Introduction:

Correctional agencies are responsible for housing offenders in safe and secure facilities. It is the responsibility of staff at those facilities to maintain public safety as well as the safety of the staff and offenders. To achieve this goal, it may be necessary for correctional staff to place certain offenders who might be a threat to others or a danger to themselves into a restrictive housing unit.

Policy Statement:

Correctional facilities sometimes find it necessary to separate offenders and to restrict the contact of offenders with others for reasons of safety and security. To ensure restrictive housing designations are made appropriately and justifiably and offenders placed into such categories are treated justly, humanely and in a constitutionally correct manner, correctional agencies should establish and maintain policies and procedures that:

A. Are made only when no alternative disposition would be adequate to control the offender’s behavior or sufficient to alter the findings of objective classification review factors;

B. Give due consideration to the special needs of offenders;

C. Are utilized only in circumstances where no other available form of housing will accomplish the required levels of safety and stability;

D. Forbid solitary confinement that results in isolation;

E. Provide transitional programming for restrictive housing offenders to prepare them for transfer to less restrictive alternative housing in general population when appropriate;

F. Provide programs that are designed to maximize the potential for successful adjustment to eventual reintegration into the community at large;

G. Require periodic classification reviews and that such reviews may result in status reduction, confirmation of current status or recommendation of additional access to positive program incentives within the restrictive housing environment;
H. Provide offenders in restrictive housing with appropriate and timely medical and mental health care;

I. Provide visitation opportunities, exercise opportunities and the ability to maintain proper levels of personal hygiene;

J. Provide to staff assigned to restrictive housing the specialized training that reflects the challenges associated with this type of assignment;

K. Prohibit agencies from confining offenders under the age of 18 in extended restrictive housing;

L. Prohibit agencies from placing offenders in restrictive housing on the basis of gender identity alone;

M. Prohibit agencies from placing offenders with serious mental illness in extended restrictive housing; and

N. Prohibit agencies from confining offenders known to be pregnant in extended restrictive housing.

This policy was unanimously ratified by the American Correctional Association Delegate Assembly at the 146th Congress of Correction in Boston, MA on August 9, 2016.