

 <p style="text-align: center;">ALLEGHENY COUNTY BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS</p>	APPLICABILITY: All Authorized Personnel	
	POLICY NUMBER: #435	EFFECTIVE: 2/7/15 REVIEWED: 4/5/23
	TITLE: Religious Activities ACA Standards 5C-17, 5C-18, 5C-19, 5C-20, 5C-21, 5C-22, 5C-23, 5C-24	
	AUTHORIZED BY: ORLANDO L. HARPER SIGNATURE: <i>Orlando L. Harper</i>	

POLICY

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines related to the provision of religious programming in the Allegheny County Jail.

APPLICABLE POPULATIONS

The religious policies and guidelines set forth in this document shall apply to all religious programs involving inmates, staff, contract employees, and volunteers at the Allegheny County Jail.

POLICY

1. The policy of the Allegheny County Jail shall be to permit each inmate to satisfy the needs of his/her religious life consistent with the security needs and orderly administration of the institution. Participation or non-participation in religion is a matter of voluntary choice on the part of each inmate, limited only by documentation showing a threat to the safety of persons involved in such activity itself or disruption of order in the facility. It is the purpose of this directive to establish general guidelines for institutional religious activities.
2. The institution’s religious program shall be coordinated and supervised by a Chaplain with the minimum qualifications of clinical pastoral education or equivalent specialized training and endorsed by the appropriate religious certifying body. The Chaplain assures equal status and protection of all religions.
3. The Chaplain in cooperation with the Jail Administration plans, directs, and supervises all aspects of the religious program. This includes but is not limited to the approval and training of both lay and clergy volunteers from faith represented in the inmate population. The Chaplain’s staff and coordinators will have access to all areas of the facility to minister to inmates and staff.

4. The Bureau of Corrections will provide adequate space to the Chaplain's Office for the facilitation and coordination of all religious services.

PROCEDURES

When a religious leader of an inmates faith is not represented through the chaplaincy staff or volunteers, The Director of Chaplaincy Services or his/her designee will assist the inmate in contacting such a person. The Bureau of Corrections will provide for the accommodation of religious practices consistent with the security needs and the orderly administration of the Jail. Inmates wishing to request accommodations for a religious practice or activity must write a request to the Chaplain's Office. Accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis and approved by the Director of Chaplaincy Services. The religious leader must have the appropriate credentials from the faith's judiciary and may minister to the inmate under the supervision of the Chaplain.

A. Clergy Visits/Religious Advisors

1. A Religious Advisor is a qualified representative, clergy or lay, from the outside community who has received written endorsement from the recognized authority of their faith group as a person competent to provide spiritual counseling and guidance to inmates. Individuals wishing to provide religious guidance to inmates shall be verified, screened and selected by the Director of Chaplaincy Services.
2. Religious Advisor visits will take place in the non-contact visiting booths. The approved Religious Advisor may arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of the visit; if there is an available visiting window at the time, the Religious Advisor may visit. If there are no visiting windows available, the approved Religious Advisor will have to sign up for the next visit.
3. An approved religious volunteer may serve as a Religious Advisor for an individual inmate with the approval of the Director of Chaplaincy.
4. The Religious Advisor will serve in accordance with the policies and procedures governing visits. A Religious Advisor may be suspended for just cause upon the recommendation of the Director of Chaplaincy.
5. No family member will be permitted to serve as a Religious Advisor to an inmate.
6. The Religious Advisor will be permitted to bring only their formal book of faith (Bible, Qur'an, or their equivalent) for their visit. The Religious Advisor must take said book with them upon leaving the visit and institution.

7. Each inmate will only be permitted to select one Religious Advisor, although a Religious Advisor may serve as such for more than one inmate.

B. Religious Activities

1. Scheduling

All religious activities will be scheduled through the Director of Chaplaincy Services, will be conducted on a regularly scheduled basis, and will be approved by the Warden or his/her designated representative. In so far as possible, the religious activities of all groups will be scheduled at times consistent with the religious beliefs of the group.

2. Location of Religious Activities

Whenever possible, religious activities will take place in a location separate from the pod dayroom (e.g., interview room, multi-purpose room, chapel, gym, etc.). The administration will approve the locations of religious activities based on the classification level of the residents involved.

3. Special Events

Community participation in special religious services and activities will be permitted with the approval of the Warden, subject to required security and orderly operation of the facility.

4. Leadership of Activities

Religious activities scheduled through the Chaplain's Office will be conducted either by members of the Chaplain's staff or by approved religious volunteers.

The only exception to this policy is when a representative from the religious faith tradition of those incarcerated, due to limited volunteers and/or inmate movement restrictions, is not able to lead inmates of a particular faith in worship or study on a regular basis.

In these cases, the inmates on a particular pod may request that the Director of Chaplaincy or his/her designated staff select a qualified inmate to lead the inmates on that respective pod in worship or study according to the practices of that faith tradition.

This appointment must be approved in advance by the Director of Chaplaincy and the Warden or their designated representatives. These services will take

place at an approved time utilizing the interview room on the respective pod. Inmate-led services/studies that are not conducted in an orderly fashion, are disruptive to the pod, or whose focus is not of a religious nature shall be suspended pending review by the Director of Chaplaincy Services and the Warden or their designated representatives.

C. Religious Volunteers

1. Religious Volunteer Training

All religious volunteers are required to undergo an orientation to jail ministries, be accountable to an outside faith community, pass a security background check, and be approved by both the Chaplain's Office and the Jail Administration.

2. See also Policies #137 - Volunteer Services and #186 - Religious Volunteers.

D. Religious Articles and Accoutrements

Inmates are permitted to possess religious objects consistent with the security needs and orderly administration of the facility. All requests for religious articles and accoutrements must be screened and approved by the Chaplain's Office. Inmates in possession of religious articles and accoutrements that are not consistent with those outlined in the policy are considered contraband and will be treated as such.

1. Religious Medallions/Pendants

Religious medallions or pendants pertinent to an inmate's faith will be permitted in the institution and may be worn by the inmate provided such medals do not constitute a security problem and provided the inmate had such on his/her possession when brought to the jail. Medals must not exceed the size of a quarter (must be less than one inch in diameter or length) and must not exceed fifty dollars (\$50.00) in value of the chain and medallion or pendant combined.

2. Religious Garments

Religious garments as described herein are permitted provided such garments do not constitute a security problem under the established rules of the

Allegheny County Jail. All garments are subject to be searched at any time for security reasons.

The only religious garments permitted in the jail are those:

- worn by the inmate upon entrance into the jail,
- donated to or purchased by the Chaplain's Office for distribution to inmates of a particular faith, or
- purchased by the inmate through commissary, if available.

No religious garment(s) designated by an outside individual for a specific inmate will be permitted in the County Jail.

Permitted Religious Garments:

a. Kippah or Yarmulke

Male inmates of the Jewish faith will be permitted to wear the Yarmulke (skull cap) in all areas of the institution, including at mealtimes, pursuant to the requirements of their religion. They can be removed and searched at any time for security reasons. Each Jewish inmate will be permitted to maintain no more than two (2) Yarmulkes at one time.

b. Kufi

Male inmates of the Muslim faith will be permitted to wear the Kufi in all areas of the institution, including at mealtimes, pursuant to the requirements of their religion. They can be removed and searched at any time for security reasons. Each Muslim inmate will be permitted to maintain no more than two (2) Kufis at one time.

c. Hijab/Head scarves

Female inmates of the Muslim faith will be permitted to wear the hijab or head scarves in all areas of the institution, including at mealtimes, pursuant to the requirements of their religion. They can be removed and searched in private by same gender jail staff at any time for security reasons. These scarves shall not be worn to cover the face.

When not in use they can be kept by the inmate. The size can be no more than 28" x 28"; however, it can be smaller. Each female Muslim inmate is permitted to maintain no more than two (2) hijab or head scarves at one time.

d. Rastafari Crown/Cap

Male inmates of the Rastafari faith will be permitted to wear the Rastafarian crown/cap (often knitted or crocheted) in all areas of the institution including at mealtimes, pursuant to the requirements of their religion. They can be removed and searched at any time for security reasons. Each Rastafari inmate will be permitted to maintain no more than two (2) crowns/caps at one time.

e. Other Religious Garments

Other religious garments that would otherwise be considered contraband (e.g. the turban of a Sikh, the veil and wimple of a Catholic nun; the snood, tichel, or Sheitel of a Jewish woman, etc.) will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Inmates must make a formal request to the Director of Chaplaincy Services. A decision to grant the request will be made in consultation with the Director of Chaplaincy Services and the Warden or their designated representatives.

3. Other Religious Accoutrements

a. Native American Medicine Bags

Native American inmates will be permitted to have their Native American medicine bag so long as the Allegheny County Jail policies are not violated and security concerns are not jeopardized.

Medicine bags may be searched at any time, but must not be touched by a non-Native American. Inmates may be requested to empty the medicine bag contents onto a piece of paper for a visual search.

b. Religious Beads

Inmates are permitted to have religious or prayer beads pursuant to their religious practice so long as the Allegheny County Jail policies are not violated and security concerns are not jeopardized.

These include but are not limited to Rosary or prayer Beads for Christians, Dhikr Beads for Muslims, Mala Beads for Buddhists, etc.

Religious Beads, in order to be authentic, must be approved by the Director of Chaplaincy. All Religious Beads are limited to 1/4" diameter and inmates are limited to one (1) set of beads.

c. Prayer Rugs

Muslim inmates are permitted to have one prayer rug each not larger than 36 by 48 inches. These rugs will remain in the inmate's cell except when used for previously approved religious services at a designated time on or off the pod.

d. Other Religious Accoutrements

Other religious accoutrements that are less common will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Director of Chaplaincy Services and the Warden or their designated representatives.

E. Literature

Religious literature is permitted in the institution provided it is approved as religious literature by the Chaplain's Office and is inspected for contraband by the jail staff.

F. Special Foods, Diets and Fasts

Accommodations will be provided for special foods, diets and fasts as a part of an inmate's religious practices consistent with the security needs and orderly operation administration of the facility. Inmates may request religious diet accommodations through the Chaplain's Office. All religious diet accommodations will be approved by the Director of Chaplaincy or his/her designated representative according to the standards of each faith.

Special foods, diets, or fasts may be accommodated as required for the celebration of major religious holidays provided they are approved by the Director of Chaplaincy or his/her designated representative.

G. Inmates on Special Housing

Inmates on restricted housing units, the institution infirmary, or mental health pods will be visited by chaplains on a weekly basis.

H. Donation of Materials

The Director of Chaplaincy Services in cooperation with the Jail Administration will develop and maintain communications with faith organizations and approve the donation of equipment and materials needed for the use of religious programs.

SUSPENSION DURING EMERGENCY

In an extended emergency situation or extended disruption of normal institution operation, any provision or section of the directive may be suspended by the Warden for a specific period of time.

RIGHTS UNDER THIS DIRECTIVE

This directive sets out policy and procedure. It does not create rights in any person nor should it be interpreted or applied in such a manner as to abridge the rights of any individual. The directive should be interpreted to have sufficient flexibility so as to be consistent with law and to permit the accomplishment of the purpose of the directives and policies of the Allegheny County Jail.