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ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION **OPR: MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SERVICES**
NUMBER **406**

INMATE GRIEVANCE POLICY

I. GENERAL

This Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) Administrative Regulation (AR) establishes an inmate grievance system to promote institutional safety by enhancing inmate and staff communication and interactions by encouraging inmates to report incidents and promoting trust and accountability of staff.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the ADOC to encourage the efficient, timely, and effective reporting and lowest-level administrative resolution of inmate grievances in facilities through clear and equitable administrative procedures.

III. DEFINITION(S) AND ACRONYM(S)

- A. **Abandonment**: Failure by an inmate to comply with required timelines, resulting in the grievance matter being considered closed.
- B. **Abuse of grievance system**: A demonstrated pattern of filing grievances in a manner other than in good faith, such as filing clearly frivolous, repetitive, or knowingly false documents or claims.
- C. **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**: A civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life.
- D. **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator**: A facility employee designated to ensure the ADA guidelines are followed.
- E. **Appeal**: A written rejection by the inmate of a decision on his/her grievance matter and movement of the matter to the next stage of decision-making.

- F. **Days:** Any references to “days” shall mean business days.
- G. **Departmental Grievance Coordinator (DGC):** The employee appointed by the Commissioner or Designee who shall be responsible for the review, investigation, maintenance, and documentation of inmate grievance appeals across the ADOC.
- H. **Emergency Grievance:** A grievance concerning matters which may necessitate a response outside regular policy time limits, including, but not limited to, issues alleging a substantial risk of imminent sexual or physical abuse.
- I. **Exhaustion Letter:** A formal letter to an inmate from the DGC certifying that an inmate has exhausted all available administrative remedies.
- J. **Gender-Responsive:** Approaches guided by research that are relational, strengths-based, trauma-informed, culturally competent, and holistic, which account for the different characteristics and life experiences of women and men and respond to their unique needs, strengths, and challenges.
- K. **Grievance:** A complaint from an inmate submitted in writing or through approved electronic means (Personal Education Devices (PEDs), Kiosk, etc.) concerning the substance or application of a policy or practice, any act or omission attributable to staff, vendors, volunteers, or other inmates negatively affecting the grievant and any condition or incident within the institution that negatively affects the grievant.
- L. **Grievant:** An inmate who submits a problem for resolution through the grievance procedure process.
- M. **Inmate:** An individual in the care, custody, and control of the ADOC housed in an ADOC facility.
- N. **Institutional Grievance Clerk (IGC):** The employee(s) appointed by the Warden/Designee to handle the clerical processing of inmate grievances, maintaining the grievance log, tracking due dates, and assisting the Institutional Grievance Officer with the institutional grievance program.
- O. **Institutional Grievance Officer (IGO):** The employee appointed by the Warden/Designee to review, investigate, and propose resolutions to grievances.
- P. **Institutional Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Compliance Manager (IPCM):** The designated person at a facility who is provided with the time, training, and authority to coordinate the facility’s efforts to comply with PREA Standards.