

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Federal Bureau of Prisons



PROGRAM STATEMENT
Institution Character Profile

Approved by	 William K. Marshall III Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons
DPI	DCO
Number	1070.10
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Summary of Changes

Program Statement Rescinded:

- 1070.09 Institution Character Profile (3/17/2025)

Changes:

- Removes references to Key Indicators/Strategic Support System (KI/SSS).
- Removes references to any concept relating to labor/management relations, the union, and/or bargaining staff.
- Provides that each Regional Director must schedule an Institution Character Profile for each institution in their region at least once every three years.
- Provides for an optional Institution Character Profile visit within six months of a new Warden's arrival at the discretion of the Regional Director.
- Includes First Step Act programming, sexual safety, access to legal materials, and availability of menstrual products as topics to be assessed for inmate climate.
- Adds a corrective action process to the Institution Character Profile instrument.

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This program statement is intended to establish a system of periodic comprehensive assessments of each Federal Bureau of Prisons (Bureau) institution in the areas of:

- staff morale,
- professionalism,
- communication,
- inmate climate, and
- community relations.

The Institution Character Profile (ICP) instrument is one of several complementary methods the Bureau uses to assess the organizational climate and program performance at institutions.

The ICP instrument relies on face-to-face interviews with staff and inmates, data analysis, record reviews, standardized staff and inmate surveys, and field observations to glean pertinent information about the Bureau institutions being assessed.

This program statement provides procedures and guidance for regional ICP teams, as well as for all Bureau staff regarding their roles and responsibilities and the use of the ICP instrument.

a. **Program Objectives.**

- Every three years at a minimum, and within the first six months of activation, each institution will be assessed by the Regional Director in the areas of staff morale, professionalism, communication, inmate climate, and community relations. Additionally, the Regional Director may, at their discretion, conduct an ICP within the first six months of a change in Warden.
- The regional ICP team will make written recommendations at the conclusion of the visit which may require corrective action by the institution.
- Institutions are responsible for implementing any corrective action plans and providing to the Regional Director assurances of implementation.
- Six months after the conclusion of the ICP visit, the regional ICP team, at the discretion of the Regional Director, will, as needed, make an unannounced visit to the institution to ensure any recommended corrective action is being implemented.

b. **Institution Supplement.** None.

2. **AREAS REVIEWED**

Each ICP team must review, at a minimum, the following areas:

a. **Staff Morale.** The overall morale or mood of the institution staff is determined through observations, interviews, staff surveys, and record reviews of staff perceptions of:

- the incentive awards program,
- the performance appraisal process,
- training satisfaction,
- job resources,
- the employee assistance program,
- staffing/workload,
- safety and security,
- staff turnover,

- job satisfaction,
- career opportunities and commitment,
- department morale,
- management's effect on morale, and
- staff mentoring program.

b. **Professionalism.** Professionalism is evaluated by examining the performance and competence of staff and management in such areas as:

- staff professionalism,
- interaction with inmates, and
- staff competence.

c. **Communication.** The quality and methods of communication throughout the institution are assessed by examining areas such as:

- management accessibility and responsiveness,
- staff/supervisor relations,
- quality of communication with internal and external stakeholders, and
- information accessibility and sources.

d. **Inmate Climate.** The character or mood of inmates as determined through observations, interviews, inmate surveys, and record reviews of inmate perceptions of:

- staff/inmate interactions,
- communication of institution issues,
- safety (including sexual safety),
- sanitation,
- recreation,
- food service,
- health services,
- psychology services,
- mail service,
- commissary services,
- discipline process,
- work opportunities,
- educational opportunities,
- FSA programming,
- availability of menstrual products (if applicable),
- access to legal materials,
- religious programs, and
- the visiting program.

e. **Community Relations.** The quality and extent of the relationship between the institution and members of the community are determined by assessing:

- recruitment activities;
- the institution's reputation in the community;
- the institution's relationship with other law enforcement agencies; and
- community activities such as: the visiting room program, open houses, the community relations board, charitable activities, volunteer and citizen participation program, and number and quality of community partnership programs.

f. **Special Focus Areas.** Prior to the deployment of the regional ICP team, the Regional Director may identify a particular area of concern beyond the scope of these ICP guidelines. These special focus areas may include but are not limited to leadership concerns, security concerns, recruitment and retention concerns, and inmate sexual misconduct towards staff. In this case, the ICP team may be directed to expand the interviews, record review, or field observation guides to address an area of special focus.

3. SCHEDULING

Each Regional Director must schedule an ICP for each institution in that region at least once every three years and schedule an ICP visit for newly activated institutions any time during the first six months of activation. At their discretion, Regional Directors may schedule an ICP visit for any institution that has undergone a Warden change within the first six months of the new Warden's arrival. Additionally, each Regional Director must provide an updated ICP schedule to the Assistant Director, Division of Compliance and Oversight (DCO) at least once annually by January 15th and notify the Assistant Director, DCO of any changes to the ICP schedule immediately.

The DCO must maintain a current ICP master schedule and distribute it to all Executive Staff members by January 31st of each year and at other times when requested.

4. ICP TEAMS

The Regional Director is to determine the number of ICP team members, based on the size and complexity of the institution to be reviewed and any other pertinent factors.

Ordinarily, a team will be composed primarily of regional staff; however, other staff, including Assistant Directors and Regional Directors from other regions, may be invited to participate in the initial ICP visit or the unannounced follow-up visit, at the Regional Director's discretion, depending on identified potential areas of concern.

The Regional Director must ensure:

- a regional ICP Coordinator is selected prior to the deployment of the ICP team to ensure the preparedness of the ICP team prior to the visit,
- all ICP team members are familiar with the intent and technical aspects of the ICP process,
- all ICP team members are able to effectively conduct interviews and produce quality results, and
- ICP reports clearly articulate the results of the ICP and provide written recommendations, if applicable.

5. ROLE OF THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Ordinarily, the Regional Director does not need to be present for the entire ICP. However, at a minimum, the Regional Director must enter the ICP mid-week to conduct interviews, be advised of findings, help the team summarize findings for close-outs, and determine what means will be used to share findings with staff (e.g., meetings with institution Executive Staff, department head meetings, and/or staff recalls).

The Regional Director must interview institution Executive Staff and others, instruct the team to gather more data when appropriate, provide other direction to the team as needed, and participate in closeouts.

6. PREPARATION FOR AN ICP

a. **Regional Team Preparation.** The regional ICP coordinator must ensure all relevant data and information listed in Section 1 of this program statement and any other necessary assessment data is collected prior to the ICP and provided to the appropriate team members, ICP team members effectively use that data and information to identify any areas of concern or special emphasis that can help focus resources during the week of the ICP visit, and help the institution ICP coordinator prepare for the ICP.

b. **Institution Preparation.** Institution preparation work should be limited to that needed to ensure an effective ICP visit. Such preparation work should not be directed towards significantly beautifying or improving the institution in advance of the ICP team's visit.

When preparing for the ICP visit, regional ICP staff must make every effort to limit institution staff tasks to the minimum required to address the ICP team's logistic and data needs.

Institution staff must work closely with the regional ICP staff, particularly the regional ICP coordinator, to ensure efforts are not being duplicated.

In some instances, it is preferable the ICP team review original documents on site. However, some data may be analyzed more effectively prior to the ICP visit, and some documents will need to be electronically scanned or copied. ICP staff should clearly request all scanning or copying of documents with as much advance notice as possible.

Institution staff must prepare staff and inmate interview schedules based on the random sample provided by the regional office, and activity schedules.

Institution Executive Staff are to prepare a brief statement addressing any existing anticipated concerns prior to conducting an ICP. Otherwise, institutions should not compile special booklets or reports specifically for the ICP team.

7. INTERVIEWS

The ICP team will conduct interviews of staff and inmates, as well as key outside stakeholders during each ICP. Interviews provide an overall assessment of the climate, mood, and morale of an institution.

a. **Staff.** Regional Directors will ensure an adequate representation of staff are interviewed. For example, Regional Directors should interview a sampling of staff from various departments, and shifts.

b. **Inmates.** Regional Directors will ensure an adequate representation of inmates are interviewed.

c. **Community Relations Board.** Ordinarily, a sample of Community Relations Board (CRB) members are to be interviewed individually. It is not necessary to convene a CRB meeting for an ICP; however, if the CRB is meeting the week of the ICP, the Regional Director may decide to attend.

d. **Non-scheduled Interviews.** In addition to interviews of staff and inmates, other staff or inmates may request to talk with the ICP team. However, these interviews should be kept informal, i.e., the official interview guides should not be used.

The insights gained from these interviews may assist the team to corroborate other findings or raise concerns for further evaluation or other appropriate actions, but the opinions should not be tallied with those from the scheduled interviews for final summary.

e. **Explanation to Interviewees.** ICP interviewers are to read or paraphrase the explanation provided on the interview guide cover page to each interviewee (staff and inmates) explaining the ICP's purpose, the voluntary nature of the interview, and the limits of confidentiality.

8. FIELD OBSERVATIONS AND RECORD REVIEW (FORR)

FORR data consists of two types: that which is collected in advance of the ICP visit and that which is collected/observed on-site. Recommended FORRs, which can be used at the regional office's discretion, can be found on the DCO page of the Bureau's intranet site.

Pre-visit data is gathered in advance so the ICP team can assess the existence of any trends that might require special attention during the ICP visit.

9. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. **Report to the Director.** Upon completing an ICP visit, and in advance of forwarding the written ICP report, the Regional Director must brief the Director of the findings and any other salient issues via email or telephone call.
- b. **Report Format.** A comprehensive written report is required. The report should consist of the Executive Summary and the Component Breakdown. The ICP Report format and an example of an ICP Report can be found on the DCO page of the Bureau's intranet site.
 - The Executive Summary must have a brief description of the overall findings and concerns and a statement of the overall rating. The ratings scale is as follows: Unsatisfactory, Marginal, Satisfactory, Exceeds, and Outstanding.
 - The Component Breakdown must include a brief description and rating for each primary area.
 - Recommendations will be provided when warranted.
 - Working papers should not be included in the final report.

The Regional Director must sign a cover memorandum for each ICP report and provide copies to the Warden and the Assistant Director, DCO.

- c. **ICP Worksheet.** The standardized ICP worksheet can be found on the DCO page of the Bureau's intranet site.

10. CORRECTIVE ACTION

If the ICP team makes recommendations to the institution, the institution is required to submit a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to the Regional Director within 14 working days of the conclusion of the ICP visit. The institution has six months to implement the CAP and provide a memorandum of assurance (MOA) to the Regional Director stating the CAP has been implemented. The Regional Director will review the MOA and any supporting evidence to determine whether the CAP is sufficient to correct any deficiencies.

Additionally, as needed, and at the discretion of the Regional Director, the regional ICP team will be deployed to the institution at the six-month mark or later to ensure compliance with the CAP. The Regional Director may also request a Regional Director from another region or an Assistant Director accompany the ICP team to ensure compliance, based on the areas of concern. This follow-up visit may be unannounced.

11. USES OF ICP DATA, WORKING PAPERS, AND REPORTS

ICP data, working papers, and reports may be used only for communication among the Regional Director, ICP team, Bureau Executive Team, and the Warden. The Warden may share appropriate parts of the written report with those institution staff members with a need to know.

REFERENCES

ACA Standards

Standards for the Administration of Correctional Agencies (2nd Edition): 2-CO-1A-01; 2-CO-1A-07

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 the Bureau's intranet site.