



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 18.31

Subject:	Religious Programs and Services for Youth in Youth Development Centers
Authority:	TCA 37-5-105 (3), 37-5-106
Standards:	ACA: 4-JCF-5F-01, 4-JCF-5F-02, 4-JCF-5F-03, 4-JCF-5F-04, 4-JCF-5F-05, 4-JCF-5F-06, 4-JCF-5F-07, 4-JCF-5F-08; DCS Practice Model Standard: 8-306
Application:	To All Department of Children's Services Youth Development Center Superintendents, Employees, and Volunteers
Policy Statement:	
Each Youth Development Center (YDC) shall provide opportunities to youth for religious services, education, and counseling on a voluntary basis. Every reasonable effort shall be made to facilitate the free practice of religion limited only to legitimate security and operational considerations.	
Purpose:	
To provide guidelines to ensure the religious freedom for youth in Youth Development Centers.	
Procedures:	
A. Documentation of youth's religious preference	During orientation in YDC's, the chaplain or designee will interview all youth to ascertain their religious preference and history. At this time the youth will be informed of the procedure for voluntarily participating in worship or religious services.
B. Religious services and programs for youth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. YDC's staffed with chaplains will require the chaplain to coordinate religious programs and services. All YDC staff including facility chaplains will avoid proselytizing for a particular faith or denomination. 2. YDC's without a chaplain position, the Superintendent will designate a qualified person to coordinate the facility's religious programs in conjunction with certified volunteers. The designee may be part-time or full-time, and may be a staff member, contract employee or volunteer. 3. Religious services held at YDC's will be non-sectarian. Services may be a part of the facility's scheduled activities. 4. Proper atmosphere and equipment needed to conduct and administer religious programs and sufficient space for the service is provided. 5. Services are conducted in an area of the facility that does not limit the activities of those youth who do not wish to attend (e.g., using the entire day

	<p>room of a living unit, etc.).</p>
<p>C. YDC Chaplain's responsibilities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chaplains, as confidants, have a dual responsibility to the youth and the facility. He/she must keep pastoral confidences intact, and at the same time, protect the facility, its staff and the youth. 2. Youth may request to speak with the chaplain at any time. The chaplain will meet with the youth as soon as practicable. 3. Chaplains will conduct non-sectarian worship services at least once a week or make arrangements for such in their absence from the facility. 4. Chaplains will develop and maintain close relationships with community religious resources. 5. For youth expressing a specific religious preference, sectarian religious activities will be permitted under the leadership of certified volunteers. These activities will be arranged in advance by the chaplain or designee, and be approved by the Superintendent.
<p>D. Use of volunteers and contract staff for religious services and programs</p>	<p>All volunteers and contract staff associated with religious services and programs will be screened, trained, and approved through the procedures outlined in the <i>Department of Children's Services Volunteer Procedure Manual</i>.</p>
<p>E. Religious materials and equipment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The chaplain or designee assigned to religious programs, with the coordination of the superintendent will review and approve donations of equipment and materials for use in religious programs. All donations will be accepted in accordance with DCS policy <u>30.3, State Personal Property</u>. 2. There will not be any religious materials or paraphernalia maintained in the general living areas of the facility. 3. When appropriate, liturgical apparel may be worn during a religious activity. When not in use, this apparel will be stored by staff.
<p>F. Other religious services</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requests for special religious diets will be coordinated through the food service staff and the DCS Director of Food Services. 2. Youth who request spiritual guidance and/or counseling from the staff will be referred to the chaplain, designee, or an approved volunteer of the youth's preferred faith. 3. Youth who express a desire to be baptized or make a commitment to a particular religion will be referred by the chaplain, designee, or approved volunteer to a person of that faith for assistance. When requested, staff will assist the youth in facilitating their spiritual adjustment upon re-entry into the community.

Forms:	None
Collateral documents:	<u>Department of Children's Services Volunteer Procedure Manual</u>