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ADMINISTRATION REGULATION
NUMBER 462

OPR: CHAPLAIN SERVICES

RELIGIOUS PROGRAM SERVICES

I. GENERAL

This Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) Administrative Regulation (AR) establishes the responsibilities, policies, and procedures for recognized religious beliefs and practices of committed offenders.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the ADOC to permit offenders the right to worship within a declared faith and identify approved practices within the scope of compelling government interests.

III. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

- A. **Community Sponsor**: An organization or individual(s) approved by the Chaplain and the Warden to provide ministry items for a religious program and/or food for an approved Sacred Day. Approved free-world sponsors shall not be friends or family members of inmates incarcerated at the institution, unless approved specifically by the institutional warden.
- B. **Declared Religious Practitioner**: An inmate who has formally submitted a declaration of religious preference.
- C. **Earth-Based Religion**: Religions that commonly practice sacred rites outside. See section V. Procedures for religions designated earth based. ADOC facilities shall have the following earth-based worship areas:
 - 1. **Native American Ceremonial Grounds**: An area restricted to Native American practitioners and their guests.

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2. **Outdoor Worship Area**: An area designated for earth-based religious practices.
- D. **Feast**: A periodic religious observance. The word feast in the title of the celebration does not mean it requires food.
- E. **Inmate Facilitators for Religious Service**: An individual who functions as a lay leader and is approved by the Chaplain. This individual is respected among his/her inmate practitioners of the same religion.
- F. **Observances**: Frequent or periodic religious activities.
- G. **Religious Item**: Paraphernalia for religious groups and personal practice. All items must be procured from an approved vendor, institutional canteen, or an approved ministry. These items may be congregational or personal.
- H. **Religious Meals**: ADOC provides a pork free menu for those inmates whose religious preference stipulates no pork.
- I. **Religious Practice**: The act of formal religious participation.
- J. **Religious Sacred Day(s)**: An approved religious celebration recognized as significant to a specific religion. These observances may be afforded time and space outside the normal schedule. If no date is listed, the date will vary. Consult with the Chaplain.
- K. **Sacred Day Foods**: Sacred Day Foods are identified as foods which have religious significance in one of two categories:
 1. **Feast Food**: An allowance of food items consumed as a meal in observance of a Sacred Day.
 2. **Ritual Food**: Specific food items defined by the religion used in a religious rite.

IV. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The Deputy Commissioner of Governmental Relations and Inmate Rehabilitation is responsible for ensuring that inmates have the opportunity to practice their religious faith as long as the expression does not pose a threat to security, safety, or orderly function of the institution.
- B. The Pastoral Programs Supervisor is responsible for:
 1. Serving as the liaison with the faith/character-based communities.
 2. Validating vendors for religious items.

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3. Meeting with Chaplains as needed to maintain consistency of Religious Program Services.
- C. The Warden is responsible for:
1. Developing their institutional Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), as necessary, for the implementation of AR 462, *Religious Program Services*.
 2. Designating an area for religious services to be conducted.
 3. Approving Religious Volunteers/free-world sponsors for entry into their institution.
- D. The Chaplain is responsible for:
1. Acting as an advocate for the dignity of all religious practices of inmates according to the approved practices in AR 462, *Religious Program Services*.
 2. Making a good faith effort to have adequate volunteer staff available to implement religious programs and assisting in the selection of interested volunteers who desire to provide religious programs for inmates.
 3. Providing the monthly activities/calendars of the religious programs to the Warden, employees, and inmates, based on participation, time, and space.
 4. Developing and maintaining a close relationship with community religious resources i.e., places of worship, faith leaders and transitional ministries, etc.
 5. Ensuring that new inmates are provided with information on religious programs available at the institution.
 6. Visiting inmates in Death Row, Restrictive Housing units, and Special Management areas, if applicable, to ensure his/her religious needs are reasonably met.
 7. Identifying authorized vendors for inmates to purchase religious items and literature.
 8. Reviewing and approving inmate religious material coming through the mail in accordance with AR 448, *Inmate Mail*.
- E. ADOC employees are responsible for following the guidelines established by this administrative regulation.
- F. The inmate is responsible for knowing and following the procedures established by this administrative regulation.