


NH DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE DIRECTIVE	CHAPTER <u>Resident Programming</u> STATEMENT NUMBER <u>703.05</u>
SUBJECT: FAMILY CONNECTIONS CENTER PROPONENT: <u>Director of Community Corrections</u> <i>Name/Title</i> <u>Community Corrections 271-5601</u> <i>Office Phone #</i>	EFFECTIVE DATE <u>02/19/2019</u> REVIEW DATE <u>02/19/2020</u> SUPERSEDES PPD# <u>7.08</u> DATED <u>05/10/13</u>
ISSUING OFFICER:  Helen E. Hanks, Commissioner	DIRECTOR'S INITIALS _____ DATE _____ APPENDIX ATTACHED: YES _____ NO _____
REFERENCE NO: See reference section on last page of PPD.	

- (a) **PURPOSE:**
To establish guidelines for the Family Connections Center.
- (b) **APPLICABILITY:**
To all employees; Persons Under Departmental Control; and members of the public where applicable.
- (c) **POLICY:**
It is the policy of the Department of Corrections (NHDOC) to offer individuals services that promote successful re-entry into society. The mission of the Family Connections Center is to strengthen the connections between incarcerated parents of minor children and their families. This programming is voluntary and does not have any impact on an individual moving through and out of the Corrections system. The Family Connections Center staff also teaches separate Healthy Relationships class to all individuals who are recommended to complete the class as a result of the NH DOC assessment. This class can be taken by any individual regardless of their crime or if they have children or not.
- (d) **PROCEDURES:**
- (1) Program Participant Eligibility and Participation:
 - a. Family support services vary at each NH DOC facilities depending upon funding and staffing levels. They will follow operational practices for safety and security at each facility.
 - b. Individuals may request consideration for participation in the Family Connections Center (FCC) programs by sending a Request Slip to the staff of the FCC.
 - c. FCC parenting programs are available to individuals who are biological and/or legal parents who have not committed a sexual crime against a child under the age of 14. Such crimes include but are not limited to being convicted of a charge relating to child pornography or indecent exposure and lewdness to children or Aggravated Felonious Sexual Assault (AFSA). Some FCC programs are available to all individuals, such as FCC Healthy Relationships and the Child Impact Program (a court order is needed for the Child Impact Program).

- d. Incarcerated parents, who are eligible to participate in FCC and have received treatment recommendation from the Sexual Offender Treatment (SOT) program, must comply with all recommendations from SOT in order to start, or remain eligible, to participate in the Family Connections Center.
- e. Parenting education classes are open to parents and non-parents. Priority enrollment is given to those individuals who are parents of minor children. Participation in all additional family support programming, available only after completing the parenting education class, is restricted to individuals who are parents of minor children and are behaving positively in the facility.
- f. Individuals may be refused participation in some or all of the FCC programming elements due to the nature of their crime or institutional behavior. Final determination or eligibility for participation will be rendered by the Administrator of the Family Connections Center. Individuals can appeal denial per the NHDOC PPD 1.16 Complaints and Grievances by Persons Under DOC Supervision.
- g. Individuals may be removed from FCC programming due to disciplinary actions, failure to meet program requirements and any documented behavior deemed inappropriate by the Administrator of the Family Connections Center. Individuals can appeal removal per the NHDOC PPD 1.16 Complaints and Grievances by Persons Under DOC Supervision.
- h. Participation at the FCC is voluntary for individuals and will not impact the rate at which the individual moves through the corrections classification system.
- i. All FCC participants must maintain positive, respectful behavior in their living units, NH DOC programs, in the visiting room, on telephone calls and through their mail correspondence in order to remain eligible to participate at the FCC.
- j. Legal proof of parentage may be required for parenting education classes and will be required for all subsequent programming.
- k. FCC participants must inform FCC in advance if there is a no contact/protective order against their child(ren) or their child(ren)'s caregivers.
- l. Individuals are eligible to participate in FCC parenting programming if they are a biological parent, a legal stepparent, legal adoptive parent or expecting the birth of their child.
- m. Parents whose children turn 18 and have been actively involved in the FCC, for more than one year, may continue to participate in FCC and receive limited programs as determined by the team of FCC staff until the age of 21 and/or until the completion of college.
- n. Rules for FCC participants must be followed to continue in the FCC programming as outlined on the Family Connections Center Parenting Program Rules (Attachment A).

(2) Staffing

- a. FCC program staff is defined as any staff/intern/volunteer working at the FCC, whether they are volunteers or paid through various partnerships that the FCC enters into, including, but not limited to existing partnerships with the University of New Hampshire and Child and Family Services.
- b. Program staff will be trained in family relationships, parenting education and/or child development with additional training in monitoring parent and child visits/interaction.
- c. All program staff will receive direct supervision from a staff member previously approved to supervise individuals until new program staff completes the NH DOC Corrections Academy and/or NH DOC Volunteer training.

(3) Programming Elements. Upon completion of FCC classes and any other prerequisites (individuals are eligible for the following services, if appropriate and where available. The flow of programming and an order is shown in Attachment B:

- a. Weekly parenting support groups;
- b. Recording of audiobooks to send home to their child(ren);
- c. Monthly newsletters identifying community resources and FCC events.
- d. Seminars and classes offered by FCC and community agencies focusing on, or relating to, family relations and parenting;

- e. Semi private visits, Children of Incarcerated Parents summer camp or video/tele visiting between the FCC participant and their child(ren) is to be held at the FCC—these visits are in addition to any other regular prison authorized visits, depending upon funding;
 - f. Outreach to agencies/institutions working with the FCC participant's family members and child(ren) to help facilitate a healthy relationship between the FCC participant and their child;
 - g. Access to the FCC's family library;
 - h. General support related to family and parenting issues; and
 - i. Assistance with establishing other community supports for the child(ren's) caregiver and for the FCC participant in preparation for her/his release.
- (4) Video/Tele Visits. The following apply to Virtual Video/Tele Visits (Internet visits) between the FCC Participant and their child(ren):
- a. The FCC Participant is responsible for complying with all responsibilities that are outlined in the FCC Participant's application for video visits. If they do not comply, visits may not start and/or may be discontinued once they start;
 - b. All visits will be documented in a FCC Participant's FCC folder and on CORIS. The assessment will be printed and put in the FCC folder. FCC Participants and their child(ren) (through their legal guardian) must provide consent to any assessments that will be evaluated by a non-DOC researcher;
 - c. FCC will work with the FCC Participant and their child's caregivers to set up mutually acceptable visiting times;
 - d. Biological and adopted children ages seventeen years or younger are permitted to visit, legal proof of parentage is required. (Exceptions are noted in A.12) Legal step-parents can visit with the child(ren) after both the biological parent and the legal step-parent fill out a form, which FCC staff will review to determine eligibility;
 - e. These visits are to include only the FCC participants and their child(ren). Exceptions need to be approved by the Administrator of FCC;
 - f. If child(ren) is (are) under the care of or being investigated by the NH Division of Children, Youth and Family (DCYF), or other state's similar agency, that agency will be contacted for approval of visits;
 - g. A child's legal guardian or representative must agree to allow the child to visit his or her parent through FCC Video/Tele Visits;
 - h. All contact information regarding the visiting child(ren) and their caregivers will be maintained in the FCC Participant's file folder as well as the DOC database;
 - i. Appropriate dress, subject matter and language must be exhibited during these visits. If at any time anything appears inappropriate, FCC staff may end the visit and/or report behaviors to local law enforcement or DCYF (or similar agency); and
 - j. The New Hampshire Department of Corrections visiting standards are outlined in State Administrative Rules Part Cor 305 – Access of Visitors to facilities of the Department of Corrections and will be followed in tandem with the above steps for Video/Tele Visits.
- (5) Semi-Private Program Visits. The following apply to Program Visits between the FCC Participant and their child(ren) in FCC:
- a. The FCC Participant is responsible for complying with all responsibilities outlined in the FCC Participant's application for program visits. If they do not comply, the visits may not start or may be discontinued once they start.
 - b. All visits will be documented in a Participant's FCC folder. FCC Participant and their child(ren) (through their legal guardian) must provide consent to any assessments that will be evaluated by a non-DOC researcher.
 - c. FCC will work with FCC Participant and their family member(s) or caregivers to set up mutually acceptable visiting times.
 - d. Biological and adopted children ages seventeen years or younger are permitted to visit; with a notarized letter from the biological parent, a legal step parent can visit with the children.

- e. These visits are to include only the FCC Participant and their child(ren).
 - f. If child(ren) are under the care of Division of Children, Youth and Family (DCYF), that agency will be contacted for approval of visits; only NHDOC approved DCYF Parent Aids will be authorized to accompany the child(ren).
 - g. A child's legal guardian or representative must agree to program visitation at the FCC.
 - h. If the legal representative wishes to authorize another adult to transport the child(ren), they need to list the transporter's name and pertinent information on a notarized consent form.
 - i. Transporters will accompany the visiting child into the facility. The transporter must leave the facility unless authorized to stay by the Administrator of the Family Connections Center.
 - j. If funding allows, FCC will provide a variety of healthy snacks and juices for the visiting child. Prior staff approval is required for store-sealed snacks, fast food meals or store-sealed drinks to be brought into the FCC. Store-sealed baby food and formula with a clear plastic baby bottle may be brought in. All foods are for the child(ren)'s consumption unless the FCC Participant's classification allows her/him to accept such food also.
 - k. If a FCC Participant is eligible for program visits and has court ordered visits and if scheduling and program rules permit, they may take place in the FCC.
 - l. All contact information regarding the visiting child(ren) and their caregivers will be maintained in the FCC Participant file folder as well as the DOC database.
 - m. The New Hampshire Department of Corrections' visiting standards are outlined in State Administrative Rules Part Cor 305 – Access of Visitors to facilities of the Department of Corrections will be utilized as guidance for families involved in program visits.
- (6) Any modifications to this policy must be approved by the NH DOC Commissioner after review of the participant's circumstances, FCC programming involvement and recommendation by the FCC Administrator and the Division of Community Corrections Division Director/designee.

REFERENCES:

Standards for the Administration of Correctional Agencies
Second Edition Standards

Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions
Fourth Edition Standards

Standards for Adult Community Residential Services
Fourth Edition Standards

Standards for Adult Probation and Parole Field Services
Third Edition Standards

Other

Bylaws of Family Support - NH Definition of Family Resource Centers - Section 3

Standards for Family Support Centers – Family Support American

Principles of Family Support Practice # 1-9

Children of Incarcerated Parents, A Bill of Rights

San Francisco Partnership for Incarcerated Parents, 2003 (www.sfcipp.org)

http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/state_agencies/cor100-400.html

PART COR 305 ACCESS OF VISITORS TO FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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