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DONAL CAMPBELL  
COMMISSIONER

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ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION  
NUMBER 609

OPR: TREATMENT

## **REFERRAL TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

### **I. GENERAL**

This Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) Administrative Regulation (AR) establishes responsibilities, policies, and procedures to provide the institutional staff with the information they need to refer an inmate for mental health assistance.

### **II. POLICY**

All inmates will receive timely access to mental health services. Inmates will be told about the mental health services available and how to access them. All referrals and request for services will be responded to in a timely fashion, whether they are from staff or inmates.

### **III. DEFINITION(S) AND ACRONYM(S)**

Refer to AR 602, Mental Health Definitions and Acronyms for the following term(s) used in this regulation:

Serious Mental Illness (SMI)

### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. All ADOC Staff and Contract Staff are responsible for observing and reporting inmate mental health problems by completing ADOC Form MH-008, Referral to Mental Health, and delivering it to the mental health staff.
- B. In emergency situations, when mental health staff are not on site, the nursing staff will contact the on-call Psychiatrist for consultation and document the consultation along with the recommended intervention in the mental health progress notes of the inmate's medical record.

## V. PROCEDURES

### A. Inmate Self-Referral

1. Pursuant to AR 611, inmates will be informed about available mental health services and how to access them during the inmate's orientation to the institution.
2. Medical staff will review the request forms and submit those relating to mental health services to the institution's Supervising Psychologist.
3. The institution's Supervising Psychologist or designee will determine who on the mental health staff will provide the follow-up services. ADOC Form MH-009, Mental Health Services Inmate Self-Referral Log, will list each request for services and the disposition of the request.
  - a. Medication issues will be referred to the Mental Health Nurses.
  - b. Non-medication issues will be referred to Mental Health Treatment Coordinators.
4. ADOC Psychologists/Psychological Associates will provide follow-up services for inmates who do not have a Treatment Coordinator.
5. Urgent or potentially urgent need will receive immediate attention and less urgent needs will be addressed within five working days.
  - a. The mental health service provider will file a copy of ADOC Form MH-8, along with a description of the intervention provided in the mental health section of the inmate's medical record.
  - b. The mental health staff will also document the date and the service provided on ADOC Form MH-009.
  - c. The institution's Supervising Psychologist or designee will review the logs on a monthly basis to see if services are being provided within five working days.

### B. Referrals from Institutional Staff

1. Institutional Staff will complete an ADOC Form MH-008 and forward it to mental health staff to initiate a routine request for assistance.
2. In emergency situations, contact the mental health staff by phone for a verbal referral. The emergency phone caller should give the inmate's name, AIS number, location, and a description of the inmate's behavior or

concerns. Verbal referrals and interventions will be documented on ADOC Form MH-040, Progress Notes, of the inmate's medical record.

3. When emergency situations occur and mental health staff is **not** available, the nursing staff will contact the on-call psychiatrist for consultation. The nursing staff will document the consultation and recommendations on the progress notes of the inmate's medical record.
4. The mental health staff member providing services will:
  - a. Complete the bottom section of the ADOC Form MH-008
  - b. Provide the referring staff member with a copy of ADOC Form MH-008 or a verbal report.

C. Referrals for a psychiatric evaluation

1. Referrals for a psychiatric evaluation will be completed when:
  - a. Medical or mental health staff refers an inmate admitted to the institution based on current psychiatric distress or with a history of psychiatric difficulties and/or treatment.
  - b. Mental health staff refers an inmate after screening a request for assistance from other institutional staff or after screening an inmate's self-referral.
2. Medical staff referrals to a Psychiatrist or Nurse Practitioner will be completed on ADOC Form MH-008, checking the "referral for Psychiatrist" box.
3. Mental health staff referrals to a Psychiatrist or Nurse Practitioner will include documentation of screening of the inmate self-referral or institutional staff referral.
4. Psychiatric assessments will be documented by completion of ADOC Form MH-018, Psychiatric Evaluation Form.

**VI. DISPOSITION**

See AR 601, Mental Health Forms and Disposition.

**VII. FORMS**

Refer to AR 601, Forms and Disposition for the following:

- A. ADOC Form MH-009, Inmate Self-Referral Log
- B. ADOC Form MH-008, Referral to Mental Health

- C. ADOC Form MH-018, Psychiatric Evaluation
- D. ADOC Form MH-040, Progress Notes

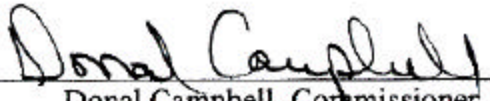
**VIII. SUPERCEDES**

This regulation supercedes AR 449 dated September 25, 2001.

**IX. PERFORMANCE**

This AR is published under the authority of:

- A. Bradley Agreement of August 8, 2000.
- B. National Commission on Correctional Health Care: Standards for Health Services in Prisons, 2003. (P-E-07, P-E-08)
- C. Code of Alabama 1975, Section 22-50-11

  
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Donal Campbell, Commissioner