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SECRETARY

PROCEDURE NUMBER: 501.104

PROCEDURE TITLE: ADMINISTRATION OF GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GED) TESTING

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONS, PROGRAM SERVICES

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RELEVANT DC FORMS: DC5-105

OTHER RELEVANT FORMS: SURVEILLANCE LOG

ACA/CAC: 4-4464

STATE/FEDERAL STATUTES: SECTIONS 944.801

FLORIDA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE: CHAPTER 6A-6.021, F.A.C.

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for general educational development testing in the department. (4-4464)

DEFINITIONS:

- (1) **Alternate Chief Examiner**, where used herein, refers to the program managers, lead educators, or placement and testing specialists as recommended by the chief jurisdictional officer and approved by the State General Educational Development Testing Office and the General Educational Development Testing Service of the American Council on Education.
- (2) **Chief Examiner**, where used herein, refers to the Assistant Chief, Education Services, Office of Institutions, Program Services.

- (3) **Chief Jurisdictional Officer**, where used herein, refers to the Assistant Director, Office of Institutions, Program Services, Bureau of Programs.
- (4) **GED**, where used herein, refers to General Educational Development.
- (5) **GED Tests**, where used herein, refers to the General Educational Development tests which consist of five (5) subject area tests leading to qualification for a State of Florida high school diploma.
- (6) **GED Testing Emergency Plan**, where used herein, refers to the emergency operating procedures approved by the Department of Education for handling GED materials in an emergency situation during a GED testing session.
- (7) **General Educational Development Testing Service** refers to the federal office located in Washington, D.C., which is responsible for the administration, supervision, and integrity of the GED testing program with participating government and contracting agencies.
- (8) **Institutional Administration**, where used herein, refers to the warden, assistant warden of programs, and the educational supervisor.
- (9) **Lead Educator**, where used herein, refers to the education supervisor, or any other institutional staff member that the warden appoints to oversee educational programming for inmates.
- (10) **Pre-GED Test**, where used herein, refers to the official practice GED test used to qualify inmates for GED testing.
- (11) **Proctor**, where used herein, refers to the correctional officer or other non-academic Department of Corrections' staff recommended by the chief examiner and approved by the state GED testing office.
- (12) **Program Director**, where used herein, refers to the individual in the Florida Department of Education who oversees the state's GED testing program.
- (13) **Qualified Professionals**, where used herein, refers to a physician, special education teacher, or an educational psychologist.
- (14) **Special Education Administrator** refers to the operations and management consultant manager in the special education section of the Bureau of Programs who is responsible for the oversight of special education services and for providing training to Florida Department of Corrections' special education staff.
- (15) **Tests of Adult Basic Education** refers to one (1) of the standardized tests approved by the Florida Department of Education and used by the Department of Corrections for assessment of academic skills and/or progress. It is a series of five (5) tests at five (5) levels that yield both normed scores

and skill and outcome performance scores covering reading, mathematics computation, applied mathematics, language, and spelling.

- (16) **Testing Coordinator**, where used herein, refers to a research and training specialist in the Bureau of Programs who serves as the central office alternate chief examiner. The testing coordinator is responsible for coordinating GED testing and for providing statewide staff training.
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SPECIFIC PROCEDURES:

- (1) Administration of the GED test will comply with GED test policy specifications outlined in the GED Examiner's Manual published by The General Educational Development Testing Service of The American Council on Education, the State Board of Education Rules, and the State of Florida GED Administrator's Handbook.

(2) OFFICIAL GED TESTING CENTER AND TEST SITES:

(a) Recommendations and Approvals:

- (b) The chief jurisdictional officer will recommend additions or changes of test sites and alternate chief examiners. The alternate chief examiners must have a bachelor's degree and background in teaching, training, counseling, or testing, and cannot instruct potential GED candidates.

1. The chief examiner will recommend the approval of proctors.
 - a. The proctor will assist and work in concert with the alternate chief examiner, but is not permitted to conduct a testing session(s) without direct, constant supervision.
 - b. The GED proctor must have a high school or GED diploma and will not be a person instructing potential candidates for GED tests.
 - c. Vocational teachers and teacher aides will not serve as proctors.
2. Final approval for all GED test sites and personnel will come from the State GED Testing Office, Florida Department of Education, and GED Testing Service.

- (c) At approved GED testing sites, one (1) alternate chief examiner will be designated as the lead alternate chief examiner and will be accountable for all aspects of GED test administration and processes, as prescribed in the GED Examiner's Manual and the State of Florida GED Administrator's Handbook.

- (d) During GED testing, only approved testing personnel will be allowed in the testing room with inmates who are authorized to test.

(3) **PROCESSING AND SECURING GED AND PRE-GED MATERIALS AT TEST SITES:**

- (a) The lead alternate chief examiner will be responsible for all aspects of GED and pre-GED test administration at the institution as follows:
 - 1. maintaining the security of GED and pre-GED test materials and essay topics at the institution;
 - 2. reporting irregularities;
 - 3. submitting statistical data to the testing coordinator;
 - 4. ordering GED testing booklets, answer sheets, and transmittal forms from the testing coordinator;
 - 5. scheduling tests;
 - 6. inventorying and checking GED and pre-GED test materials before, during, and after test administrations;
 - 7. scheduling staff to pat down (search) each inmate entering and leaving every GED testing session;
 - 8. maintaining and reviewing all test surveillance logs, seating charts, testing session reports, testing irregularity reports, and other documentation;
 - 9. returning GED materials to testing coordinator and the program director, Florida Department of Education;
 - 10. recording test results on OBIS; and
 - 11. adhering to the "GED Testing Emergency Plan."
- (b) The lead alternate chief examiner may designate any of the above listed tasks to an alternate chief examiner.
- (c) Duties of proctors include:
 - 1. maintaining visual supervision of the examinees;
 - 2. observing examinees carefully for collusion, cheating, and other improprieties or irregularities;
 - 3. distributing and collecting test booklets, answer sheets, and scratch paper; and
 - 4. maintaining the test surveillance log.
- (d) The following mailing instructions will be followed by all applicable department staff.
 - 1. Prior to ordering the GED materials, the alternate chief examiner will follow written procedures as set forth by the GED Examiner's Manual and department guidelines for receiving and storing GED materials at the institution.
 - 2. The testing coordinator will send GED materials to the institution, addressed to the attention of the lead alternate chief examiner who is responsible for testing at that institution.
 - 3. The mailroom staff will neither open the GED testing materials nor search the contents of the box, except in the presence of an alternate chief examiner.

- (e) In order to ensure the safeguarding of all testing materials, the alternate chief examiners will:
 - 1. maintain test booklets, answer sheets, and other GED and pre-GED materials in a manner to prevent loss, damage, theft, or unauthorized access to test materials;
 - 2. secure GED and pre-GED test materials in a locked file cabinet, container, or safe in an area that is accessible only to alternate chief examiners; (Under no circumstances may the materials be stored in any location that is accessible to other staff members or inmates. The secure storage provided should not be in the institution's administration building.) and
 - 3. be the only persons with access to the keys or combination to the lock. If a file cabinet is used for the storage, it should employ an external steel bar lock.
- (f) GED test materials will immediately be inventoried by an alternate chief examiner upon receipt, before and after each test administration, and prior to returning the materials to the central office.
- (g) Pre-GED test materials will immediately be inventoried by an alternate chief examiner before and after each test administration.
- (h) The alternate chief examiners will never allow reproduction or destruction of test booklets.
- (i) In case of loss or theft of pre-GED and GED materials or unauthorized access to test materials, the following guidelines will be followed:
 - 1. The lead alternate chief examiner will immediately notify the program manager and the testing coordinator;
 - 2. For GED materials only, the testing coordinator will immediately notify the program director, Florida Department of Education; and
 - 3. Within twenty-four (24) hours of discovery of loss, theft, or unauthorized access to test materials, the lead alternate chief examiner will complete an "Educational Testing Incident Report," DC5-105, which will be forwarded to the program manager, the testing coordinator, and the warden.
- (j) Within twenty four (24) hours of completion of GED testing, the alternate chief examiner will complete the following:
 - 1. All test booklets and a copy of the test surveillance log will be placed in a sealed box and returned to the testing coordinator;
 - 2. GED materials will be returned to the testing coordinator by United Parcel Services or Federal Express; and
 - 3. All answer sheets and transmittal forms will be returned in a sealed envelope or box, by United Parcel Services or Federal Express, to the program director, Florida Department of Education.

- (4) **STAFF TRAINING**: The testing coordinator and the alternate chief examiners will attend approved GED in-service training at least once annually.
- (5) **PAYMENT PROCESS**: The lead educator will ensure that costs for GED testing materials are paid from funds allocated to the institutional education department.
- (6) **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR TEST TAKING**: The established criteria for eligibility of candidates to take the GED practice test and test are as follows:
- (a) To qualify for the official practice GED test, the inmate must score at a 9.0 grade level or higher in reading, total math, language, and total battery on a “D” or “A” level tests of adult basic education, forms 7 or 8. Tests of adult basic education scores must be recorded on OBIS and taken within one (1) year prior to GED testing.
 - (b) The inmate must score a minimum of 450 on each subtest and minimum total score of 2250 on the “Official Practice GED Test” administered by the alternate chief examiner. Qualifying scores must be achieved within one (1) year prior to GED testing. Pre-GED scores must be recorded on OBIS prior to GED testing.
 - (c) Exceptions to the above requirement must be approved in writing by the testing coordinator.
- (7) **TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS**:
- (a) For inmates with disabilities, testing accommodations will be made available if there is a documented need. Accommodations may include:
 - 1. extra time,
 - 2. private room,
 - 3. frequent breaks,
 - 4. interpreter,
 - 5. scribe, or
 - 6. use of a calculator.
 - (b) Qualified professionals will document the need for accommodations.
 - (c) Methods of documenting the need for accommodations on the GED include:
 - 1. a review of public school records for inmates with a disability by qualified professionals, and
 - 2. documentation of the type(s) of testing accommodation needed.
 - a. The public school records may also contain an educational psychological evaluation that documents the need for testing accommodations.

- b. If the public school records are unavailable, first the department education staff will administer the tests of adult basic education without accommodations to establish baseline data.
 - c. Second, the department education staff will administer the tests of adult basic education with accommodations to document the need for such accommodations.
 - (d) If accommodations are needed, the alternate chief examiner will ensure that the special education teacher or other designated staff will complete the "GED Accommodations Request" found in the GED Examiner's Manual and submit the form to the special education administrator in the central office for approval and processing.
- (8) **RECORD KEEPING AND HANDLING OF GED DIPLOMAS AND SCORES**: Upon receipt of GED scores and diplomas from the program director, the lead alternate chief examiner (institutions) or designee will:
- (a) record the GED scores on the DC38 screen in OBIS;
 - (b) not allow an inmate to retain the original or copy(ies) of the GED diploma; (The alternate chief examiner will mail the original GED diploma to a person designated by the inmate, at department expense.)
 - (c) within sixty (60) days of test completion, send a copy of test results received from the Florida Department of Education to the testing coordinator; and
 - (d) maintain appropriate statistical data and provide reports on the GED testing programs as prescribed by the Office of Institutions, Program Services and GED Testing Service.

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James V. Crosby, Jr., Secretary