

<p style="text-align: center;">STATE OF VERMONT AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Constituent Services</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Page 1 of 3</p>						
<p style="text-align: center;">CHAPTER: PROGRAMS – VOLUNTEER SERVICES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">#381</p>	<p>Supersedes: #381, dated 12/21/1990; #381.01, dated 12/21/1990</p>							
<p>Local Procedure(s) Required: No Applicability: All staff (including contractors and volunteers) Security Level: “B” – Anyone may have access to this document.</p>									
<p>Approved:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; border: none;"> <p><u>SIGNED</u></p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; border: none;"> <p><u>05/14/2024</u></p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; border: none;"> <p><u>05/28/2024</u></p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;"> <p>Nicholas J. Deml, Commissioner</p> </td> <td style="border: none;"> <p>Date Signed</p> </td> <td style="border: none;"> <p>Date Effective</p> </td> </tr> </table>				<p><u>SIGNED</u></p>	<p><u>05/14/2024</u></p>	<p><u>05/28/2024</u></p>	<p>Nicholas J. Deml, Commissioner</p>	<p>Date Signed</p>	<p>Date Effective</p>
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the services the Department of Corrections (DOC) provides to the constituents, such as members of the public who have connections or relationships with individuals under the custody and supervision of the DOC or who are otherwise affected by the DOC.

AUTHORITY

Title 28, V.S.A., Chapters 1, 3, 5, 9, and 11.

POLICY

The DOC’s policy is to recognize how difficult the corrections system can be for constituents to navigate. The Constituent Services Unit (CSU) helps constituents access accurate information about our policies, practices, and specific events. The CSU supports efforts which strengthen, stabilize, and improve relationships and promote collaboration. Through the services the CSU provides to constituents,

feedback and input received are used to improve systems and the delivery of services.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. CSU Role

1. In all its interactions, the DOC has a primary responsibility to individuals under the custody and supervision of the DOC.
2. The CSU provides non-emergency services to constituents who are:
 - a. Individuals under the custody and supervision of the DOC;
 - b. Family and friends of individuals under the custody and supervision of the DOC; and
 - c. Anyone who may have a connection to an individual under the custody and supervision of the DOC.
3. The CSU does not respond to emergency situations. In these circumstances, the CSU shall refer the constituent to the appropriate facility or field site.
4. In most cases, the CSU serves as a liaison to identify the subject matter expert within the DOC who can help respond to a constituent's inquiries and relay accurate information back to the requestor.

B. CSU Process

1. An individual may contact the CSU through the following ways:
 - a. Placing a telephone call;
 - b. Sending an email;
 - c. Entering a request through the portal which can be reached through the CSU page on the DOC Website; and
 - d. Being referred by:
 - i. The Commissioner's Office;
 - ii. Government Officials;
 - iii. DOC Staff; and
 - iv. The Prisoners' Rights Office.
2. CSU will attempt to provide an initial response to inquiries within two to three business days by answering the question, letting the constituent know the subject needs to be investigated further, or triaging the question to the correct jurisdiction. If communication requires language

access services, such as an interpreter or assisted technology, an initial response may take four to five business days.

3. For constituents, who are identified as possibly having a disability or barrier accessing and understanding material written or spoken in English, the CSU shall:
 - a. Arrange for translation services for all written correspondence received in a language other than English. This means the CSU shall have the correspondence translated into English so the CSU can respond, and have their response translated into the language of the original correspondence prior to sending the reply. Using translation services may result in a delay in the CSU's response; and
 - b. Use an interpreter or assistive technology when a verbal inquiry is received in a language other than English, including ASL.
4. The CSU shall work with the Executive Director for Policy and Strategic Initiatives to respond to all requests from the Governor's Office and the General Assembly.
5. The CSU shall work with the Out-of-State Unit (OOS) to ensure that constituents seeking information regarding an incarcerated individual housed at a supplemental housing correctional facility (SHCF) or through the interstate compact receive accurate information.

C. Release of Information (ROI)

1. The CSU may discuss information that is in the public use file, in accordance with the rule on records for individuals under the supervision or custody of DOC, and answer process and general departmental questions without a ROI.
2. The CSU shall not answer questions about an individual under the custody and supervision of the DOC unless that individual has completed the appropriate ROI for the constituent requesting information.
3. The CSU shall not ask the individual under the custody and supervision of the DOC to complete an ROI. It is the individual's responsibility to complete the ROI with the appropriate facility or field site.