



**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS BUREAU  
FACILITY OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENT**

Requirement:	<b>PFB 6.2.472 OFFENDER HEALTH CARE ACCESS</b>
Effective Date:	08/01/2023 <span style="float: right;">Page 1 of 2</span>
Revision Date(s):	
Reference(s):	DOC 4.5.15; 53-1-203, MCA
Signature / Title:	/s/ Megan Coy, Community Corrections Facilities and Programs Bureau Chief

**This procedure is referenced as *PPD 4.5.1500 Offender Health Care Access* in Section 3.J. Offender Management; Healthcare, in the following contracts: Alpha House, Butte Prerelease, Elkhorn, Gallatin County Reentry Program, Helena Prerelease, Nexus, Passages, and START. This procedure is also referenced in Section 2.2.9. Services; Healthcare, in the following contracts: Connections Corrections Program (CCP) East, Connections Corrections Program (CCP) West, and WATCH West.**

**I. PURPOSE:**

All facilities contracted with the Community Corrections Facilities and Programs Bureau (FPB) will follow established procedures in providing offenders with access to medical, mental health, and dental services and will ensure offenders are instructed upon admission on how to obtain these services.

**II. DEFINITIONS:**

**Access to Care** – A system in which a patient is seen by a clinician in a timely manner, given an appropriate diagnosis, and receives the required care.

**Community Corrections Facilities and Programs Bureau** – The Bureau oversees the facilities providing assessments and sanctions, prerelease, and treatment services. This Bureau is referenced interchangeably as Programs and Facilities Bureau (PFB) or Facilities and Programs Bureau (FPB) in procedures and forms.

**Emergency Care** – Health care for an acute illness or an unexpected health need that cannot be deferred until the next scheduled sick call or clinic.

**Facilities and Programs Contract Managers** – The Department’s employees who act as the liaisons between the Department and FPB contract facilities regarding services and offender management. These employees also monitor compliance with the terms of contractual agreements between the Department and FPB contract facilities.

**HSB-Health Services Bureau** – The Bureau within the Department responsible for the overall health care functions of medical, mental health, and dental for all programs and facilities.

**III. PROCEDURES:**

In accordance with contracts, facilities will provide offenders with access to health care services including medical, psychiatric, dental, optometric, pharmaceutical, psychological, and other medical-related services. These services must meet American Correctional Association and National Commission on Correctional Health Care standards; federal, state, and local laws and regulations; Department policies; and applicable procedures.

**A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. Facilities will avoid creating unreasonable barriers to offender access to care. Examples of these barriers may include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. punishing offenders for seeking care for health needs;
  - b. deterring offenders from seeking care for health needs through unreasonable practices not related to legitimate facility needs, for example, holding sick call at 2:00 a.m.; and
  - c. for prerelease center residents, restricting community movement in a manner which interferes with health care access without reasonable accommodations.
2. Upon intake/admission, the facility will provide all medical information to the offender orally and in writing about how to access emergency and routine medical, mental health, and dental services, and the grievance process for health-related complaints.
3. Facilities must ensure that offenders who may have difficulty communicating (for example, foreign speaking, developmentally disabled, illiterate, mentally ill, deaf) understand how to access health care services.
4. Facilities must publish or post in each housing unit any procedural changes on how to obtain health care services prior to implementation.
5. Where applicable, facilities must update offender handbooks as necessary.
6. When the cost of offender health care is the responsibility of the Department, residential facilities must obtain prior written approval from HSB of all scheduled offsite health services and inpatient hospitalization or surgery by emailing [cormedical@mt.gov](mailto:cormedical@mt.gov). Unapproved offsite medical services will be the responsibility of the facility.
7. Emergency care may be provided without prior authorization following the requirements of *6.2.475 Emergency Medical Services*.

**B. REQUESTS FOR HEALTH CARE**

1. Non-medical facility staff may not approve or deny offender requests for health care attention.
2. Facilities must establish procedures to ensure that all offender health care requests are forwarded to the nursing staff in a confidential manner.

**IV. CLOSING:**

Questions about this facility operational requirement should be directed to the HSB Chief or FPB Chief or designees.

**V. FORMS:** *(available to facility staff on request from HSB or FPB staff)*

*Medical Preauthorization Request Form*  
*MT DOC Dental Services Request Form*  
*Non-Formulary Medical Request Form*