

North Carolina Department of Correction

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Michael F. Easley
Governor

Theodis Beck
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Julia Boseman
Representative R. Phillip Haire
Senator Eleanor Kinnaird
Representative Joe Kiser
Representative Marian McLawhorn

FROM: *Tracy A. Little*
Tracy A. Little, Deputy Secretary

RE: Legislative Report on Domestic Violence Offender Supervision
(S.L. 2005-356, Section 3)

DATE: January 11, 2007

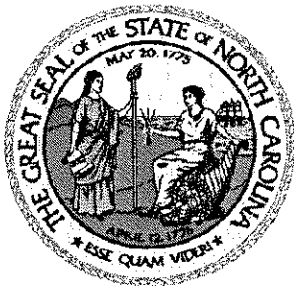
Pursuant to Session Law 2005-356 (House Bill 569), please find attached a report on measures the Division of Community Corrections is undertaking to address the issue of supervising domestic violence offenders.

TL/ea

Attachment

cc: Jim Mills
Sheryl Stephens

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION**



Division of Community Corrections

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT
ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENDER
SUPERVISION**

January 1, 2007

Michael F. Easley
Governor

Robert Lee Guy
Director

Theodis Beck
Secretary

DIVISION OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM

S.L. 2005-356 (House Bill 569)

SECTION 3. The Department of Correction, Division of Community Corrections, shall make a written report no later than January 1, 2007, to the Joint Legislative Committee on Domestic Violence and the Joint Legislative Corrections, Crime Control, and Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee on measures the Division is undertaking to address the issue of supervising domestic violence offenders.

Introduction

For more than two years, the Division of Community Corrections has worked to enhance the supervision of domestic violence offenders within our communities. Most important, DCC has moved to a victim-centered approach that focuses on close supervision of the offender and the use of treatment resources to address inappropriate thinking concepts and related behaviors that lead to violent outcomes. This report addresses changes the Division has implemented to address the needs of domestic violence offenders more effectively and to enhance victim safety. Those changes focus on providing close supervision and control of domestic violence offenders; enhancing the safety of domestic violence victims; ensuring that the batterer completes treatment; and coordinating the efforts of the courts, law enforcement, treatment providers and victim advocates.

DCC Advisory Task Force

The Division chartered an advisory task force to review changes in domestic violence laws and current practices related to supervision of domestic violence offenders. The group began its work in 2004 and expanded its membership in 2006 to better represent all stakeholders. The task force membership includes:

- DCC Administration
- DCC Domestic Violence Officers
- Judicial Officials
- Law Enforcement
- NC Council for Women/DV Commission
- DOC Victim Services
- Governor's Crime Commission Staff
- NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation
- District Attorneys
- Prevent Child Abuse NC

The work of this group resulted in several initiatives, including case management standards for domestic violence offenders, collaborative partnerships with treatment providers and victim service providers and specialized training in the supervision of domestic violence offenders.

➤ Case Management Standards for Probation/Parole Officers

The Division standardized case management policy regarding supervision of domestic violence offenders, including warrantless searches, removal of weapons and continuous verification of treatment attendance and completion. In addition, the probation officer must make sure that the offender complies with the requirements of any 50B protective order requirements. The Division of Community Corrections and Administrative Office

of the Courts signed an agreement during the year that provides probation/parole officers with access to the AOC Civil System (VACP) in order to review 50B protective orders.

➤ Collaborative Partnerships

The Division has developed a model memorandum of understanding for domestic violence supervision. This memorandum is an attempt to outline local processes, protocols, roles and responsibilities of all agencies involved with a domestic violence offender. The agreement notes the probation officer as the lead agent in the offender's supervision, while bringing clarity to the inter-related roles of various team members.

The memorandum establishes information sharing processes, joint case planning principles and case staffing sessions to coordinate abuser treatment, victim safety and offender supervision. This team approach is designed to enable joint decision-making while tracking offender progress, which prevents the offender from playing one agency against another or from providing different responses to each agency. The agreement also outlines a process to address dual issues, such as the combination of abuser treatment participation while also attending substance abuse treatment. The agreement coordinates responsibilities for risk and needs assessments of the offender, lethality assessments and associated responses and victim safety planning, including responses to safety issues. The notification process to victims at the local level is also clarified within the agreement. During early 2007 the Division will be involved in the rollout of this new agreement memorandum in each judicial district.

➤ Training

In FY 2005-06, 151 Division of Community Corrections staff attended various training opportunities related to domestic violence. This training was sponsored by various DCC partners such as the Governor's Crime Commission, the North Carolina Victims Assistance Network, and the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

In addition, the task force helped develop specific domestic violence training for probation/parole officers. The division will use a four-track curriculum to train officers and supervisory personnel on best practices in domestic violence offender supervision. Training is scheduled to be completed by the middle of 2007.

DCC Domestic Violence Offenders By The Numbers

- Domestic Violence Offenders--Admissions 2,252 (Annual 12/05-12/06)
- Domestic Violence Offenders--Exits 902 (Annual 12/05-12/06)
- Domestic Violence Offenders--Revocations 488 (Annual 12/05-12/06)
- Average Length of Stay 348 Days
- Twelve (12) Judicial Districts specializing in DV caseloads
- 247 victims of DV registered for notification

During 2007, the Division will implement the use of the memorandum of understanding as a standard statewide practice, and also will deliver specialized training to officers throughout the state. The Division will continue to research best practices in the supervision of domestic violence offenders, working to enhance the supervision provided on a continual basis. The

use of the task force will be an ongoing focus as well, utilizing the advice of professionals from across the spectrum of domestic violence services.