



LAFAYETTE PARISH SHERIFF'S OFFICE CORRECTIONS DIVISION POLICY AND PROCEDURES	Section/Policy: W-0100
Subject: WORK RELEASE PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT, PURPOSE, AND OBJECTIVES	Number of Pages: 4
References: Louisiana Revised Statute: 15:711 – Work Release Program ; 15:1111 – Work Release Program ; 15:1135 – Work Release Program DOC: No. B02-001 OSHA: Act of 1970	
Approved by: Work Release Manager: Director of Corrections:	Date:

W-0100

POLICY:

The Corrections Division shall establish and operate a Work Release Program that complies with federal and Louisiana law and Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections guidelines.

W-0101

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of the Work Release Program is to provide a source of revenue that is beneficial to the Sheriff's Office, to provide an opportunity for offenders to re-establish dignity and self-esteem, and to facilitate the transition back into society as a responsible adult.

Whenever possible, the Corrections Division shall encourage offenders to gain work experience relevant to the current job market and/or participate in the Work Release Program. This achieves three (3) main objectives:

1. Reduces recidivism by teaching offenders and/or residents job skills and work habits and provides gradual reintegration back into the community.
2. Reduces offender stress levels and idleness that can result in acts of aggression and/or violence against staff and/or offenders.

3. Allows an offender to have funds available for their conversion back into society upon their release from custody.

W-0102 **DEFINITIONS:**

A. Work Release Program:

A criminal justice diversion program, approved by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, that provides gainful employment in the community to eligible offenders.

W-0103 **RULES:**

- A. Offender's working conditions shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local safety laws and regulations. ([Act of 1970](#))
- B. Offenders approved to participate in the Work Release Program shall be classified as minimum custody and, once processed by program staff, shall be housed at the Work Release Center.
- C. The Corrections Division shall screen all offenders that may be eligible for work release. Each offender's disciplinary history, criminal history, and other institutional adjustment factors shall be reviewed prior to submitting a recommendation to the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, for state offenders, or the Work Release Manager, for parish offenders.
- D. The Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections shall confirm offender eligibility for every state offender and the Work Release Manager shall confirm offender eligibility for every parish offender.
- E. Once state offenders have been screened by the STOP Unit and determined to be eligible and recommended by the Work Release Program, each offender's name shall be forwarded to the Secretary of Department of Public Safety and Corrections for final approval.
- F. Offenders assigned to the Work Release Program shall not be employed in a position which will necessitate their departure from the State, inclusive of protective waters in the Gulf of Mexico.
- G. Selection criteria for the Work Release Program shall follow Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections established guidelines.
- H. The Work Release Program shall enter into agreements with local employers in compliance with applicable standards and state statutes.

- I. Wages of offenders participating in the Work Release Program shall not be less than the customary wages for an employee performing similar services.
- J. Program staff shall make frequent and random work-site checks on offenders assigned to the Work Release Program.
- K. Any major violation of the rules of conduct and/or obligations may result in an offender's immediate termination from the Work Release Program and return to secure custody.
- L. Shakedowns, drug and alcohol screenings:
 - 1. Offenders participating in the Work Release Program shall be searched and alcohol screened each time they return from a job site.
 - 2. Offenders participating in the Work Release Program shall have their property and living area searched in accordance with an established schedule.
 - 3. Random drug screening shall be performed on all offenders participating in the Work Release Program. In addition, reasonable suspicion and confidential information regarding substance abuse shall be grounds for drug screening.
- M. Accounting records:
 - 1. A separate file shall be established for each offender participating in the Work Release Program. All wages shall be received by and deposited into a public banking institution by Sheriff's Office finance personnel.
 - 2. A separate checking account shall be established for the Work Release Program and only funds earned by program participants shall be placed into this account.
 - 3. Individual records shall be maintained on each offender participating in the Work Release Program. The Sheriff, or designee, shall audit all records in accordance with an established schedule.
 - 4. Checks written from the work release trust account shall require the signature of the Sheriff's Office Chief Finance Officer or the Sheriff.
 - 5. Earned wages shall be disbursed in accordance with Louisiana statute. A Payment and Disbursement of Earnings Agreement shall be acknowledged in writing by each offender upon placement into the Work Release Program.

N. Offender employment:

1. Offenders shall not work in excess of twelve (12) hours in a twenty-four (24) hour period, unless the Work Release Manager, or designee, grants prior approval.
2. Offender employment shall not be in an establishment where alcohol, firearms, or narcotics are a source of revenue.
3. Wages shall be hourly or salary, no commission sales or tip-dependant employment shall be allowed.
4. Wages shall be received weekly or bi-monthly and mailed directly to the Sheriff's Office Finance Division.
5. Offenders shall not drive any vehicle on a public street or highway.
6. Offenders may not move from one job site to another without notifying program staff.
7. Money for family support shall be a verifiable family member (father, mother, wife or children) and not a girlfriend, etc. Offenders shall send no more than fifty percent (50%) of their personal earnings on a monthly basis.
8. Employers shall not deduct funds from wages for any personal items, equipment, or contributions, other than the normal requirements of law unless prior arrangements are agreed upon with the Work Release Manager, or designee.