

<p align="center"><b>State of Vermont</b> <b>Agency of Human Services</b> <b>Department of Corrections</b></p>	<p><b>Title:</b>  <b>Domestic Violence Policy</b></p>		<p align="center"><b>Page 1 of 2</b></p>						
<p><b>Chapter:</b>  <b>Public Information and Prevention Education</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>#27</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>New</b></p>							
<p><b>Attachments, Forms &amp; Companion Documents:</b> N/A</p>									
<p><b>Local Procedure(s) Required:</b> No  <b>Applicability:</b> All Department staff (including volunteers and contractors.)  <b>Security Level:</b> "B"- Anyone may have access to this document.</p>									
<p><b>Approved:</b></p> <table border="0" style="width:100%"> <tr> <td style="width:33%; border-top: 1px solid black; text-align: center;"><b>Andrew A. Pallito, Commissioner</b></td> <td style="width:33%; text-align: center;"><u><b>April 6, 2012</b></u></td> <td style="width:33%; text-align: center;"><u><b>April 24, 2012</b></u></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Date Signed</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Date Effective</b></td> </tr> </table>				<b>Andrew A. Pallito, Commissioner</b>	<u><b>April 6, 2012</b></u>	<u><b>April 24, 2012</b></u>		<b>Date Signed</b>	<b>Date Effective</b>
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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to guide the development and implementation of administrative directives and procedures related to domestic violence services in the Vermont Department of Corrections to include the supervision of domestic violence offenders, programming for domestic violence offenders, and victim support services.

**POLICY**

It is the policy of the Department of Corrections (DOC) to ensure that all domestic violence services are provided in accordance with correctional evidenced based practices and principles and in a consistent manner that:

- (1) Increases safety of and autonomy for victims of domestic violence;
- (2) Expects accountability from offenders who commit domestic violence;
- (3) Supports offenders in a process of change that results in safe and responsible relationships within their families and communities; and
- (4) Utilizes a coordinated community response to domestic violence.

The Department will develop and maintain a Domestic Violence Manual that will provide an accessible public source of information for Department staff aimed at ensuring the quality and consistency of casework with domestic violence offenders and victim/survivors. The Manual will direct readers to relevant directives and identify best practice procedures for providing domestic violence services throughout the Department.

The Department has established a Domestic Violence Advisory Work Group that includes DOC staff and external stakeholders. The Work Group will develop recommendations related to Department policy and practice related to domestic violence.

## **AUTHORITY**

13 V.S.A. Chapter 165, §§ 5301-5321. Agency of Human Services Policy 1.03, *AHS Response to Domestic Violence*, May 2011.

## **REFERENCE**

*Memorandum of Understanding*, Agency of Human Services & Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. *Report to the Secretary: Recommendations for Systems Change at the Vermont Agency of Human Services*, 2005; *Phase One: AHS Domestic Violence Initiative*, Report to the Secretary, 2006.

2010 Vermont Statewide Standards for Programming for Men who Batter, Vermont Council on Domestic Violence.

American Probation and Parole Association, *Community Corrections' Response to Domestic Violence: Guidelines for Practice*.

Ellen Pence & Martha McMahon, *A Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence*, The National Training Project, <http://www.stopvaw.org> 2006.

*Poised for Prevention: Advancing Promising Approaches to Primary Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence*, Prevention Institute, [www.preventioninstitute.org](http://www.preventioninstitute.org), 2007.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Domestic violence policies and procedures within the Department will ensure a standardized response to cases involving domestic violence that respects the authority and autonomy of domestic violence victims to direct their own lives, and provides guidance regarding how best to comply with established criminal or statutory obligations without increasing risk to victims.

All policies, procedures, case practices and education related to domestic violence will be reviewed and developed in accordance with correctional best practice principles and evidence-based practice, to include emerging domestic violence best practice principles and guidelines.

1. The Department will prioritize victim safety in its response to domestic violence offenders.
2. The Department will hold the perpetrator, not the victim, responsible for his/her abusive behavior and for stopping the abuse.
3. Historically, social and cultural norms and beliefs have created an environment for domestic violence to occur and must be changed.
4. The Department will collaborate with statewide domestic violence partners as part of a local and statewide coordinated community response to domestic violence.

## **TRAINING**

1. The Director of Community Corrections, Re-entry, & Classification and the Director of Facility Operations shall ensure that all District Managers and Facility Superintendents are oriented to this Policy and its implications for staff under their supervision.
2. District Managers and Facility Superintendents shall ensure that all staff are aware of and oriented to this Policy.

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The Department will monitor any standards or legal mandates regarding domestic violence offenders to comport with the principles of this policy.