

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>POLICY OF</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>STATE OF DELAWARE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>POLICY NUMBER</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">6.9</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PAGE NUMBER</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 of 5</p>
<p><b>CHAPTER:</b> PLANNING, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH</p>	<p><b>RELATED ACA STANDARDS:</b> 2-CO-1F-13, 2-CO-1F-14</p>	
<p><b>APPROVED BY THE COMMISSIONER AND EFFECTIVE THIS DATE:</b></p>	<p><b>SUBJECT:</b> RESEARCH ACTIVITIES</p>	
<p><b>APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE</b></p>		



2/1/2018

- I. **AUTHORITY:** 11 *Del. C.* §6517; 29 *Del. C.* §8903
- II. **PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines for experimental research or testing.
- III. **APPLICABILITY:** All Department employees, volunteers, persons or organizations conducting business with the Department.
- IV. **DEFINITIONS:** None
- V. **POLICY:** The Department will support and engage in research activities relevant to its programs and services. This research should contribute to effective supervision, conservation of resources, and increased public safety and should assist in establishing goals, objectives and plans for the future.

In order to supplement existing resources, the Department shall permit, encourage and use research conducted by outside professionals. When appropriate, the Department will pursue financial support for research from private and public funding sources.

It is the policy of the Department of Correction to prohibit offenders from participating in medical, pharmaceutical or non-cosmetic testing for experimental or research purposes. For other medical research, refer to Department policy 11-1-06.

Offenders' participation in non-medical and non-pharmaceutical research/testing should be permitted only after a review of the research design indicates the probability that no adverse effects will occur to the offenders in the program. The Commissioner will give final approval for any recommended project.

The researcher shall ensure the protection of the rights, privacy and well-being of the individuals involved in the study. These protections shall be described in Institutional Review Board documents, or similar documents from the College, University or organization conducting the research. Participants for research studies shall be volunteers, and shall be fully informed of the nature and extent of the research project and use of information from the study.

<b>POLICY OF STATE OF DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION</b>	<b>POLICY NUMBER 6.9</b>	<b>PAGE NUMBER 2 of 5</b>
<b>SUBJECT: RESEARCH ACTIVITIES</b>		

The Department will establish mandatory guidelines authorizing access to records and data for research purposes while maintaining confidentiality and the security of the Department.

The following guidelines will be followed:

- A. Due to resource limitations, undergraduate college student requests to conduct research studies will not be approved.
- B. Research proposals from graduate students, colleges, universities, and non-profit research organizations will be reviewed on a rolling basis, as received.
- C. Employees of the Department who wish to perform research with offenders or DOC staff for their academic pursuits must also adhere to this policy. This includes, but is not limited to, use of data from the Department's offender management system and other data sources which would not be considered to be publicly available. Reports that are publicly available are exempt from this requirement.
- D. Process:
  1. Applicants are encouraged to meet or speak with DOC's Planning & Research Unit for an informal discussion prior to proposal submission. DOC can/will provide input and feedback to shape a successful research request application.
  2. Researcher obtains Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from their respective research/academic institution. DOC will not officially review proposals prior to the applicant obtaining IRB approval.
  3. Researcher completes and submits formal DOC application found on DOC website. Applications should be submitted **six months** prior to the intended research start date.
  4. Once all required documents are received as part of the application process, DOC convenes a Research Review Panel (RRP). Panel membership is determined by the Planning & Research Unit according to the research topic; the RRP shall be multi-disciplinary and shall consist of at least three members.
  5. The RRP may request revisions/modifications to the proposal and/or supplementary information. Applicants should be aware that in cases where multiple revisions/modifications are requested, this process may delay the intended start date of the research, particularly in cases when modifications require additional review by the applicant's IRB.
  6. After review and approval by the RRP, the proposal with recommendation will be submitted to the Commissioner.
  7. Upon approval by the Commissioner, and prior to commencing any research activities, the researcher will be required to sign and return the Research Policy Acknowledgement attached to this policy.

<b>POLICY OF STATE OF DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION</b>	<b>POLICY NUMBER 6.9</b>	<b>PAGE NUMBER 3 of 5</b>
<b>SUBJECT: RESEARCH ACTIVITIES</b>		

- E. Guidelines for approval:
1. The research will be conducted by professional researchers, college faculty, or graduate students engaged in their masters or doctoral studies under appropriate supervision by qualified faculty.
  2. Research applicants shall possess appropriate academic preparation and previous research background qualifications and credentials for conducting the requested research at the time the application is submitted. Research applicants requesting to administer a specific assessment tool must provide documentation indicating their qualification to administer the tool.
  3. A project overview and research design report, including purpose, goals, objectives, timeline, and methodology will be submitted to Planning & Research, along with the Institutional Review Board approval notice. The submission shall include a copy of the informed consent form for participants, interview script, and any other relevant forms.
  4. Proposals should include a detailed data protection, storage, retention, and destruction plan.
- F. Once approved by the Commissioner, the Planning & Research Unit will coordinate research activities with the researcher or group.
- G. The study will not disrupt the Department's routine or interfere with personnel carrying out their duties.
- H. Interviews of offenders or staff and/or participation in surveys or focus groups will be done on a voluntary basis only.
- I. Subjects used in the study will not be identified by name or in any way which would reveal their identity.
- J. The researcher or group will explain the goals and methods of the study to all potential subjects, with written explanation provided. All offenders and staff shall be informed that their participation in the research is purely voluntary.
- K. The researcher will obtain signed consent from all individuals who are to participate in the research.
- L. Any data collected during the course of the research shall be used only in the manner described to the subject prior to his entry into the study.

<b>POLICY OF STATE OF DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION</b>	<b>POLICY NUMBER 6.9</b>	<b>PAGE NUMBER 4 of 5</b>
<b>SUBJECT: RESEARCH ACTIVITIES</b>		

- M. Research interviews or focus groups shall adhere to the format approved by the researcher's Institutional Research Board and the DOC. Similarly, questions and discussion topics during the interviews or focus groups should be constrained to those which were approved in advance by the researcher's Institutional Research Board and the Department. Deviation from the approved script is not permitted.
- N. Information or data collected or obtained through cooperative research shall not be transferred to a third party without the approval of the DOC Commissioner.
- O. No DOC employee shall receive compensation or payment of any kind for participation in the research project. Offenders may receive modest participation incentives (generally, no more than \$25). The amount and exact nature of the proposed incentive should be described in the research application and is subject to review and approval by the respective leadership of the facility where the research is to occur. Incentives may take the form of monetary deposits into the offender's inmate account via money order or gift cards (dependent upon the setting and the facility's rules). In cases where focus groups are planned, refreshments may be offered as a participation incentive at the discretion of the respective facility leadership.
- P. The Department maintains a vested interest in ensuring that correctional data and research presented in the public sphere accurately describe the correctional population. Similarly, DOC has a vested interest in being aware of publications and presentations made about the correctional population. The researcher/group will submit a draft of any journal articles, manuscripts, or reports intended for publication and/or public presentations 30 days prior to submission or presentation. This also includes public presentations on preliminary research findings prior to publication. Subsequent modified manuscripts and materials based upon earlier approved submissions must also follow this process.
- Q. Any use or presentation of the research data beyond the original overview and report is prohibited. This includes presentations and publications not specifically identified in Section O above.
- R. Permission to conduct the study may be discontinued at any time for violations of these guidelines, or for violations of any DOC Policy or written or verbal directives given by DOC staff involved with the study.

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<p><b>SUBJECT: RESEARCH ACTIVITIES</b></p>		

- S. Researchers who fail to adhere to these guidelines will be barred from performing research with DOC, and a complaint may be lodged with their respective research institution and/or Institutional Review Board.
- T. Researchers shall provide copies of the published report to DOC for its internal dissemination.
- U. Requests for data to conduct surveys or research by groups not meeting the criteria listed herein will be either processed as a data request or referred to the DOC Public Information Officer. Such requests are subject to refusal based upon their scope or time and labor required by DOC to accommodate the request.
- V. For Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, reference DOC Policy 10.5.
- W. The DOC's adoption of a research activity policy does not obligate the DOC to create data. Nor does the existence of a research activity policy create a right of any person or entity to access a DOC facility or to conduct research of persons committed to the custody of the DOC.

**Delaware Department of Correction  
Research Policy Acknowledgement**

Upon approval by the Commissioner, and prior to commencing any research activities, the researcher will be required to sign and return this Research Policy Acknowledgement.

By signing, researchers acknowledge receipt and review of the Delaware Department of Correction's Policy 6.9 on Research Activities. Researchers must adhere to these policies. Researchers must provide drafts of presentations and/or manuscripts to the Department for review 30 days prior to the intended presentation/publication date. Failure to comply with the policies and procedures described in Policy 6.9 will result in termination of research approval.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Researcher (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**If applicant is a graduate student, review and signature by academic advisor is required.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Academic Advisor (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Institution/University Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Research Proposal Title: \_\_\_\_\_