VOLUNTEER SERVICES PROGRAM
Minnesota Sex Offender Program

Issue Date: 7/2/19    Effective Date: 8/6/19    Policy Number: 410-5043

POLICY: The Minnesota Sex Offender Program (MSOP) provides all clients with the opportunity to participate in activities utilizing community volunteers, within budgetary and security constraints.

AUTHORITY: Minn. Stat. § 246.014, subd. (d)

APPLICABILITY: MSOP, program-wide

PURPOSE: To maintain procedures governing the volunteer services program.

DEFINITIONS:
Immediate family – refer to MSOP Division Policy 420-5100, “Visiting” definition of “visitor.”

Spiritual support – refer to MSOP Division Policy 420-5300, “Spiritual Practices.”

Valid identification (ID) – refer to MSOP Division Policy 410-5032, “Event Letters.”

Volunteer – a screened and trained person authorized to provide services within the facility for a specific purpose.

Volunteer services coordinator/designee – a staff member responsible for coordinating the facility’s Volunteer Services Program.

PROCEDURES:
A. The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee recruits volunteers from all cultural and socioeconomic groups of the community, based on facility needs and volunteer qualifications.

B. The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee:
   1. specifies the lines of authority, responsibility and accountability for community volunteer programming;
   2. ensures and documents community volunteers are informed and trained on facility policies, including security procedures;
   3. ensures and documents completed required background studies on all community volunteers entering the facility as outlined in DHS Administrative Policy, “Policy on Background Checks and Background Studies;”
   4. maintains a file for each community volunteer including:
      a) Volunteer Application (410-5043a);
      b) background study clearance(s); and
      c) Volunteer Programming Annual Review (410-5043b).
C. Application and Approval

1. Volunteer applicants must be at least 18 years old.

2. Volunteers may not be related to a client.

3. Volunteer applicants complete a Volunteer Application (410-5043a) and submit it to the facility volunteer services coordinator/designee.
   a) The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee completes a criminal history check on each volunteer applicant before approving the application.
   b) For applicants with a criminal history, the facility volunteer services coordinator/designee refers the applicant to the facility director, who consults with the facility clinical director for approval.

4. Once the application is approved, the prospective volunteer submits his/her background study information in accordance with DHS Administrative Policy, “Policy on Background Checks and Background Studies.”

5. Volunteers may not have direct contact with clients until the facility volunteer services coordinator/designee receives first notice of background study results. (Refer to DHS Administrative Policy, “Policy on Background Checks and Background Studies.”)

6. If a background study has disqualified the volunteer from providing direct services to clients, see DHS Administrative Policy, “Policy on Background Checks and Background Studies.”

7. Volunteers performing in a professional capacity (e.g., chaplain, pastor, or priest) must provide a relevant license or certificate. Volunteers performing services not requiring a license or certificate must provide a letter of organizational affiliation.

8. The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee notifies volunteers of approval or denial of volunteer status.

9. Former employees must have approval from the facility director in consultation with the facility clinical director, before applying to become a volunteer.

10. Applicants requesting to volunteer at more than one MSOP site must indicate this on their application.
    a) Volunteers who request to provide services at more than one MSOP site are reviewed by the facility volunteer services coordinators/designees at those sites.
    b) The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee from the originating site processes the application and requests a criminal history and background study.
    c) The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee from the originating site completes all other procedural requirements outlined in this policy, including first-year volunteer training.
    d) Volunteers complete annual recertification at the originating site, unless approved by the volunteer services coordinator/designee of the originating site.
D. **Volunteer Certification, Training, and Programming Review**

1. Volunteers complete training required by DCT Policy 115-1045, “Non-Employee Training” prior to providing service within MSOP facilities.

2. MSOP certifies volunteers annually. Certification includes a criminal history and background check, check of relevant professional license(s) or certificate(s), and annual training required by DCT Policy 115-1045, “Non-Employee Training.”

3. The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee documents annual reviews of each volunteer program on the Volunteer Programming Annual Review (410-5043b).

4. During their annual certification and programming review process, volunteers are encouraged to submit suggestions for program enhancement.

E. **Volunteer Guidelines**

1. The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee is the designated contact for all volunteers.

2. MSOP does not permit volunteers to be on a client’s visiting list at any MSOP facility.

3. Spiritual support in the event of death of a client’s immediate family member, or serious illness of the client or client’s immediate family member – refer to MSOP Division Policy 420-5300, “Spiritual Practices.”

4. Volunteers having officiant credentials filed with a Minnesota county may perform marriages at MSOP facilities. (See MSOP Division Policy 420-5500, “Client Marriage.”)

5. The number of community volunteers is limited to those required for each activity, as determined by the facility volunteer services coordinator/designee.

6. Volunteers facilitate programming for a single group. The facility director, in consultation with the facility clinical director, must approve a volunteer providing programming for more than one group.

7. Volunteers serve at the facilities for the sole purpose of their programs and are not allowed to use their volunteer roles for any purpose (e.g., to solicit business or donations) not outlined in this policy.

8. Volunteers must not accept gifts, money, articles or special favors from a client, client’s family, or client’s friends.

9. Volunteers must not give any item to a client, client’s family, or client’s friends, including gifts, money, articles, or special favors, unless permitted under MSOP Division Policy 420-5400, “Donations.”

10. Volunteers may not engage in direct communication (e.g., telephone, letter, or e-mail) with clients outside of scheduled programming time, or client’s family/friends.

11. Volunteers must not divulge to clients any home telephone numbers, addresses or personal information about themselves, other volunteers, or staff.
12. Prior to scheduled programming, the facility security director/designee approves all spiritual items utilized for ceremonies or studies. These items are listed on the approved Event Letter (410-5032a) and are inventoried upon entering or leaving the facility.

13. The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee previews all media provided by volunteers for programming for contraband and appropriateness of content.
   a) The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee provides a reasonable number of copies of study material upon request with a minimum of seven days’ advance notice.
   b) Spiritual resource volunteers only provide commercially-produced DVD-R/CD-R per MSOP Division Policy 420-5310, “Use of Controlled Items During Spiritual Ceremonies.”
   c) The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee presents questionable media to the media review team. (See MSOP Division Policy 420-5230, “Media Possession by Clients.”)

14. Except as approved by the facility clinical director, the facility volunteer services coordinator/designee schedules volunteer-supported activities outside of core clinical and psychoeducational group hours.

15. Volunteers who engage in behavior threatening the safety, security, or orderly operation of the facility are subject to permanent removal from the volunteer list, visiting restrictions and possible criminal prosecution as outlined in section F below.

16. Volunteers who are the subject of a criminal investigation, charge, arrest and/or conviction, or incarcerated for any reason, must immediately notify the facility volunteer services coordinator/designee, who immediately notifies the facility director/designee. The volunteer must keep the facility volunteer services coordinator/designee informed of the progress and final disposition of the charge. MSOP suspends the volunteer from providing services during this process and the volunteer must also undergo a new background study (refer to DHS Administrative Policy, “Policy on Background Checks and Background Studies.”)

17. A volunteer who has any known history of personal and/or professional association with any MSOP client immediately notifies the facility volunteer services coordinator/designee. The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee completes a Level 1 Incident Report (Phoenix) (refer to MSOP Division Policy 410-5300, “Incident Reports”).

18. Volunteers review and sign the Volunteer Application (410-5043a), agreeing to abide by facility policies, procedures, and Minnesota data practices statutes, including the use of confidential information.

F. Volunteer Suspension/Termination
1. MSOP may suspend or terminate volunteers for violation of MSOP policies. The facility director/designee (in consultation with the facility clinical director) decides on a case-by-case basis.

2. The facility director of the investigating site emails all facility volunteer services coordinators/designees a notification of the alleged policy violation(s) and whether volunteer privileges are suspended.
3. The facility director determines whether any follow-up investigation is required regarding the alleged policy violation(s). The investigation includes contacting the volunteer to advise him/her of the investigation and to give him/her an opportunity to present information on his/her behalf. This may occur via telephone.

4. When the investigation is completed, the facility director/designee verbally notifies the facility volunteer services coordinator/designee and the volunteer of the result. The facility director/designee also sends the volunteer written notification by certified mail.

5. The facility volunteer services coordinator/designee contacts the Master Control supervisor to remove the volunteer’s Event Letter (410-5032a) from Master Control.

6. The volunteer has five business days from the date of written notification to file a written appeal. The facility director (in consultation with the facility clinical director) reviews and responds in writing to the appeal within 30 days.

REVIEW: Annually

REFERENCES: MSOP Division Policy 410-5032, “Event Letters”
DCT Policy 115-1045, “Non-Employee Training”
MSOP Division Policy 420-5100, “Visiting”
DHS Administrative Policy, “Policy on Background Checks and Background Studies”
MSOP Division Policy 410-5300, “Incident Reports”
MSOP Division Policy 420-5230, “Media Possession by Clients”
MSOP Division Policy 420-5400, “Donations”
MSOP Division Policy 420-5500, “Client Marriage”
MSOP Division Policy 420-5400, “Donations”
MSOP Division Policy 420-5300, “Spiritual Practices”
MSOP Division Policy 420-5310, “Use of Controlled Items During Spiritual Ceremonies”

ATTACHMENTS: Volunteer Application (410-5043a)
Volunteer Programming Annual Review (410-5043b)
Event Letter (410-5032a)

All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

/s/
Nancy A. Johnston, Executive Director
Minnesota Sex Offender Program