

# INDIANA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

## Contact and/or Relationships with Offenders

### Policy/Procedure O-51

#### Policy Statement:

The Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ISBVI) has a collaborative relationship with the Indiana Department of Correction. This collaborative effort is mutually beneficial to both organizations by providing “offenders” with opportunities to develop and hone various skills prior to release and, at the same time, provide labor and specific skill sets to the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. This will allow the existing staff, in conjunction with “offenders” and offender supervisors, to maintain and enhance the ISBVI facilities.

At no time will offenders be utilized when students are present. Furthermore, offenders will not be utilized who have committed crimes of a violent nature or who have been identified as “sex offenders.” Offenders will be supervised at all times by officers provided and trained by the Indiana Department of Correction.

No staff person, without prior approval by the Superintendent or his/her designee, shall have any personal contact with an offender and/or the family or close friends of an offender beyond that necessary to fulfill work-related responsibilities or for the proper supervision and treatment of the offender. If any contact is made beyond that necessary for proper supervision and the fulfillment of assigned work-related responsibilities and treatment, such contact shall be reported to the staff person’s immediate supervisor no later than the next regular business day. The immediate supervisor shall report the contact in writing to the ISBVI Superintendent who will then notify the appropriate administrator at the Department of Correction.

Examples of inappropriate contact include, but are not limited to:

1. Living with or providing lodging for an offender, unless the offender is a parent, step-parent, child, step-child, adopted child, or where the offender and staff person were married prior to the staff person’s employment with the ISBVI.
2. Marriage to an offender, unless the staff person and offender were married prior to the staff person’s employment;
3. Offering an offender employment;
4. Carrying or delivering messages to or from an offender;
5. Carrying or delivering anything to or from an offender which has not been officially authorized by the Superintendent of the ISBVI.
6. Social relationships of any type with an offender;

7. Visiting or corresponding with an offender, unless the offender is a family member and permission has been obtained from the ISBVI Superintendent and the Facility Head where the offender is housed;
8. Physical contact beyond that which is routinely required by specific job duties. (Sexual contact with an offender is a criminal offense under IC 35-44.1-3-10.)

Staff must notify the ISBVI Superintendent, in writing, upon learning of the commitment of a friend or family member to the Indiana Department of Correction. New staff persons shall advise of the existence of such a relationship upon accepting employment with ISBVI or upon discovery, if not known at the time of accepting employment. This notification shall include: the offender's name, DOC # (if known), relationship, facility where the offender is housed or supervised, and whether the staff person intends to maintain the relationship, including visiting or corresponding if the person is a family member.

**DEFINITIONS**

Offender: Any person committed by a court to the care, custody, or control of the Indiana Department of Correction, including parolees and offenders housed in contractual facilities.

Staff: Any full-time or part-time employee, temporary, contractual, or volunteer worker with the State of Indiana who works in Agencies that either use offenders for work and/or share grounds with Indiana Department of Correction facilities.

Family Member: Any person related by blood, marriage, or adoption.

The ISBVI Board directs the ISBVI Superintendent to ensure ISBVI staff complies with this policy by:

- 1) Providing ISBVI staff written notice and documenting their awareness and receipt of these documents by obtaining their signatures;
- 2) Affording initial and periodic on-going training to ISBVI staff on the ISBVI Board Policy on Contact and/or Relationships with Offenders.

**ISBVI Policy O-51**

Approved: 5/16/11

Revised: 10/21/13, 10/22/18, **5/17/21**

**ISBVI Superintendent:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**ISBVI Board Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_