



**.STATE OF MONTANA  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
POLICY DIRECTIVE**

Policy No. DOC 4.2.3	Subject: <b>UNIT MANAGEMENT</b>
Chapter 4: FACILITY / PROGRAM SERVICES	Page 1 of
Section 2: Classification	Effective Date: July 1, 1998
Signature: /s/ Mike Ferriter, Director	Revised: 03/22/12

**I. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Montana Department of Corrections to utilize, where practical, a unit management system in its facilities in order to decentralize authority, more effectively deliver programs and services to offenders, and oversee the operation of housing areas.

**II. APPLICABILITY**

All divisions, facilities, and programs Department-owned and contracted, as specified in contract.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

Direct Supervision - Method of offender management that ensures continuing direct contact between offenders and staff by posting staff in the offender living area with a heavy reliance on personal interaction for offender supervision.

Service Providers - This term includes contracted persons, volunteers, interns, temporary employees, or other vendors providing service whose assignment is primarily on Department premises, e.g. facility or program office.

Unit Management - Management system that subdivides an institution into units.

Unit - A self-contained living area, ideally housing fewer than 150 but not more than 500 offenders; staff members have decision-making authority for institutional programming and living conditions for assigned offenders within broad rules, policies, and guidelines established by the Department and/or administrator.

**IV. DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES**

**A. Unit Management**

1. To the extent that resources permit, each facility/program will be organized under a unit management system that increases contact between staff and offenders, fosters increased interpersonal relationships, and leads to more knowledgeable decision making as a direct result of staff dealing with a smaller, more permanent group.

**B. Unit Team**

1. Each unit will be staffed by a unit team consisting of Department employees and service providers working in the unit directly responsible for the residing offenders.
2. Staff offices will be located in the unit so employees and offenders are accessible to each other.

3. Unit team may include:
  - a. a unit manager;
  - b. shift sergeants;
  - c. case managers;
  - d. counselors;
  - e. service providers;
  - f. correctional officers; and
  - g. representatives from other facilities/programs serving as ad hoc team members.
4. Offenders are assigned to a unit team upon receiving housing assignments.
5. Unique needs of the offender population may dictate that more or less staff be assigned to a particular unit based on security, program, and treatment.
6. When possible, a minimum of one unit team member should be scheduled when offenders are not working or in programs.

### **C. Responsibilities**

1. Responsibilities of the unit team include:
  - a. program planning;
  - b. responding to classification questions;
  - c. parole matters;
  - d. release planning;
  - e. assisting personal and family issues; and
  - f. counseling.
2. The unit manager (or similar position) responsibilities include:
  - a. oversight of all unit programs and activities;
  - b. maintaining a close working relationship with facility/program personnel;
  - c. chairing the unit team and reviewing team decisions; and
  - d. oversight of sanitation and other on-unit programs.
3. The shift supervisor responsibilities include:
  - a. supervising activities of staff and offenders in daily operations of the unit; and
  - b. overall security, safety, and orderly operation of the unit during shift.
4. The case manager (or similar position) serves as the primary contact point between the offender, administration, and community; typical responsibilities include:
  - a. casework and many social services functions;
  - b. preparation of classification and parole reports;
  - c. assisting offenders with release plans; and
  - d. processing offender-related correspondence and other materials relating to the offender's commitment.
5. The unit counselor (or similar position) is a trained staff member who may:
  - a. provide services such as counseling and guidance for offenders in regards to institutional conduct, personal difficulties, and planning for the future;

**Subject: UNIT MANAGEMENT**

- b. visit offender work and program assignments regularly;
  - c. be the first resource for offenders in resolving daily problems; and
  - d. provide crisis counseling.
6. Service providers may perform clerical and administrative duties.
  7. Correctional officers and service providers responsible for direct supervision or care are encouraged to establish professional relationships, they shall:
    - a. provide daily supervision of offenders;
    - b. enforce rules and regulations;
    - c. oversee safety, security, and sanitation in the unit.
  8. A casework supervisor position may be established as a specialty position to provide supervision of case managers, and may serve in an advisory and consultant role to unit staff.

**D. Communication**

1. The primary communication in the unit management system is personal contact between staff and offenders. Unit staff may maintain bulletin boards with written information that may be of interest to offenders. Unit Managers may utilize group and individual meetings, at their discretion, to improve communications in the unit.

**E. Offender Case Reviews by Unit Team**

1. Reviews may be held for initial classification of offenders after orientation and testing are complete, to adjust programs or work assignments, review transfer or custody reduction requests, and to gather the information necessary for reports to the paroling authority. Offenders will be provided with a written advisement of each team action resulting from a case review.

**G. Appeals**

1. Facility/program procedure will establish the process by which offenders may appeal unit team actions.

**V. CLOSING**

Questions concerning this policy shall be directed to facility unit managers.

**VI. REFERENCES**

A. [53-1-203, MCA](#)

B. *ACA Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, Fourth Edition, 2009*

**VII. ATTACHMENTS**

None