Introduction:

Of utmost concern to the public and those working both in the criminal and juvenile justice systems is violence in our society.

Policy Statement:

Correctional agencies are in a unique position to assume a proactive role in violence reduction and prevention. In particular, corrections professionals can help reduce violence through their work directly with offenders and indirectly through their support of violence prevention policies. Specifically, correctional agencies should:

A. Train staff to recognize those risk factors that contribute to violent behavior and to utilize effective intervention strategies to reduce violence;

B. Design and implement effective classification and treatment programs utilizing a wide range of modalities so that a continuum of interventions is available to all offenders in need;

C. Provide offenders and their families with counseling, parenting and other life skills training that emphasize the need to break the “cycle of violence” whereby a childhood history of physical and psychological abuse predisposes the victim to become a perpetrator of violence in later years;

D. Integrate conflict resolution methods into institutional and community treatment programs so that offenders and their families learn and demonstrate these skills as alternatives to violent behavior;

E. Establish restorative justice programs that allow victims an increased role in the justice process and which require offenders to restore the victim and the community;

F. Provide effective community supervision services that promote community protection, aid in the development of offender skills and competency, and hold the violent offender accountable;

G. Initiate at all stages within the juvenile justice system a comprehensive approach toward the prevention, treatment and remediation of violent behavior among youths;
H. Support a long-term crime reduction strategy that draws on interdisciplinary research and addresses the risk factors contributing to violent criminal behavior in a comprehensive and integrated manner, including providing employment opportunities, strengthening families, building strong neighborhoods, increasing community involvement and enhancing the quality of education and other social institutions;

I. Build partnerships that improve communication and collaboration and share technologies, information and intelligence among the key stakeholders in the criminal and juvenile justice systems, elected officials and the community to combat violence;

J. Support legislation and measures to reduce deaths, injuries and suicides from firearms; and

K. Support mass media campaigns against violence and efforts to encourage the media and entertainment industries to adopt practices that de glamorize violence.

This Public Correctional Policy was ratified by the American Correctional Association Delegate Assembly at the Congress of Correction in 1996. It was last reviewed and reaffirmed at the 143rd Congress of Correction in Washington, DC, August 13, 2013.