

<b>State of Vermont, Agency of Human Services Department of Corrections</b>	<b>Title: Religious Services</b>	<b>Page 1 of 2</b>									
<b>Chapter: Programs - Volunteer Services</b>	<b># 380.01</b>	<b>Supersedes #380.01, dated 2/4/2008</b>									
<b>Attachments, Forms &amp; Companion Documents:</b> Any companion documents associated with this directive will be available on the Department's website.											
<b>Local Procedure(s) Required:</b> Yes, the Superintendent will ensure that local written procedures for the use and storage of religious objects and symbols are developed. Facility Superintendents, in conjunction with the Volunteer Services Coordinators, will develop local processes to ensure that the procedures in this directive are consistently and fairly applied, and that documentation required under this directive is maintained.											
<b>Approved:</b>  <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;"><b>SIGNED</b></td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;"><b>03/16/2017</b></td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;"><b>04/03/2017</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Lisa Menard, Commissioner</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Date Signed</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Effective Date</b></td> </tr> </table>			<b>SIGNED</b>	<b>03/16/2017</b>	<b>04/03/2017</b>	_____	_____	_____	<b>Lisa Menard, Commissioner</b>	<b>Date Signed</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this directive is to establish the Vermont Department of Corrections' (DOC) policy regarding inmate religious practices and programming.

**PHILOSOPHY**

It is the philosophy of the Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) to offer inmates the opportunity to participate in religious services and programs, and to exercise their religious beliefs while operating within the inherent need for resources, facility safety, and security. Faith-based programs and observances will be accommodated within available time and space, unless a restriction is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest.

**AUTHORITY**

28 V.S.A 11 § 803(a)(b); Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, 42 U.S.C. §2000xcc; American Correctional Association Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 4th Edition 2003, Standards 4-4273, 4-4319, 4-4517, 4-4518, and 4-4520.

**REFERENCE**

Department Administrative Directives #354.05 *Inmate Alternative Diets*; #376 *Volunteer Services Management*; #409.01 *Searches*; #327.01 *Inmate Visits*; #410.06 *Restrictive Housing Status, Conditions of Confinement*.

## **POLICY**

The DOC acknowledges the inherent and constitutionally protected rights of inmates to believe, express, and exercise the faith of their choice.<sup>1</sup> The DOC works to accommodate an inmate's opportunity to participate in religious programming and the practice of their faith, individually, or in a group. Opportunity to exercise one's faith shall reflect the diversity of faith and traditions found in societies throughout the world.

It is the policy of the DOC to ensure that inmates, who wish to do so, may subscribe to any faith belief they choose. Inmate faith practices, as opposed to belief, may be subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions. Inmate participation in faith activities shall be voluntary. The DOC shall provide faith opportunities for inmates. The opportunity for inmates to engage in particular faith practices shall be subject to legitimate DOC or institutional interests and concerns, including security, safety, health, discipline, rehabilitation, order, and the limitations and allocations of resources.<sup>2</sup>

The DOC shall not endorse any religious faith and will ensure that faith programming is consistent with the provisions of federal and state statutes.<sup>3</sup>

The DOC recognizes that many faiths incorporate religious, traditional, and cultural practices. The DOC offers inmates and faith groups the opportunity to celebrate events.<sup>4</sup>

It is the policy of the DOC that inmates have freedom of conscience to see and/or subscribe to any faith belief. The DOC shall seek to meet inmate faith needs within the unique parameters of the correctional setting.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> State of Washington, Department of Corrections, Religious Programs, DOC 560.200, Effective 2/1/14.

<sup>2</sup> State of Ohio, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, Institutional Religious Services, 72-REG-01, Effective 01/15/15.

<sup>3</sup> State of Washington, Department of Corrections, Religious Programs, DOC 560.200, Effective 2/1/14.

<sup>4</sup> State of Washington, Department of Corrections, Religious Programs, DOC 560.200, Effective 2/1/14.

<sup>5</sup> State of Ohio, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, Religious Accommodations, 72-REG-02, Effective 4/4/10.