SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE		POLICY NUMBER 100-15	PAGE NUMBER 1 OF 5
		DISTRIBUTION:	Public
		SUBJECT:	Research Activities
RELATED STANDARDS:	**ACA 5-ACI: 1F-13, 1F-14, 1F-15, 1F-16, 1F-17, 1F-18, 6C-09 (M)**	EFFECTIVE DATE: SUPERSESSION:	August 01, 2026 08/01/2025
DESCRIPTION: General Administration	REVIEW MONTH: July	**NICK LAMB** **SECRETARY OF CORRECTIONS**	

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC) to ***govern the conduct of research in the institution, including compliance with professional and scientific ethics and with state and federal guidelines for the use and dissemination of research findings*** **[ACA 5-ACI-1F-16]** The DOC supports research activities relevant to its programs that assist in achieving department goals, objectives, or plans for the future; and that contribute to more effective and efficient supervision of offenders, use of DOC resources, and increased public safety.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines that ***govern voluntary offender participation in non-medical, non-pharmaceutical, and non-cosmetic research programs*** **[5-ACI-1F-18]** and to describe research procedures, responsibilities of administrators, and dissemination of information. The DOC will ensure the security of information and data collection systems, including verification of data, electronic transmission, and storage of data, and protection of the privacy of offenders, DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers.

III. DEFINITIONS

DOC Research Activities:

Research initiated by the DOC, either using DOC staff and/or contract researchers.

Medical Research:

Research activities that include, but are not limited to, medical experiments and pharmaceutical studies using offender subjects.

Research Activities:

The collection of information about a particular subject which is aimed at:

1. The discovery and/or interpretation of facts.
2. The revision of accepted theories in light of new facts, or
3. The practical application of new or revised theories.

Social Science Research:

Research activities that include, but are not limited to, the use of offender interviews, offender questionnaires, and reviews of offender case records. This does not include any research activities that will expose offenders to the possibility of physical, psychological, or other harm as a consequence of their participation.

IV. PROCEDURES

1. General Research Activity Guidelines:

A. The ***DOC supports and engages in*** internal ***research activities relevant to its programs, services, and operations*** and ***encourages and uses*** approved ***research conducted by outside research professionals*** **[ACA 5-ACI-1F-13 and ACA 5-ACI-1F-14]**.

B. Research activities other than those activities initiated by the DOC, which utilize the participation or records of DOC employees, interns, volunteers, or offenders which are held by the DOC, must be approved in writing by the secretary of corrections (SOC), deputy secretary of corrections (DSOC), or designee, prior to the start of the research.

C. Those conducting research activities will be informed of, and shall adhere to, all DOC policies that are relative to the research project. All applicable security and safety procedures shall apply to the activities of the researcher and the research project.

D. Research activities will comply with all state and federal law, including all laws and guidelines pertaining to the use and reporting of research findings. All approved research activities will conform to accepted professional standards and scientific ethics.

2. Application to Conduct Research:

A. The ***secretary of corrections (SOC) reviews and approves all research proposals and/or designs prior to their implementation*** **[ACA 5-ACI-1F-17]**. The principal researcher (excluding DOC research activities) must complete a *Research Application* (attachment #1), prior to conducting any research within a DOC program, unit, or institution and prior to having contact with offenders or staff for research purposes. The completed application must be submitted to the SOC or designee.

B. The DOC may require the researcher or sponsoring organization to substantiate a professional standing in the field of corrections, criminal justice, education, or related field, subject to approval by the DOC.

C. The applicant shall include an endorsement by a recognized research organization (e.g., university, college, private foundation, consulting firm, or public agency) that has a mandate to perform research, certifying that the research proposal is for valid scientific, educational, or other public purposes. If Human Subjects Reviews have been conducted and approved through the requesting research organization, a copy shall be included as part of the endorsement.

D. The design of the research and information provided on the application shall be of sufficient quality to reasonably predict the results of the research will be reliable, valid, and reasonably relevant to the business of the DOC.

E. Submitted applications or requests received by the DOC will generally be responded to within ten (10) working days of receipt by those with authority to consider the request.

3. Obtaining Approval to Conduct Research:

A. DOC staff may request additional documentation from the researcher concerning any aspect of the research project, prior to making a decision on the research request.

B. If the research application is declined, a response will be sent in writing to the contact listed on the research application within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the research application/request. All decisions are final. An electronic copy of the response shall be retained on file in the DOC Central Office.

C. The *Research Agreement* (attachment #2) must be signed and approved by the SOC or designee prior to initiation of the research.
   1. The SOC or designee will maintain the original signed research agreement with the research request and any other responses or documentation related to the research request.
   2. A copy of the respective signed research agreement form will be provided to the principal researcher.
   3. The researcher shall not modify, revise, or otherwise change the agreement or scope of research described and approved within the application, including extending the end date or broadening the number of research subjects without prior approval from the approver.

4. Conduct of the Researcher(s):

A. The researcher(s) and/or designated DOC staff will obtain a signed *Research Consent Form* (attachment #3) from all offenders, staff, interns, or volunteers (hereafter also referred to as "research subjects") selected to participate in social research, prior to conducting any research activity that directly involves the research subject. The applicant may propose an alternative informed consent form by including it as an attachment to the application.
   1. If the social research involves research subjects under the age of eighteen (18), signed consent forms are required from the juvenile's parent or guardian.
   2. Consent forms are not required when the research does not involve direct contact with a research subject under the authority of the DOC; or does not include publication of personally identifiable information.
   3. Research data identifying individual offenders is subject to the same confidentiality and security standards required for case records and personnel files.

B. The researcher is responsible for ensuring the subject's rights and wellbeing are not compromised through participation or association with the research.

C. ***Operational personnel assist research personnel in carrying out research and evaluation*** **[ACA 5-ACI-1F-15]**. At least one (1) DOC staff member from the Office and Planning and Analysis will be assigned to monitor the research project and oversee the researcher's compliance with all applicable DOC policies and rules, including preservation of protected, privileged information or confidential material provided or acquired through the research.

D. The principal researcher shall provide an explanation of the research activity, goals, expectations, and purpose to all research subjects prior to participation in the research activity or signing the consent form.
   1. A written summary will be prepared to facilitate this explanation. A copy of the explanation shall be provided to each research subject. If the subject is an offender, a copy of the explanation will be included in the offender's institutional record.
   2. The explanation will make it clear to all research subjects that participation in the research activity is voluntary and participating or not participating in the research project will in no way impact the subject's incarceration or supervision (offenders) or employment with the DOC (DOC staff members).
   3. All fees and costs associated with translation of the explanation and documents/forms for those research subjects with communication disabilities, or those whose primary language is not English, shall be the responsibility of the researcher. No participant may be discriminated against on the basis of a disability.

E. The principal researcher will maintain or have access to adequate records showing the current status of the research project, which shall be made available to the SOC or designee upon request.

F. Data collected during the course of the research activity will only be used in the manner described to the research subject(s), or in a manner subsequently and specifically permitted by the research subject, and as approved by the DOC through acceptance of the application and agreement.

G. No research subject will receive direct or indirect compensation or special favors for participation in the research or derive any benefit from such participation not expressly described by the researched and approved by the DOC, unless approved by the SOC or designee.

H. Research data which identifies research subjects shall be used only for specified and approved research or statistical purposes and shall not be revealed for any purpose other than those specified. The privacy and identity of all research subjects who have not provided consent shall be maintained.
   1. Identifying information shall not be included in research reports or publications unless specifically agreed to by the research subject(s) and must serve a legitimate purpose relevant to the research.
   2. Identifying information shall be maintained under physically secure conditions. Upon termination of the research project, personally identifying information, such as names or ID numbers of the research subject(s) shall be destroyed or otherwise separated from the data.

I. Researchers visiting DOC facilities or having direct contact with offenders shall be required to submit to a criminal records background check, which shall be conducted by authorized DOC staff prior to the researcher's admission to any DOC facility or having direct contact with DOC offenders. The results shall be reviewed by designated DOC staff and are subject to approval.

5. Follow-Up Reports on Research:

A. A draft copy of the preliminary or final findings/results of the research project may be required by the SOC or designee prior to further dissemination of such, to the public or otherwise.

B. When the research project is complete, a final report of the findings/results will be provided by the principal researcher to the SOC and/or designated DOC staff for review.

C. At the discretion of the SOC or designee, the researcher may be required to verify the accuracy of research data collected prior to publication.

D. The DOC shall be granted access to the data collected though the research project upon request by the SOC or designee.

6. Violations of Research Regulations:

A. Permission to conduct research utilizing DOC employees, interns, volunteers, or offenders may be rescinded, suspended, terminated, or denied if there is reason to believe the research violates state or federal law, DOC policy, agency standards, or the research or associated processes become detrimental to offenders or staff, or compromise the safe, secure, and efficient operation of the facility, or conflicts with the legitimate penological interests of the DOC.

B. Violations regarding the release of offender record information may subject the violator to civil or criminal penalty.

7. Medical Research:

A. The use of offenders for medical, pharmaceutical, or cosmetic experiments is prohibited. This does not preclude voluntary offender participation in clinical trials that are approved by clinical services based on the offender's need for specific medical intervention. The institutions ***permit offender participation in medical or pharmaceutical research. Facilities electing to perform such biomedical research shall be in compliance with all state and federal guidelines*** and laws **[ACA 5-ACI-6C-09 (M)]**.

8. Surveys:

A. Designated DOC staff shall respond in a timely manner to surveys sent to the DOC by an academic or professional organization seeking statistical data.

B. Completed surveys/responses shall be forwarded to the DOC public information officer (PIO) or designee for inclusion in the department's correspondence database.

C. Surveys received by the DOC from private, for-profit businesses for commercial purposes shall be responded to by designated DOC staff as time and duties allow. Staff may consider any clear or perceived benefit to the DOC from participation in the survey when prioritizing a response.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

The deputy secretary of Corrections (DSOC) is responsible for the annual review and maintenance of this policy.

VI. AUTHORITY

A. SDCL § 24-2-20 **Records and information furnished court, secretary, board, or Governor--Information that may be released for certain other purposes.**
B. SDCL § 24-15-1 **Files and case histories of inmates--Purposes--Access to file.**
C. SDCL § 26-7A-120 **Confidentiality of records.**

VII. HISTORY

August 2026
August 2025
August 2024
July 2023
January 2022
December 2019

ATTACHMENTS

1. Research Application (v1)
2. Research Agreement (v1)
3. Research Consent Form (v1)

RESEARCH APPLICATION

To:

1. Title of Research Activity:

2.	**Principal Researcher:**	**Additional Researcher:**	**Additional Researcher:**
Full Name			
Street			
City			
State			
Zip Code			
Email			
Phone #			

If additional researchers are needed, please provide their contact information on a separate sheet of paper in the provided format above.

3. Research Endorsed By:

4. Summary of the goals of the Research Activity:

5. The justification of the Research Activity:

6. Details of Research Design:

a. DOC resources/personnel needed:

b. Sampling procedures for selecting offender subjects or offender records for this research and any criteria that will be used to determine the sample selection:

c. Procedures used for data collection and copies of research instruments to be used, including interview schedules, questionnaires, data collection forms and tests.

d. The security procedures to be followed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants:

e. Details of compensation if any to be paid:

f. What are the plans for dissemination of research findings:

All research requests will normally be answered within ten (10) working days of being received by the Secretary of Corrections, Deputy Secretary of Corrections, or designee.

All research will be conducted in accordance with DOC policy 100-15 *Research Activities.*

RESEARCH AGREEMENT

Name of Principal Researcher * _____ Date _____

Address: _____
Street or P.O. Box

_____ _____ _____
City State Zip Code

Home Telephone Number: ( ) _____ - _____

Work Telephone Number: ( ) _____ - _____

Cell Phone Number: ( ) _____ - _____

E-Mail Address: _____

I agree to abide by the following guidelines regarding my research activities:

- To follow all policies and directives that apply to the conducting of research.
- To not change any part of the approved research project, including but not limited to, extending the end date, or broadening the pool of subjects, without prior approval from the DOC.
- The use and dissemination of research findings that may identify a research subject (offender or staff member) requires a signed statement of informed and voluntary consent by each subject.
- To permit the DOC to monitor the research project while it is in progress and to suspend or terminate any research activity if there is reason to believe the project violates policy, law, or becomes detrimental to offenders, staff, or the safe and efficient operation of the facility.
- To include in any publication of any part of the research project a statement that acknowledges the DOC's participation in the project but disclaims the DOC's endorsement of the findings.
- To submit a plan discussing the anticipated use and dissemination of the research findings for approval prior to the start of the research and to forward a draft copy of the completed research project prior to dissemination to the DOC. A copy of the final research report shall be forwarded to the DOC upon completion of the research project.

Signature of Principal Researcher _____ Date _____

Signature of Department of Corrections Representative _____ Date _____

*This form must also be completed by each member of the research staff.

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

I freely and knowingly agree to participate in the research project entitled _____

_____ I fully realize that my participation is of my own choosing and I agree not to hold the South Dakota Department of Corrections or the State of South Dakota liable for any physical or psychological harm that may happen to me, and I release any claim against the DOC related to my voluntary participation in the research project.

☐ Offender
I understand my decision to participate or not participate in this research project will have no impact on the terms of my incarceration or supervision and there is no penalty for not participating in the research project.

☐ DOC Staff Member
I understand my decision to participate or not participate in this research project will have no impact on my employment with the DOC and there is no penalty for not participating in the research project.

☐ I consent to having my identity revealed in the research project and any reports.

☐ I DO **NOT** consent to having my identity revealed in the research project or any reports.

I understand that if the DOC is not the sponsor of the research project, the decision as to whether my identify will be protected is up to the researcher and is not under the control of the DOC.

I affirm this research project has been satisfactorily explained to me and all of my questions have been answered. I understand that my participation if voluntary and of my own choosing. I know that I can choose to discontinue participation at any time.

Printed Name of Offender/Staff	Title (if applicable)
Signature of Offender/Staff	Date
Signature of Staff Witness	Date