American Correctional Association

PUBLIC CORRECTIONAL POLICY ON OFFENDER ON OFFENDER SEXUAL ABUSE

2005-1

Policy Statement:

Sexual abuse against individuals confined in correctional facilities or on community supervision is wrong, illegal and should not be tolerated. Victims of sexual abuse may suffer severe physical and psychological effects. Corrections professionals have a responsibility to those they serve to provide a safe environment within which offenders are supervised.

To promote a safer and healthier environment for offenders and the community, correctional agencies should:

A. Establish, publicize and enforce a zero-tolerance policy regarding all forms of sexual abuse;

B. Develop classification and supervision policies and procedures that minimize the potential for sexual abuse to occur and develop policies that serve to protect the victim and prevent repeat occurrences;

C. Establish investigative policies and procedures that include the processes for reporting and thoroughly investigating every allegation involving sexual abuse, including appropriate measures to protect the complainant during an investigation;

D. Establish mental health and medical protocols for treating the victim, including initial screening, reporting, and appropriate follow-up treatment. Ensure victims are afforded assistance services and receive ongoing counseling and support;

E. Foster an environment in which the reporting of alleged sexual abuse is encouraged and reports may be made without fear of reprisal;
F. Establish relationships and protocols with outside law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies to pursue the prosecution of perpetrators of sexual abuse when there is a suspected violation of law;

G. Maintain adequate and appropriate levels of staff to protect inmates against sexual abuse;

H. Develop effective correctional strategies that provide constructive activities, and increase staff and offender safety and security;

I. Promote facility design that enables effective supervision within facilities;

J. Provide orientation and ongoing in-service training to staff, volunteers and contractors, emphasizing the zero-tolerance policy, explaining state law, case law, administrative policies on the issue, and providing the skills needed to effectively manage offenders;

K. Provide information to offenders, inmates and detainees on how to avoid sexual abuse; and

L. Establish a systematic process for the collection of data that document the number of sexual assault allegations, the nature of each allegation and the resolution of the allegation.

This Public Correctional Policy was unanimously ratified by the American Correctional Association Delegate Assembly at the Winter Conference in Phoenix, AZ on January 12, 2005. It was last reviewed and reaffirmed at the 2020 Winter Conference in San Diego, CA on January 11, 2020.