American Correctional Association

PUBLIC CORRECTIONAL POLICY ON SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

1992-1

Introduction:

Substance use disorder, and the criminal activity and human suffering associated with it, is a major social and public health problem. The majority of offenders have documented substance use disorders. Therefore, the impact has reached critical dimensions within correctional programs and facilities.

Policy Statement:

A comprehensive response to the substance use disorder crisis must include coordinated public and private sector strategies, along with a commitment to provide effective substance use disorder treatment, education and awareness to those who need such services, regardless of their legal status or criminal involvement. To support a comprehensive response, correctional agencies shall:

A. Provide education and information to offenders that foster their awareness of the chemical effects on the brain and on the need for treatment;

B. Assess offenders’ need for substance use disorder services, and provide a continuum of nonresidential and residential treatment services that promote a lifestyle of recovery;

C. Maintain appropriately trained staff for the delivery of treatment, programs and services;

D. Maintain an organizational climate that proactively addresses staff substance use disorders;

E. Advocate for and cooperate with interagency and community efforts to prevent substance use disorders and interdict the supply of illicit substances;

F. Maintain professionally appropriate record-keeping of the treatment, services and programs provided;

G. Evaluate the quality and effectiveness of treatment, services and programs provided; and

H. Provide leadership and advocacy for legislative and public support to obtain the resources needed to provide effective substance use disorder services.
This Public Correctional Policy was ratified by the American Correctional Association Delegate Assembly at the Winter Conference in 1992. It was last reviewed and reaffirmed at the 147th Congress of Correction in St. Louis, Missouri on August 22, 2017.