American Correctional Association

PUBLIC CORRECTIONAL POLICY ON INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1985-4

Introduction:
Timely and accurate information is a basic requirement for effective management of organizations. Such information forms a basis for sound decision-making and allows for accountability in operations and program results.

Policy Statement:
For correctional staff to function effectively, they must have accurate and timely information. The design of correctional information systems must reflect combined efforts of both corrections professionals and information system specialists. To meet the diverse needs of a correctional agency, information systems should be designed to support the management processes of the agency as their primary function and service delivery functions of the agency by providing data relevant to their efficiency and outcome. They should provide sufficient flexibility to support relevant research and evaluation.

To promote development of effective information systems, correctional agencies should:
A. Clearly define the desired scope of the system, consistent with a realistic assessment of anticipated resources and technologies;
B. Involve and train correctional managers in all stages of system development and operation to ensure such managers' needs are met;
C. Prepare detailed and carefully monitored development plans to ensure systems are designed and implemented in a timely, secure and cost-effective manner;
D. Require that the system include evaluation procedures, including assessments of information needs of the users at all levels, to ensure the quality of system input and output;
E. Cooperate with correctional, law enforcement, educational, and other public agencies to provide for the mutual sharing of information, consistent with legitimate concerns for privacy, confidentiality, and system security;
F. Ensure appropriate information needs of the public are met, consistent with legal requirements; and
G. Advocate the provision of resources to implement and update advanced information system technologies.
This Public Correctional Policy was unanimously ratified by the American Correctional Association Delegate Assembly at the Winter Conference in Orlando, Fla., Jan. 20, 1985. It was last reviewed and affirmed at the 145th Congress of Correction in Indianapolis, IN on August 19, 2015.