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Life Connections Program

/s/
Approved: Blake R. Davis
Assistant Director, Correctional Programs Division

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To establish guidelines to implement the Life Connections Program (LCP), a pilot residential pre-release program in low, medium, and high security institutions. The demonstration sites are the Federal Correctional Institutions at Milan, Michigan, and Petersburg, Virginia; the United States Penitentiaries at Terre Haute, Indiana, and Leavenworth, Kansas; and the Federal Medical Center Carswell, Fort Worth, Texas.

The objectives of the program are to foster personal growth and responsibility, and to right the relationships among the victims, the community, and the inmate, using secular outcome-based objectives. It is anticipated that the program will use the inmate's personal belief system, whether secular or religious, to bring reconciliation and restoration. Participants will be helped to take responsibility for their criminal behavior. Groups in the community at the inmates' release destinations will be asked to volunteer as support organizations for inmate participants upon release.

Through the pilot, the Bureau of Prisons provides opportunities for the development and maturation of the participating inmates' commitment to normative values and responsibilities, believing this will result in overall changed behavior, better institutional adjustment, and reduced recidivism rates.

Program Objectives. The expected results of this program are:

- Through living within the boundaries of their belief systems, whether secular or religious, inmates will demonstrate improved institutional adjustment.
- Working closely with outside community organizations for release preparation and continued sponsorship, the rate of rearrests and recidivism will be reduced.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Warden.** The Warden at each institution ensures that all aspects of this Operations Memorandum are implemented.

b. **Faith-based Program Coordinator, Central Office.** LCP is a Chaplaincy Services program. Responsibility for developing and providing technical expertise rests with the Chaplaincy Services Branch.

The Faith-based Program Coordinator, Chaplaincy Services Branch, Correctional Programs Division, and the respective Regional Chaplaincy Administrators provide program and curriculum development, as well as technical support.

c. **Life Connections Program Chaplain.** Programming and administrative aspects of the institution pilot program are the responsibility of the LCP Chaplain. The LCP Chaplain enters data into the Inmate Skills Development system to identify outcome measures and reports progress in skill areas determined critical to successful return to the community.

The LCP Chaplain helps participants formulate personal goals reflecting the outcome-based objectives. The Associate Warden has oversight responsibilities and supervises the Chaplain.

d. **Unit Staff.** The Unit Manager ensures coordination between the LCP Chaplain and the Unit Team. The LCP Chaplain participates in Classification Team meetings. Both Unit Team members and the LCP Chaplain encourage and monitor program activities during regular team meetings.

e. **Other Departments.** The Central Office Faith-based Program Coordinator trains staff Chaplains and other institution staff in the different elements of the program to integrate program goals with inmate participation in other aspects of the institution.

3. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

a. **Program Selection Criteria**. To participate, inmates:

- Apply for the program voluntarily (BP-A0741).

- Are within 24 to 36 months of projected release date. The length of time remaining on the sentence is not a consideration for high security or female inmates who have at least 30 months remaining before release. Those with shorter sentences have priority.
- Must not have a written deportation order.
- Receive a recommendation from relevant components (Unit Team, Associate Warden, and Chaplaincy Team) (BP-A0742).
- Are approved by the sending institution's Warden (BP-A0742).
- May not be in *FRP refuse* status.
- Are meeting or have met GED obligations.
- Have met ESL obligations.
- Are willing to be designated to the LCP site.
- Participate in a three-session orientation.

b. **Program Structure**

(1) **Program Population**. The number of participants at each pilot site will not exceed 36 inmates. The second cohort of 36 inmates ordinarily begins after 6 months; a third group begins after 12 months. Program duration is 18 months.

Standard Completion Requirements outline successful program participation. The standard checklist is completed by the Chaplain and participant before completion recognition.

(2) **Multi-Track Makeup**. The program is open to inmates seeking a grounding in positive values and responsibility, whether or not they have a religious affiliation. Inmates who volunteer for this program are accommodated in broad tracks sharing common beliefs and principles, whether secular or religious.

Specific groups represented in a cohort will vary, depending on the choices of the inmates. Differences in teachings or disciplines within each broad category will be identified and integrated by the community leaders of the respective groups.

(3) **Schedule for Program Activities.** The curriculum involves five days of regularly scheduled afternoon and evening programming, as well as weekend activities.

Participants have institution work assignments for up to four hours a day during unscheduled program hours.

Evening and weekend programming involves special activities with mentors, multi-track program activities, and track-specific components. Inmates are encouraged to participate in scheduled activities with the general population for religious study and worship services, in accordance with their personal beliefs, education, leisure time activities, work assignments, etc.

c. **Housing.** LCP is a residential program. Ordinarily, all inmates living in the assigned housing

unit will be waiting to participate, engaged in LCP, or have completed the program.

Participants work/study/reflect together in small groups in accord with the objective of their chosen track. The quality of housing for LCP inmates cannot exceed that provided for the general population.

4. **PROGRAM REFERRAL**

Inmates who volunteer for LCP submit a completed application packet to the institution Chaplain and participate in a self-directed three-session orientation program:

- **Session 1:** Overview of LCP.
- **Session 2:** Feedback and exploration of LCP; completion of the Program Participation Request and Agreement Form (BP-A0741).
- **Session 3**: A private interview with an institution Chaplain regarding program eligibility and a review of application materials.

Upon identifying an inmate as eligible, the LCP Chaplain contacts the inmate=s Unit Team. While considering an inmate for referral, policies, and procedures for re-designation and transfer of inmates are followed. The Unit Team submits a referral packet, including:

- LCP Program Participation Request and Agreement form (BP-A0741) and LCP Program Referral form (BP-A0742).
- An up-to-date Progress Report.
- A Request for Transfer/Application of Management Variable form (EMS-A409) with program participation code 324.

The unit staff should email completed, scanned application packets to:

BOP-CPD/CO Life Connections Program

The Faith-based Program Coordinator reviews applications and recommends designation of qualified applicants to a pilot site.

If an applicant is currently housed at a pilot site, a review committee consisting of the LCP Chaplain, Unit Manager, and Associate Warden reviews the application. Upon the Warden=s approval, the inmate may be admitted. A copy of the completed application packet is forwarded to the Faith-based Program Coordinator, Central Office.

5. **CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION**

a. LCP participants choose between the following curriculum tracks that promote positive values and responsibilities:

(1) **Secular Track**

- Opportunities to develop and adopt a code of ethics and morality.
- Creating and establishing decision-making strategies consistent with personal code of conduct.
- Participating in scheduled institution-sponsored value-based programs.
- Opportunities for reflection (whether secular or religious), direction, and counseling.
- Using journals and personal reflection to develop personal growth.

(2) **Spirituality Track**

- Opportunities for spiritual reflection (whether secular or religious), direction, and counseling.
- Opportunities to develop and adopt a code of ethics and morality.
- Creating and establishing decision making strategies consistent with personal code of conduct.
- Participating in institution worship services consistent with boundaries of faith or secular beliefs.
- Using journals and personal reflection to develop spiritual growth.

b. All LCP participants participate in the following curriculum components:

(1) **Education Component**

- Track-specific study material.
- Interfaith or secular curriculum.

(2) **Community Mentoring Component**

- Developing relationships with community-based groups.
- Establishing mentoring guidelines.
- Meeting with participants weekly, with additional meetings determined locally in accordance with program needs.

(3) **Community Service Component**

- Five hundred hours of community service.

(4) **Victim Impact Component**

- Developing the violation of relationships model.
- Clarifying impact of crime on victim(s).
- Providing interaction with Victim Impact Panels.

6. INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

a. **Mentoring During Incarceration Phase.** A trained mentor is matched with each participant during this phase. The mentor meets the participant to:

- Reflect on issues of brokenness and healing.
- Model appropriate social behaviors.
- Help develop a maintenance plan for healthy and productive living upon reentry into the inmate population.

These meetings ordinarily take place in the institution's Visiting Room. Title 42, U.S.C., ə 17533 provides that "any person who provides mentoring services to an incarcerated offender is permitted to continue such services after that offender is released from prison." Mentors are permitted to provide mentoring services to released Federal inmates if the mentor provided such services to the released inmate while he or she was incarcerated. The statute also authorizes Wardens to prohibit mentors from providing mentoring to released inmates if it is determined that such post-release mentoring services would pose a significant security risk to the released inmate, any other inmate, any person who provides mentoring services, or any other person. Failure to abide by this prohibition could result in the mentor being prohibited from continuing to serve in this role at the institution. Mentors participate in this component in compliance with program guidelines and are accountable to the LCP Manager for guidance and reporting purposes.

b. **Partnership with the Community at Release Destination.** This partnership is designed to help the inmate with healthy community reintegration upon release. It begins during incarceration and intensifies as the inmate transitions back into the community.

Training materials are provided for sponsoring mentoring organizations. Correspondence with sponsored inmates is strongly encouraged, so they will have a sense of belonging to the community before release.

If possible, representatives from the mentoring organizations visit with participants at least once in the Visiting Room. The addition of community representatives to participants' visiting list is an exception to the general requirement of having an established relationship prior to confinement. These visits are ordinarily not counted against the allotted number of social visits per month. The frequency of these visits is determined locally in accordance with program needs.

7. SENTRY PROGRAM CODES

Each participant's current program status is maintained in SENTRY. The Unit Team makes SENTRY assignment changes:

- **LCP APPL** - The inmate requests to participate in LCP and meets admission criteria (Section 3a). The SENTRY assignment is keyed by Central Office LCP staff and remains active until the code is changed to LCP WAIT or LCP PART by institution staff.
- **LCP UNQUAL** - Requests to participate but does not meet one or more admission criteria. Assignment remains active until there is a change in status.
- **LCP WAIT** - Meets admission criteria; has this assignment added at the designated institution. The inmate remains on the waiting list until formal participation in LCP.
- **LCP PART** - Begins participation. Additional guidelines apply:

  - LCP PART replaces LCP WAIT and remains current until the inmate ends participation.
  - LCP PART is not entered until the inmate is housed in the LCP Unit at a pilot institution.
  - LCP PART is replaced by a termination assignment when the inmate ends participation.

- **LCP COMP** - Successfully completes LCP.
- **LCP INCOMP** - Does not complete LCP for reasons beyond his/her control (writ, medical, etc.).
- **LCP FAIL W** - Does not complete LCP because he/she withdraws.
- **LCP FAIL E** - Does not complete LCP because of behavior resulting in expulsion.

8. PROGRAM COMPLETION

Upon successfully completing LCP, participants are ordinarily moved from the program unit to another unit or institution to make room for new participants. To enhance ties with the community, regardless of release date, inmates are designated to an institution close to their release destination, unless there are documented security concerns.

9. PROGRAM EXPULSION

The Warden, after receiving a recommendation from the institution's LCP Review Committee, makes the final decision regarding an inmate's expulsion. Inmates may be expelled for:

- Violation of disciplinary rules and regulations as determined by the Unit Discipline Committee or Discipline Hearing Officer.
- Failure to meet other program requirements, such as financial responsibility or education obligations.

Inmates expelled from LCP are ordinarily returned to the sending institution.

10. **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

The Office of Research and Evaluation will evaluate LCP's effectiveness by comparing institutional conduct before, during, and after participation. Three control groups – female low security inmates, male medium security, and male low security inmates – will be established for the evaluation.

a. **Duration.** There will be a one- to four-year follow-up of participants who complete the program to evaluate the impact on recidivism rates and institution management.

b. **Follow-up Study.** Where feasible, a follow-up study will be conducted after release with the community organization to measure the effectiveness of support received during the transition process. The follow-up assessment will provide information on the rate of rearrests and recidivism, and will help identify the most effective methods used by communities.

11. **PROGRAM RESOURCES**

The Executive Staff has dedicated resources for LCP. Funding is disbursed through the Chaplaincy Services' Cost Center.

12. **STAFF TRAINING**

The LCP Chaplain and Unit staff will receive training, focusing on the interdisciplinary approach governing the program. Training also provides:

- A review of the LCP philosophy.
- Program implementation requirements.
- Instructional skills and materials.
- Guidelines for integrating the program into the institution.

BOP Forms

BP-A0741	Life Connections Program (LCP) Program Participation Request and Agreement Form
BP-A0742	Life Connections Program (LCP) Referral Form

Records Retention Requirements

Requirements and retention guidance for records and information applicable to this program are available in the Records and Information Disposition Schedule (RIDS) on Sallyport.