



**Rockwall County  
Sheriff's Office  
Detention Division  
Policy and Procedures**

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| <b>Policy:</b><br>Religious Practice Plan   | <b>Policy #:</b><br>E-1001           |
| <b>Procedure:</b><br>Requirements for Religious Practices and Volunteers            | <b>Effective Date:</b><br>08/12/2004 |
| <b>Revised Date(s):</b><br>03/19/07    11/19/07    05/10/10<br>09/30/11    12/09/15 | <b>Approved By:</b>                  |

It is the policy of the Rockwall County Detention Center to extend to all offenders as much freedom and opportunity as possible for perusing individual beliefs and practices, consistent with security, safety, and order in the facility. Chaplain services will be provided in a manner, which allows for the exercise of freedom of religion by inmates. Programs and services are provided relative to demand, need, and resources. Classes, worship services, and counseling tend to be aligned, at times, with the various segments of religious affiliation within the inmate population. Participation in such activities and attendance at religious classes and worship services is completely voluntary. Chaplaincy services will be carried out in a manner, which shows respect for the religious beliefs and preferences of individual offenders. Chaplaincy volunteers will not openly refute, depreciate, or belittle the stated beliefs of a particular inmate, beyond a causal, non-confrontational discussion or comparison of beliefs.

The Chaplaincy Program is committed to promoting an atmosphere, which allows those desiring spiritual wholeness, the necessary conditions for experiencing such. Religious services provides one-on-one ministry, counseling, and dealing with being incarcerated. The Chaplaincy program is dependent upon the current offenders for coping with the pressures, pain, and consequently the reality of daily living. The Chaplaincy Program is dependent upon the current offender population, size, and expertise of the volunteer pool, available facility space, and time restrictions, so services are provided accordingly. Church services are available on Sunday mornings and Thursday evenings.

Any inmate who wishes to carry out any religious practice that would ordinarily violate facility rules or require special accommodations must request the needs in writing to the Jail Administrator. The inmate must provide evidence that his or her request is in fact bona fide. The Jail Administrator will make the decision whether or not to allow the practice and make known the decision to the inmate in writing within 5 days. Should the inmate disagree with the decision, he or she may file a grievance to the Sheriff in accordance with policy F-200.

Religious services will be held in one of three areas within the facility. Female inmates will be placed in the South Multipurpose room. Depending on the size of the male inmates group, services will be held either in the North Hall Law Library or the recreation area.

**RELIGION PLAN**

All inmates will be permitted to practice the religion of their choice, which will be restricted only to the extent necessary to insure the safety and security of the facility, staff, and the inmates.

- 1) All volunteers must be a minimum 18 years of age.
- 2) ID card and jail approval of record review.
- 3) Release form
- 4) Letter of recommendation (Local Church, Pastor)
- 5) Volunteers will only be able to minister to the offenders of the same sex as themselves. In special instances, Chaplains may be able to minister to those of opposite sex, but the ministry will be restricted to a physical area outside the general containment area for offenders of that sex. Such permitted

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instances might be suicide counseling, death notice, counseling, and other situations regarding critical life circumstances. The RCDC Supervisors will decide when such ministry services are needed and they will contact appropriate Chaplain or Chaplaincy representative to arrange for such services.

- 6) Availability of ministry opportunities between inmates and volunteers will be dependant on time, space, security, and available jail staff supervision. This might mean that some volunteers may be directed to other facilities, such as a State Jail, or prisons, which have greater need for volunteers.
- 7) Attendance at religious services will be limited to a combination of 2 Chaplains or volunteers per services. Class instructions may be accompanied by a maximum of 1 other volunteer for any other class.
- 8) Volunteers shall not give legal advice, nor shall they become involved in the legal process regarding any inmate, unless ordered or subpoenaed by the Court.
- 9) Volunteers will not bring in or take out any money, commodity or other contraband item to an inmate, nor will they aid in the transfer of such items between inmates. Volunteers will not take anything out of the facility for an inmate. Volunteers are not to bring any item into the jail that has not been approved by the Rockwall County Detention Center.
- 10) All volunteers are expected to dress in a reasonable, modest manner that will not excite, distract, or upset an inmate.
- 11) All volunteers will be issued an identification card with their picture. They shall show the county issued I.D. card to jail staff before being allowed in the facility. If the volunteer does not have their county issued I.D., they will not be allowed in the facility.

Rockwall County Detention Center also offers religious based programs. Current programs that are authorized at RCDC include:

**Woman Set Free:**

*Woman Set Free* is a non-denominational, Christian, faith-based organization created to minister to the spiritual needs of women who are or have been in prison. The program incorporates spiritual guidance, life skills, skills to become employed, and provides resources for employment for the female inmates that attend the program. The inmates that complete the program are rewarded with a certificate after attending six services and completing homework assignments from the services. Each service includes lessons from The Bible and Christian songs. The program is completely voluntary and offered to female inmates only. The program will be offered on the following schedule:

- Tuesdays, 12:15 – 13:15

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