

Name Public Correctional Policy on Term “Correctional Officer”

Type Policy

Date Jan. 20, 1999; Jan. 14, 2004

Description Introduction:

Correctional personnel are skilled professionals and should be treated as such. The term “guard” evokes a stereotypical and negative image that does not recognize their professionalism. The duties of corrections personnel, whose primary responsibility is custody and control, also include direct or indirect support of habilitative or rehabilitative programs that require advanced or specialized training.

Policy Statement:

The American Correctional Association recognizes the use of the term “correctional officer” in all of its publications and communications to describe custodial/security personnel. The Association is committed to promoting the use of the term “correctional officer” and discouraging the use of the word “guard.”

Therefore, correctional agencies should:

- A. Ensure that all agency policies, procedures and practices use the term “correctional officer” when referring to custodial/security personnel;
- B. Promote employee conduct that is consistent with professional standards and practices; and
- C. Educate the media in the use of the term “correctional officer” when referring to custodial/security personnel.

This Public Correctional Policy was ratified by the American Correctional Association Delegate Assembly at the Winter Conference in Nashville, Tenn., Jan. 20, 1999. It was reviewed and amended at the Winter Conference in New Orleans, Jan. 14, 2004.