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DATE: September 25, 2014

TO: Division of Adult Institutions staff

FROM: Cathy A. Jess, Administrator
Division of Adult Institutions 

SUBJECT: Revisions to Administrative Code Chapter Department of Corrections (DOC) 303 Discipline

Within the Division of Adult Institutions (DAI) we understand we must maintain a safe and secure environment for our staff, the public and the inmates in our care. Maintaining this safe environment is done, in part, through the application of Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter DOC 303 Discipline. In the new DOC 303, a focus on changing negative behavior will be emphasized, along with reinforcing the role of our line staff in that process. The upcoming changes to the DOC 303 provide DAI with an excellent opportunity to focus on making positive changes to our restrictive housing status (segregation) practices. In order to be effective in our mission, we must maintain an appropriate balance of both physical containment and behavior management. Long-term segregation placements have been shown to be ineffective in terms of discipline and do not serve our corrective or rehabilitative goals.

The new uncontested minor disposition process will require that staff have positive engagement with inmates and that staff also deal with as many issues within the unit or area as possible. The new process will ensure a much more timely response to rule infractions and misbehavior, resulting in the imposing of swift, proportionate and appropriate sanctions, which has been shown by evidence-based research to promote the best outcome for inmate behavior.

The current DOC 303 was last revised in 2001; a department-wide committee has been working to revise the DOC 303 since early 2008. Many staff have devoted hundreds of hours to review current laws, national standards, complaint outcomes and decisions, as well as relevant court cases, in order to develop a set of recommendations for revision of the DOC 303. Many of the changes will better align with current laws and streamline the disciplinary process, without violating liberty interests, while minimizing potential court actions.

Public hearings were held regarding the proposed revisions to DOC 303 and the revisions were subsequently approved by Secretary Wall, the Wisconsin Legislature and the Governor. The revised DOC 303 will become effective on January 1, 2015.

As we move forward with training it is important to remember that the purpose of the inmate disciplinary process is to maintain order and safety. The rehabilitation of and fairness in the treatment of inmates in our custody is important, and must be balanced with the deterrence of misbehavior and maintenance of respect for the correctional system. The disciplinary process should be used as a

means to motivate the inmate to alter their negative behavior, with long-term correction of the behavior as the end goal. We are responsible for encouraging inmates to practice good decision making skills and for reinforcing positive behavior and pro-social problem solving.

Prior to the effective date, training regarding the changes to the DOC 303 is necessary for all staff and began in August, with training for administrative staff, hearing officers and institution trainers. An on-line training is being developed for staff representatives (formerly known as advocates). An announcement for inmates about the revised DOC 303, containing an overview of the changes, will follow.

More information will follow from your institution leadership on training and roll-out of the new DOC 303. Once the revised DOC 303 becomes effective, it will be available to all staff on the Wisconsin Legislative Website and a link will be provided on myDOC. For training purposes, prior to the effective date, a copy of the revised DOC 303 can be found in the following location on myDOC: Home Page ▶ About DOC ▶ Policies and Procedures ▶ Secretary's Office ▶ [Wisconsin Admin Code Chapter DOC 303 Discipline](#)

Change can be unsettling, for both staff and inmates, and as we move forward with implementation and training it will be vital that each of us model positive change. Thank you for all you do every day and in advance for your efforts towards implementation of the revised DOC 303.