

Chapter: Program
Subject: Religious Participation,
Socialization & Education
Section: 12.5
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ODJFS Rule: 5101: 2-5-16; 5101: 2-9-19
COA Standard: GLS 2.01 (f), 7, 13.01, 13.02, 13.05; AM 6
Revised: 4/10/2020

NRTC has a written policy on religious participation, socialization and education by youth in out-of-home care which complies with the requirements of rules 5101: 2-5-16 of the Administrative Code.

Consideration to be Given to Youth's Religion

Every youth has the right to enjoy freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Accordingly, NRTC demonstrate consideration for, and sensitivity to, the religious background of youth in out-of-home care and of families receiving services.

Each youth shall be provided the opportunity for practicing the chosen religious beliefs and faith of the youth or their family, unless it is determined and documented in the youth's case plan by the custodial agency that practicing the youth's or family's chosen religious beliefs and faith is not in the youth's best interests.

1. Families may schedule the youth's home visits to coincide with their religious services. A youth may receive visits from representatives of his or hers chosen religion with advance notice to the youth's Probation Officer, Case Manager or a supervisor on duty.

A youth may be encouraged to participate in religious activities, but will not be coerced to do so. Religious coercion may include, but is not limited to:

1. Being required to accompany staff or other youth to religious services, but allowed to sit outside the area where the service actually occurs.
 2. Being given extra chores to perform or being required to read or listen to specific material while others attend religious services.
 3. Being required to view or listen to specific religiously oriented television, video tapes, or music.
- Participation in religious services or activities are strictly voluntary.

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NRTC shall not require a youth to receive non-emergency medical treatment that conflicts with the religious tenets or practices of the religion of the youth or parent without the specific written consent of the parent, guardian or custodian.

When a youth requires emergency medical treatment and such treatment conflicts with the religious tenets or practices of the youth, parent, guardian or custodian, NRTC will immediately transport or arrange for the transportation of the youth to a medical facility and will contact the custodial agency or the individual who placed the youth.

1. NRTC will contact the youth's Probation Officer as well as the youth's parent or guardian should emergency medical treatment be required.

A youth will not be baptized or submitted to any religious procedures without prior consent of the youth according to their age and functioning level and prior approval of the youth's parent, guardian or custodian.

Socialization & Education

NRTC may assign a youth daily tasks and work assignments within the facility. Such assignments shall be of the type normally performed by a youth and shall not be beyond the youth's developmental ability to perform. Daily tasks and work assignments will not place the youth in physical danger and will not interfere with the youth's studies or normal social development.

NRTC will make arrangements for each youth to attend a school which complies with the minimum standards as prescribed by the state board of education and shall ensure that the youth attends school in accordance with the youth's ICCA and/or service plan.

1. During the initial phases of the program, each youth will attend Nicholas Liberty School, a chartered school on the grounds of the facility, which is approved by the State Board of Education. The school staff shall develop an individualized curriculum for each youth that assures the continued progress of their educational needs. The educational program is equal in quality and requirements to similar programs in the community, ensuring that report cards and credits are transferable to local schools.
2. Upon completion or at the end of the Residential Phase of the program, the youth will transition to their school in the community, while still residing at the Center. NRTC will provide transportation and bus fare as needed. NRTC Probation Officers shall receive Weekly Monitoring Reports and make visits to the schools to ensure the youth's attendance and compliance.

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NRTC encourages youth to participate in community, school, recreational and cultural heritage activities which are appropriate to his or her age and functioning level and shall as is necessary and reasonable, arrange appropriate transportation for the youth to and from such activities. These opportunities enhance the youth's ability to meet new youth, build new healthy relationships, network and share experiences with peers. NRTC prohibits the exploitation of residents in employment-related training or gainful employment.

1. Upon advancing to Level C, each youth is encouraged to obtain a Community Resource in which they participate at least once a week. All off campus activities requiring additional permission slips will be obtained by the probation officer and kept in the youths file. This includes but is not limited to additional permission slips, medical record releases, physical and waivers of liability. Acceptable Community Resources include but are not limited to:
 - Organized sports through the youth's school or a community facility
 - Paid employment
 - Volunteering at a community agency (hospitals, nursing homes, animal shelters, etc.)
 - Church youth groups or Bible study classes
 - Membership in groups or classes outside of school (anger management, Al-A-Teen, leadership training, etc.)
2. In addition, NRTC facilitates a youth's involvement in a variety of recreational opportunities, including but not limited to:
 - Sports (basketball, football, track, softball, etc.) and use of the facility's gymnasium
 - Arts and crafts
 - Special events and field trips
 - Games and television
 - Weekly off-campus trips to the movies or bowling alley
 - Use of the local community centers as scheduled

NRTC shall, as appropriate help to develop social supports networks and build healthy, meaningful relationships with caring individuals of their choosing.

- You may be referred to a Natural Helper
- Bringing in family/friend supports as needed

NRTC shall, as appropriate, teach a youth tasks and skills required for life in the community.

1. Each youth shall be monitored in daily tasks, such as self-care, room-care, assigned chores and personal hygiene, in addition to receiving instruction in Life Skills as part of the independent educational curriculum.
2. Upon placement at NRTC, all youth will be given an independent living assessment.

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All youth will participate in independent living classes and skills programming as deemed appropriate by their age and functioning level. The assessment will help guide staff on each youth's individual skills, abilities and needs. The classes will help guide youth in development of skills and knowledge necessary to navigate their surrounding environment.