are not allowed on TDCJ property. The exception is for those persons licensed to carry a handgun under Chapter 411, Subchapter H of the Texas Government Code to possess a handgun on TDCJ property if the un-loaded gun and ammunition is secured in the locked trunk of a locked vehicle, or locked compartment if the vehicle does not have a trunk, prior to entering TDCJ property.

Volunteers shall report the possession or trading of contraband between inmates, inmate and staff, and inmates and other volunteers.

Under NO circumstances will volunteers engage in trading or trafficking with inmates. Volunteers are prohibited from possessing, selling to, buying from, or delivering to ANY inmate ANY article or commodity of ANY description except through authorized channels.

Inmates spend a lot of idle time thinking of ways to get their hands-on contraband. It is important that you are part of the solution to controlling contraband and not part of the problem.

## **VOLUNTEER AND PROPERTY SEARCHES**

All volunteers, their vehicles, and property are subject to search upon entering TDCJ property. Once an individual enters TDCJ property where searches are being conducted, they shall not be permitted to exit without being searched and cleared by the searching officer.

All volunteers entering a facility with high contraband detection, as designated by the CID director, shall be searched when entering the facility. Random searches of volunteers at all other units shall be conducted daily at locations designated by the warden.

During a search, volunteers shall:

- Remove their jacket, smock, headgear, belt, and footwear. After these items have been removed, the searching correctional officer shall physically search each item and set the items aside, or use the parcel scanner to search each item if a scanner is available;
- Remove all items from their pockets. The searching correctional officer shall examine the contents along with all other items in the individual's possession and then set them aside;
- Be thoroughly pat searched by a correctional officer of the same gender;
- Be searched using contraband detection equipment, such as a handheld or walk-through metal detector that may be performed by either gender; and
- Lift their feet so the bottom of each foot can be visually inspected or scanned with a handheld metal detector by the searching correctional officer.

An individual may be required to submit to additional searches if reasonable suspicion exists. Individuals are expected to cooperate with TDCJ staff during a search of the individual and their property while on TDCJ premises.

If a volunteer objects to any portion of these procedures, the searching correctional officer shall immediately discontinue the search and contact a security supervisor while maintaining sight of the individual.

If anything, suspicious is during a search, a supervisor shall be called to determine whether further investigation is warrant. If further investigation is necessary, the duty warden shall be summoned to determine whether the volunteer shall be taken to a private area to resolve the issue.

- Any item deemed inappropriate or that has the potential to jeopardize the security of a unit shall be confiscated. All confiscated items classified as contraband of a criminal nature shall be immediately turned over to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG).
- If suspicious items are not found during the search, all personal items shall be returned to the volunteer.

## **VEHICLE AND PROPERTY SEARCHES**

All vehicles on TDCJ property are subject to search. All individuals shall ensure vehicle doors, windows, and trunks are secured and locked. The beds of trucks shall be free of all tools, clothes, or anything that could be used as a weapon or aide in an escape. If there is a toolbox in the bed of a truck, it must be locked and secured. All tools in the bed of the truck shall be secured.

Intoxicating beverages or other contraband items shall not be left in any vehicle parked on TDCJ property.

A positive alert on a vehicle, item, or package by a narcotic detection canine shall be considered reasonable suspicion and subjects the individual, the individual's property, and vehicle to a search.

Volunteers conducting official state business are prohibited from carrying and storing tobacco and vapor products while in secure correctional facilities. The use of tobacco or vapor products shall be disposed of in the receptacles provided or in personal vehicles.

Immediately after parking or while stopped at the first security checkpoint, whichever occurs first, individuals in possession of a firearm or ammunition, who are not authorized to store firearms and ammunition in TDCJ storage locations described below, shall unload, and secure the firearm and ammunition in a:

1. Locked weapons box or locked compartment in a locked vehicle; or
2. Locked vehicle with the firearm concealed from view, with a locking device properly installed on the firearm.

## **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS AND SAFETY**

### ***CHEMICAL AGENTS***

After chemical agents have been used and the situation has been brought under control, individuals and the area affected by the chemical agents shall be decontaminated as soon as possible. All affected individuals shall be examined by licensed medical staff, properly decontaminated, or advised as to proper decontamination procedures, and offered a change of clothing.

#### **For exposure to Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) gas:**

**OC** is a natural substance made from the oil and resins of peppers. The effects of OC will usually subside within 30 minutes; however, the following procedures will help minimize the effect.

- Recommended method of decontamination is ventilation.
- Move the affected individual to uncontaminated air, if possible.
- Remove contact lenses and contaminated clothing.
- Exit the affected area, face into the wind or a fan, breath normally, and try to relax.
- Do not rub eyes or skin. This will force the substance into soft tissue and prolong the effects.
- Flush eyes and exposed skin with large amounts of cool water.
- Blow your nose if it is irritated.
- Use a wet paper towel, followed by a dry one, and pat the exposed area to lift the resin. Change the paper towel frequently and avoid rubbing the towel over the exposed area.

This will only smear the resin to other areas.

- Do not apply salves, creams, oils, or lotions, which can trap the irritant.
- Do not use commercial eyewashes to flush the eyes. This may cause an adverse chemical reaction with the OC.
- Use soap and shampoo that do not have an oil base to wash the affected area. Start from the head and wash down.
- Once washed, use a cool towel or ice pack on exposed areas to reduce inflammation.
- Avoid direct sunlight and stay in a cool place. An air-conditioned room is ideal.
- If major symptoms persist, seek medical attention.

**For exposure to Orthochlorbenzalmalononitrile (CS) gas:**

CS consists of an oily liquid that makes decontamination fairly easy.

If exposed to CS gas:

- Remain calm.
- Get out of the affected area.
- Recommended method of decontamination is ventilation and rinsing with lukewarm, soapy water.
- Remove contact lenses and caution not to rub the eyes. In cases of severe irritation, the individual should irrigate the eyes with water by cupping water and splashing it on the face.
- If chemical agent residue is found on the individual's clothing, the clothing must be removed to obtain complete relief.
- Generally, an individual exposed to CS may shower immediately in lukewarm water. When showering, the individual should use soap and avoid harsh rubbing of the affected areas.
- Exposed clothing can be cleaned by normal washing.

**For exposure to (OC) (CS) blend:**

- Decontamination of an individual and of an area for exposure to OC/CS blend is the same as decontamination for CS chemical agents.

**HOSTAGE SITUATIONS**

The TDCJ policy will not permit inmates, or others, to use hostages (i.e., employees, volunteers, visitors, or other inmates) to escape from custody or otherwise interfere with orderly institutional operations. Hostages will not be recognized for bargaining purposes.

There are no guarantees in a hostage situation; however, research indicates that the following guidelines have proven very helpful.

- Do not be a hero! Accept your position and be prepared to wait. Be patient. Remain calm.
- The first fifteen to forty-five minutes are the most dangerous. **Follow the instructions of your captor. Do not hesitate!** Be cooperative.
- Convey interest and concern in the hostage taker's story but speak only when spoken to.
- Be a good listener.
- Rest as much as possible but remain alert and take mental notes. As soon as things settle down, try to get as much rest as possible without turning your back on your captor.
- Avoid windows and doors. Keep your back to a wall if possible and try to stay in a group if there is more than one hostage.

- Use your mind to create an emotional safe haven.
- Do not make suggestions, express opinions, moralize, threaten, plant ideas, or worry out loud. Do not try to be a negotiator.
- Do not try to escape unless you are certain that you will be successful, and even then, rethink it. Consider how your escape attempt will affect the treatment of or outcome for the remaining hostages.
- If anyone, including you, needs any special medical attention, inform your captors.
- Be observant. Try to remember everything that you see and hear. Memorize things about the captors, their descriptions, and conversations.
- Follow orders as quickly as possible – Do not argue or be authoritative. Respond in a cooperative manner.
- Treat the captor like royalty. Do not turn your back on your captor unless ordered to do so.
- Work to establish the "Stockholm Syndrome." Let this emotional bonding take place. Do not be afraid to look the hostage takers in the eye, but do not stare.
- Have a positive attitude.
- Do not be obnoxious -- The hostage who chatters, jokes, whimpers, cries, or loses control over body functions is difficult to tolerate.
- Minimize your contact with the hostage takers.
- Relieve your fears and anxiety by doing breathing exercises: relax your muscles by stretching.
- Avoid intellectual or philosophical discussions with your captors.
- Steer the conversation to basic needs and issues--to the reality of the moment.
- If you believe a rescue attempt is taking place, or you hear a noise or shooting, hit the floor and stay down. Keep your hands on your head and do not make any fast moves. Assume the fetal position.
- Never doubt that you will be rescued.
- When rescue comes, follow all orders given by security staff. You may be asked to remain on the floor until the inmate has been apprehended, secured, and removed from the area.

## **VOLUNTEER SAFETY**

Volunteers are an asset to the TDCJ mission. Your safety is important to the agency. Volunteers should always remain aware of their surroundings.

- A. **MOST COMMON ACCIDENT:** Slips, trips and falls are one of the most common sources of injury. Always pay attention to the surface you are walking on and wear low-heeled footwear that is comfortable and in good condition.
- B. **UNSAFE CONDITIONS:** Volunteers should learn to recognize unsafe conditions such as frayed electrical wiring, trip hazards, slippery floors, etc., and report them immediately. Unsafe actions such as leaning back in chairs, improper lifting, or not observing warning signs should be identified and discouraged.
- C. **CHEMICAL HAZARD COMMUNICATION INFORMATION:** You have a right to know if any chemical substances you come in contact with are hazardous to you. If you have questions regarding chemical substances, you may be exposed to contact the facility or department volunteer authority.
- D. **BLOOD AND BODY FLUIDS PRECAUTIONS:** Because of the potential hazard of contracting Hepatitis B and/or the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that are transmitted by blood or

other body fluids, you are asked to please refrain from assisting in any situation which may lead to contact with blood and/or body fluids. Please notify staff in case of emergency.

- E. When a TDCJ or Correctional Managed Health Care employee or volunteer believes he or she may have been exposed to bloodborne pathogens as a result of the employee's work-related duties they should wash the exposed area with soap and water or rinse exposed eyes, nose or mouth with water.
- F. FIRE: Fire escape plans are posted in all areas of the facility. Locate them and become familiar with the escape route(s) and emergency phone numbers.
  - In the event of fire, remove yourself and others from the areas and follow the posted escape route.
  - Pull the fire alarm nearest the emergency if one is available.
  - Call the emergency phone number.
  - Follow staff orders.

## **TEMPERATURE RELATED ILLNESS**

**Heat Precautions** – staff, inmate, and volunteers need to be cautious of heat during the summer months, especially when in extreme heat. Remember, heat-related illness can quickly progress from heat cramps, to heat exhaustion, to heat stroke.

**Be alert of the signs and symptoms of heat and hypothermia.**

| <b><i>Recognition of HEAT Illness</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>HEAT CRAMPS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>HEAT STROKE - EMERGENCY!! Death is Imminent</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involuntary muscle spasms following hard physical work in a hot environment</li> <li>• Heavy perspiration</li> <li>• Cramping in the abdomen, arms, and calves</li> </ul>                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diminished or absent perspiration</li> <li>• Hot, dry, and flushed skin</li> <li>• Increased body temperatures, delirium, convulsions, seizures, possible death</li> <li>• Rapid pulse, weakness</li> <li>• Headache, mental confusion, dizziness</li> </ul> |
| <b>HEAT EXHAUSTION</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weakness, anxiety, fatigue, dizziness, headache, nausea</li> <li>• Profuse perspiration, rapid pulse, rapid breathing</li> <li>• Possible confusion or loss of coordination</li> <li>• May lead to heat stroke if not treated</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extreme fatigue</li> <li>• Nausea/vomiting</li> <li>• Incoherent speech progressing to coma</li> <li>• Medical care is urgently needed</li> </ul>                                                                                                            |

| <b><i>Treatment and Prevention of HEAT Illness</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>TREATMENT OF HEAT ILLNESS (All types)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>PREVENTION OF HEAT ILLNESS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move person out of direct sunlight into air-conditioned environment, if possible</li> <li>• Remove clothing, maintaining modesty</li> <li>• Have them drink water if conscious</li> <li>• Sprinkle water on them; fan them if there is no breeze</li> <li>• Get medical attention ASAP</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing frequency of fluid intake when working in hot environments</li> <li>• Taking a break every 30-60 minutes</li> <li>• Decrease intensity of work under extreme conditions</li> </ul> |

### HIGHER RISK FOR HEAT ILLNESS

- Newly assigned to job
- On psychiatric medications and certain other medications
- Elderly
- High temperature and humidity conditions
- No breeze

## Recognition of HYPOTHERMIA (Cold Related Illness)

### HYPOTHERMIA CATEGORY 1

- Loss of body heat
- Shivering
- Lack of interest or concern
- Speech difficulty
- Forgetfulness
- Mild unsteadiness in balance or walking
- Loss of manual dexterity

### HYPOTHERMIA CATEGORY 2 EMERGENCY!! Death is Imminent

- Shivering stops
- Exhaustion
- Drowsiness
- Confusion
- Sudden collapse

- Slow pulse and breathing
- Pupils dilated
- Cardiac arrest

May lead to category three if not treated

### HYPOTHERMIA CATEGORY 3 EMERGENCY!! Death is Imminent

Individual is comatose  
No palpable pulse  
No visible respiration

## Treatment and Prevention of HYPOTHERMIA (Cold Related Illness)

### TREATMENT OF COLD ILLNESS (All Types)

- Move person into a warm environment, if possible
- Remove wet clothing
- Insulate the person by adding clothing or blankets
- If frostbite exists, gently heat affected area with warm water or towels, a heating pad, or hot water bottles
- If conscious, encourage consumption of warm sweetened liquids
- Monitor breathing
- If heart has stopped, then judge the possibility of administering CPR
- Get medical attention ASAP

### HIGHER RISK FOR COLD ILLNESS

- Newly assigned to job
- Elderly
- Exposed to below freezing temperatures for a long period of time without adequate clothing/blankets
- Wet when exposed to cold weather

### PREVENTION OF COLD ILLNESS

- Dress appropriately when working in extreme cold conditions
- Drink warm, sweet fluids
- Move extremities often to keep enhanced blood circulation

## **SUICIDE PREVENTION**

If you notice any of the following, contact Mental Health/Medical staff or the facility/department volunteer authority immediately.

| <b>SUICIDE HIGH RISK FACTORS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>WARNING STATEMENTS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recent family loss</li><li>• Recent set off or serve all</li><li>• Recent denial of protective housing</li><li>• Recent Court disappointment</li><li>• Recent changes in relationship</li><li>• Changes in physical condition</li><li>• Deteriorating medical condition</li><li>• Increasing fear of being harmed</li><li>• Feeling pressured or threatened by gangs</li><li>• Encouragement from others to commit suicide</li><li>• Recent placement in single cell housing</li><li>• Less than three years served on sentence</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No one cares</li><li>• I won't be around long</li><li>• My family will be better off without me</li><li>• It doesn't matter anymore</li><li>• No one would miss me if I were gone</li><li>• Take care of my daughter, car, etc. for me</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul> |

## **SIGNS AN INMATE MIGHT BE SUICIDAL**

| <b>Behavioral Changes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Mood Changes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eating habits</li><li>• Hygiene habits</li><li>• Sleeping Habits</li><li>• Giving away possessions</li><li>• Refuses visits of mail</li><li>• Talks about death or dying</li><li>• Any self-injury</li><li>• Crying</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hopelessness</li><li>• Withdrawn</li><li>• Depressed</li><li>• Sadness</li><li>• Worthlessness</li><li>• Helplessness</li><li>• Anger</li><li>• Fearful</li></ul> |

## **INMATE MANIPULATION**

Volunteers understandably want to approach their volunteer service in a positive and optimistic manner. Volunteers must be aware that some inmates will attempt to manipulate the volunteer for their own benefit. The following are suggestions to help you reduce the chance of being manipulated:

- Realize that some inmates will take advantage of you if you let them.
- Do not do anything you would be ashamed to share with the facility or department volunteer authority.
- Keep everything out in the open. If an inmate's actions are questionable, ask for advice and assistance.
- Know the policies and procedures you are required to follow. Ask for help to review and understand these policies and procedures.

- Learn to be assertive and use the word “NO” appropriately.
- Be aware of verbal and non-verbal messages you send out, particularly body language.
- Always report and document any attempt at manipulation or game-playing.
- Confront manipulative behavior and act as the issues arise. Verify information before you act.
- Know your personal goals and ethical limitations.
- Understand your value system.
- Understand your strengths and weaknesses.
- Be firm, fair, and consistent.
- Realize that inmates view themselves as the victim.
- Realize that when an inmate is told “maybe”, they often regard it as a promise.

### HOW CAN YOU TELL IF AN INMATE IS “GETTING” TO YOU?

- You feel **anger** towards the system and see yourself as an advocate for the inmate. You should maintain an emotional detachment.
- You are usually **irritated** at the staff to the exclusion of considering that there may be valid reasons for delays. You presume that a delay is caused by staff, and do not consider that an inmate may be responsible for the delay.
- You begin **favoring** an inmate, or some inmates, over others and show it by spending more time with them or by **sharing** personal information with some, but not others.
- You begin to **enjoy** hearing stories of how other volunteers or staff are awful and you are wonderful.
- You feel **good** because inmate like you.
- You begin to think about **bending a rule** for an inmate, or you do **bend a rule** for an inmate.
- You feel a strong sense of **pity** for inmates, often to the point of wanting to rescue them from the natural consequences of their actions.
- You feel **superior** to other volunteers and have an inflated view of what impact you can have on an inmate.
- You **fail** to report questionable behavior or requests because you do not want to get an inmate into trouble.
- You unquestionably **believe** stories about cruel officers and find yourself buying into the “gossip”.
- Inmates begin emphasizing **common interests**. For example, an inmate may engage you in a long conversation about what you like, dislike or other personal matters. Be aware of personal probing to see where you stand. There may be an ulterior motive behind this behavior.
- Inmates begin soliciting **empathy** or **sympathy**. Inmates will tell you truthfully and sometimes untruthfully about the many problems that they have, such as a sick child, a

dying mother, bankruptcy problems, etc.

- Inmates exhibit the ***we/they syndrome***. inmates will try to pit you and them against the system, especially if they can determine that someone or some organization has treated you unfairly. They will point out a similar thing has happened to them and try to establish a commonality. Try to recognize this so you can make a response that promotes personal accountability.
- Inmates begin testing your ***limits***. Inmates will ask for certain things, some of which may be acceptable and others which may be illegal, to see what you will allow them to do. Inmates will break minor rules to see how you react. Report all infractions.
- The inmate will suddenly ***offer favors***, do extra work, be excessively ***nice*** and/or overly ***complimentary***.
- Inmates offer comments such as, "You're the only one who understands." "You're the best teacher, preacher, counselor, etc. I have ever had." "You're the only one who can help."

***If you begin to identify with ANY of the above examples, contact the facility or department coordinator or the Volunteer Services Department immediately for assistance.***

## **BECOME A SKILLED VOLUNTEER**

The following is provided to assist you in becoming an effective and skilled volunteer.

- ✓ Practice active listening skills when dealing with inmates.
- ✓ Ensure you have time; do not act as if you are in a hurry.
- ✓ Do not act as if you want to help and then provide none. Inmates are good at detecting a lack of sincerity; it is one of their common traits.
- ✓ Know your physical, emotional, and personal boundaries when working with inmates.
- ✓ Set your boundaries. A prevalent downfall of volunteers is inappropriate relationships with inmates.
- ✓ Have a positive effect on the inmates you are working with. Encourage them to share feelings and become more open. Empower them to have self-direction, independence, autonomy, personal growth, and self-development.
- ✓ Do not take the inmate's side against the agency. They will use manipulation and deceit to try and turn you towards them.
- ✓ Do not undermine staff. If your group gets interrupted for count, sit patiently, and wait for the officer to perform their duties. You are there to support staff in the agency's mission and you are a guest. If inmates see an inappropriate attitude on your part, they will use this to further manipulate the situation to their advantage.
- ✓ Do not make plans with inmates before coordinating things with the appropriate volunteer authority. This will increase your effectiveness by not having to change plans if something you propose is not in accordance with regulations or policies.
- ✓ There is no need to establish a facade or to create a special status for yourself in relation to the inmate. Express your feelings genuinely. An honest and unmasked expression of feelings is one important way for the volunteer to show concern.

- ✓ Review what you know of the inmate you will meet.
- ✓ Never make a promise to an inmate without first knowing whether the request is permitted. A “maybe” is often viewed as a “yes” from an offender inmate. The inmate will test you, call your bluff, and see if you will deliver. This is an important part of the inmate’s learning to trust you.
- ✓ Be honest and objective, disapproving when it is warranted, as well as praising, supporting, and encouraging when it is warranted.
- ✓ There is a mechanism in place for inmates to receive what they need and are lawfully entitled to. If they ask for something, you can assist within the appropriate mechanism. If no mechanism exists, it is probably illegal.
- ✓ Be familiar with signs/triggers of the relapse process and who to contact for assistance.
- ✓ Respect is the keystone. The inmate will not be open with you until respect and a rapport is developed. Conversely, you must respect the inmate’s individuality and basic rights as a human being. There is no room for narrow prejudices or feelings of superiority. Respond to the inmate’s needs and interests, not to your own.
- ✓ Let the inmate tell you in their own good time about the offense committed, the family left behind or any other deeply held guilt-associated matters. Accept him or her as an individual who is no better or no worse than anyone else. To pigeonhole or categorize a person is, in a way, to dehumanize the person.
- ✓ Do not expect overnight miracles. When things have been going wrong for years and years with a person, these things cannot be corrected in a few weeks or months. The positive effects of your relationship with the inmate may not have a decisive effect until long after you’ve stopped working with the person.
- ✓ The inmate will never respect you until you cannot be conned or manipulated. The inmate’s manipulations may be expressed in a request for you to influence correctional officers, for a witness, or for you to bring something in or out of the institution. Never give out your home address or phone number. **Never deposit money in an inmate’s account.** If the inmate asks you to do something which you consider “borderline,” say that you will check to see if it is all right. Then ask the appropriate official.
- ✓ There will be a time when the inmate, overwhelmed by troubles, will confront you with hostility. At such times, do not force conversation upon the inmate and above all, do not respond in a hostile, sarcastic, or anxious manner. Do not act shocked. Retain your composure, ignore the hostility, or withdraw for awhile. Chances are that the inmate will regain their composure.
- ✓ Remember that every contact with an inmate has the potential for aggression. Delay, interrupt, stop or terminate the contact if you feel it is necessary.
- ✓ You cannot take the burden of the other person’s problems on yourself. They are the inmate’s problems, not yours.
- ✓ You may not receive thanks or any show of gratitude from the inmate. They may feel it but may not know how to express it and may feel embarrassed by it. You may never hear “thank you” but your effort will be, in the long run, appreciated.
- ✓ Be familiar with criminal thinking errors and ways to redirect that thinking. It is how we think that determines how we behave. When dealing with the inmate population, there are criminal patterns or thinking errors that must be acknowledged and changed before

significant, long-lasting change can be made.

- ✓ Get inmates to ask questions of themselves such as:
  - Did I do anything to bring about or cause this situation?
  - Did I respond to a situation and make it better or worse?
  - Does blaming someone or something else make the situation better?

## **VOLUNTEER INDEMNIFICATION/REPRESENTATION**

If a volunteer is sued as a result of performing services as a volunteer/intern, the State of Texas will not indemnify the volunteer and will not provide a defense for such litigation.

## **VOLUNTEER TRAINING**

A volunteer is required to complete a volunteer training session every two years. The volunteer may either attend an on-site training to meet this requirement or access the volunteer training through the TDCJ website [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Volunteer Tab → Rehabilitation Programs Division, Volunteer Retraining. Volunteers are required to complete this training by the two-year anniversary of their most recent volunteer training date in order to maintain their approved status. Volunteers are required to complete a TDCJ volunteer application as part of the retraining process. You may contact Volunteer Services or the appropriate volunteer authority on the facility you serve to determine if it is time to retrain. The volunteer training schedule can be found on the TDCJ website, for those choosing to be retrained in person.

## **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS/COMPLAINTS**

A volunteer is required to report complaints or concerns directly to staff, preferable at the facility. If the issue cannot be resolved at the facility level, contact the Volunteer Services Department or the appropriate divisional authority such as the Parole Division for parole volunteer program concerns.

Volunteers may provide input or submit suggestions regarding the volunteer program and/or their experience as a volunteer. Volunteers may request a Volunteer Program Assessment/Suggestion form from their facility or department volunteer coordinator or may access on the TDCJ website [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Volunteer tab → The form should be submitted to the Volunteer Services Department.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All approved volunteers are required to agree in writing to abide by TDCJ policies relating to security and confidentiality of all records and information, both written and verbal, which pertains to employees, inmates or releasees by signing the Volunteer Training/Orientation Acknowledgement form.

A volunteer may have access to confidential information on an as needed basis and as approved by the appropriate department and applicable facility administrator or their designee. Approved volunteers who are granted access to the TDCJ data (e.g., mainframe system) will be fingerprinted. Failure of the volunteer to maintain confidentiality as stated may incur a penalty for disclosure of such information, such as criminal prosecution or civil suit.

## **Acknowledgement of Volunteer Training / Orientation**

I understand the following:

1. I shall comply with all security and program regulations and requirements of the TDCJ to the best of my ability. Failure to comply or violation of rules or program procedures may result in my services being declined as a volunteer from all TDCJ facilities or offices and will be cause for forfeiture of future volunteer participation or employment with the TDCJ. My services as a volunteer / intern may be declined by me or the TDCJ for any reason (other than discrimination as per policy).
2. I understand that I must immediately inform the facility administrator, or other appropriate authority, about any act that might result in harm to any individual or threaten the security of the facility.
3. I must cooperate with any investigation by the TDCJ.
4. I understand and hereby state that I agree to maintain confidentiality of all records and information, both written and verbal, which pertains to employees, inmates or releasees within the TDCJ. I understand that I may incur a penalty for disclosure of such information, such as criminal prosecution or civil suit.
5. I must inform Volunteer Services AND my assigned staff member of the following:
  - a. I have been arrested (must be notified within 48 hours)
  - b. A relative, friend, enemy or victim becomes incarcerated
  - c. A relative, friend, enemy or victim is transferred to the facility where I volunteer
  - d. I become personally involved with an inmate or releasee
  - e. Change my address or phone number
6. I attest that I have been fully advised of and clearly understand the following:
  - a. The property that I seek to enter is under the supervision and control of the TDCJ and is a place of confinement or supervision for individuals who have been convicted of crimes and who are serving or completing their sentences.
  - b. Inmates or releasees who are confined or are supervised on this property may have been convicted of violent crimes and may be permitted to move freely in some areas in which I may be present.
  - c. Criminal prosecution may result if I introduce any drugs, weapons, or other contraband onto State property.
  - d. There are inherent risks that I may encounter as a volunteer due to the nature of the Agency's mission. I assume all risks that may result from the operation of the facility.
  - e. In accordance with Section 501.172 of the Texas Government Code, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), the TDCJ has a zero-tolerance policy for sexual misconduct. Individuals who violate the rights of an inmate or engage in sexual misconduct will be referred for prosecution. A volunteer with knowledge of any misconduct, either by personal detection or being confided in by an inmate, shall be required to report the misconduct immediately. It is a felony offense if a volunteer violates the rights of a person in custody or engages in sexual contact, sexual intercourse, or deviant sexual intercourse with a person in custody.
  - f. I am required to participate in the TDCJ Volunteer Training and Orientation every two years in order to remain an approved volunteer.
7. I understand and agree that I will not:
  - a. Accept gifts from or give gifts to an inmate or releasee (except for approved mentor volunteers).
  - b. Conduct business transactions with inmates, releasees, or their families.
  - c. Participate in receipt or handling of money, such as cash or warrants, or personal funds of inmates or releasees, collect or distribute restitution owed by inmates or releasees.

- d. Contribute to inmate trust funds (nor will family members contribute). *Exception: family members or an inmate that was previously identified as having a relationship with, prior to their incarceration and declared to the Volunteer Services Department.*
  - e. Give legal or financial advice to inmates or releasees other than through an approved program utilizing approved content.
  - f. Interfere with law enforcement investigation of inmates or releasees.
  - g. Give public statements about general or specific inmates or releasees or Agency business.
  - h. Give personal information to inmates or releasees (except for approved mentor volunteers).
  - i. Allow a releasee to reside at my personal place of residence. *Exception: family members or an inmate that was previously identified as having a relationship with prior to their incarceration and declared to the Volunteer Services Department.*
  - j. Visit an inmate(s) in regular unit visitation. *Exception: family members or an inmate that was previously identified as having a relationship with, prior to their incarceration and declared to the Volunteer Services Department.*
8. I shall notify my assigned staff member or appropriate authority if I am unable to report to my volunteer station at the scheduled time. While performing my volunteer duties, I will conduct myself in a professional manner and dress in conservative attire. I agree to be cooperative, courteous, reliable and to obey all rules and follow given instructions.
9. I understand that, as a participant in the TDCJ volunteer program, I am not a TDCJ employee and therefore, I am not entitled to any compensation or employment benefits. I am not covered by worker's compensation, retirement or leave accrual. I will not be reimbursed for mileage, parking, meals or other volunteer-related expenses.
10. I understand that my volunteer / intern participation does not guarantee future employment with the TDCJ, and that I may not be awarded a future contract(s) to provide services to the TDCJ.
11. I understand that I am not an agent of the TDCJ, and I will not make any commitment on behalf of the TDCJ to third parties.
12. I, the undersigned, do hereby waive and release any and all rights to claims of any kind or nature which may exist or accrue in the future against the TDCJ, its personnel, employees, staff or agents because of, as a result of, or in connection with the duties, responsibilities and service which I will undertake with inmates under the supervision of the TDCJ.
13. I understand that, in the event that I am sued as a result of my performing services as a volunteer / intern, the State of Texas will not indemnify me and will not provide me a defense to such litigation.
14. Volunteers who work with victims must abide by the TDCJ Victim Services Division policies and procedures.
15. I agree to abide by specific departmental rules, expectations, and responsibilities as it applies to my volunteer service.

## **Be Aware and Not Complacent!**

Awareness promotes safety.

Complacency promotes trouble.

Stay "tuned in" to your environment.

Subtle changes may alert you to trouble.

## **WANT TO LEARN MORE? ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

### **Helping Hands**

A Handbook for Volunteers in Prison and Jail

By Daniel J. Bayse

### **Games Criminals Play**

By Bud Allen and Diana Bosta

## **CONTACT /SERVICE INFORMATION**

Volunteer Services

PO Box 99

Huntsville, Texas 77342-0099

936-437-3026

### **Chaplaincy**

Approved volunteers who are interested in the chaplaincy volunteer program shall contact the chaplain at the facility where they wish to serve to schedule a visit. The contact information for the TDCJ facilities may be found on the TDCJ website [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Find a Facility button → Unit Directory, or by contacting the Volunteer Services Department.

### **Parole Division**

Approved Parole Division volunteers will receive additional orientation at the office where they will provide services. Approved volunteers shall contact the parole office volunteer coordinator at 512-406-5308 or by contacting Volunteer Services.

### **Substance Use Treatment Program**

Approved volunteers that are interested in the substance use treatment volunteer program shall contact the facility or department volunteer authority. the facility at which they wish to serve to schedule a visit. The contact information for the TDCJ facilities may be found on the TDCJ website [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Find a Facility button → Unit Directory, or by contacting the Volunteer Services Department.

### **Sex Offender Treatment Program**

Approved volunteers that are interested in the sex offender treatment volunteer program shall contact the Sex Offender Treatment Program administrative staff at 936-437-2847 or by contacting Volunteer Services.

### **Victim Services**

Approved volunteers for the Victim Services Division shall contact the unit chaplain to schedule a visit. The contact information for the TDCJ facilities is available on the TDCJ website [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Find a Facility button → Unit Directory. You may also contact the Victim Services volunteer coordinator at 512-406-5922 or Volunteer Services.

### **Windham School District**

Approved volunteers for Windham School District shall contact the principal of the unit at which they are interested in volunteering to schedule a meeting to discuss their potential volunteer assignment. It is up to the unit principal to determine if there is a significant educational need for approved volunteers. The contact information for the TDCJ facilities is available on the TDCJ [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov) → Find a Facility button → Unit Directory. You may also contact the Windham School District volunteer coordinator at 936-291-5357.

### **Reentry and Integration Division**

Approved volunteers for the Reentry and Integration Division (RID) / Texas Correctional Office for Offenders with Medical and Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI) shall contact the RID volunteer coordinator at 936-437-5040 or volunteer services.

### **Notes**

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