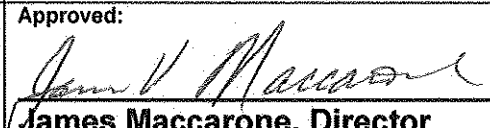


**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES
JUVENILE INSTITUTIONS**

Subject: Honor's Program	Policy Number: 13
Number of Pages: 6	Section: XIII
<p style="text-align: center;">Attachments</p> A. Honors Program Application B. Acknowledgment Form	<p style="text-align: center;">Related Standards & References</p>
Effective Date: January 5, 2009 Revised: May 2, 2012 Revised: February 1, 2017	Approved:  James Maccarone, Director

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Services (DYS), that a program for eligible youth provides opportunities for youth to learn about, understand, and value civic and community involvement. As part of the program, youth will complete a variety of work projects that help restore faith in the criminal justice system in local communities, and repair damage to the community caused by crime.

II. DEFINITIONS

As used in this policy and procedure, the following definitions apply:

- A. Restorative Justice – An approach to crime that places emphasis on four quadrants when dealing with crime. These four quadrants are the victim, the offender, the government, and the community. The goal is to habilitate the offender, repair damage done to the victim, repay the government for the cost of dealing with the crime, and undo any damage done to the community.
- B. Service Plan – A detailed, written plan containing goals, objectives, timelines and staff assignments which comprises a youth's rehabilitative program. The plan shall address areas of high risk/need, and promote pro-social behavior. The Service Plan is a holistic and comprehensive document that also addresses the youth's recreational, educational, vocational, medical, mental health, family and transitional needs. *(DYS Policy XIII.5 Service Plans)*
- C. Treatment Team – An appointed group of staff members responsible for developing and coordinating the implementation of a youth's determined Service Plan. The Treatment Team shall encourage the youth, while monitoring the youth's progress and revise the Service Plan as needed. The Team shall also be responsible for linking the youth to the appropriate programming and resources to address individual risk and/or needs. *(DYS Policy XIII.4 Treatment Teams)*
- D. Honors Program - The Honors Program (HP) is a voluntary program for youth eligible by Stage designation which combines specialized classes (i.e. character development) with work projects designed to benefit other youth at the facility and the public. The program consists of participating in the election process, contributing to one's

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community, and the preservation of the environment. Youth in the program will attend special classes, participate in the unit based governmental meetings which helps direct the program activities within the program, and engage in work projects both on the Oakley campus and in the community.

III. PROCEDURE

Part of growth is learning to accept responsibility for functioning within a community by recognizing and demonstrating a concern for others needs and creating a community that provides a healthy environment for families and its citizens. The Honors Program (HP) will teach youth about civic responsibility and help local communities recover by performing a public service.

- A. Program Philosophy - The HP will focus on the role each individual should fulfill if he/she is to be a responsible member of the community in a free and democratic society. This role includes the following:
 1. Civic Responsibility - Individuals have a responsibility to understand how the government works in a free and democratic society and to take action to assure the government fulfills its role properly.
 2. Self Government - Beyond just participating in the election process and monitoring how the government is working, individuals need to participate in the governmental process. The program will use student government to help participants learn how to function effectively in elected or appointed positions.
 3. Care of the Environment - Individuals must live in harmony with the environment, and work to minimize damage being done to the surrounding areas.
 4. Restorative Justice – Individuals have a responsibility to help restore the community from the harm caused by crime in ways they can such as performing public service.

- B. Selection and Removal - The HP will provide youth in the program with opportunities to engage in unique programming and to receive special privileges as a reward for their participation. Criteria for the program will emphasize positive conduct at the facility, progress toward treatment goals, and low risk to the community.
 1. Qualifications - To qualify for the program, youth must meet the following criteria:
 - i. Classification guidelines for Stage B or Stage A to join the program
 - ii. No history of violent crime, reviewed on a case by case basis.
 - iii. No history of escapes for last 2 years, unless an escape plan is developed and recommendation by a Qualified Mental Health Professional is given.
 - iv. Progress toward treatment goals,
 - v. Major discipline violation free for the past 30 days,

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- vi. At the facility for a minimum of eight weeks on present commitment, and
 - vii. Must have a minimum of eight weeks left on current commitment.
 - viii. The facility Administrator will have the authority to modify these time requirements if needed. *(vi. and vii)*
2. Referral - Counselors working with youth at the Oakley Youth Development Center will provide information to the youth assigned to them about the HP. If a youth is interested, the counselor will screen the youth to determine if the youth is eligible. Youth must also complete an Application for Stage Change *(DYS Policy XIII.10 Behavior Incentive System, Attachment D)*. If the youth is eligible, the counselor will refer the youth, using the Honors Program Application *(Attachment A)* to the counselor assigned to the HP for further screening and placement in the program.
 3. Voluntary Participation - A youth referred to the program will have the program explained to him by the HP counselor. The youth will sign a Honors Program Acknowledgment Form *(Attachment B)* indicating he is entering and participating in the program voluntarily.
 4. Removal - Youth may leave the program at any time they no longer wish to participate. A youth may also be removed from the program by the treatment team if the youth's behavior does not conform to the program's expectations. Reasons for possible removal include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Refusing to participate in special work projects or failing to diligently work while on special work projects,
 - ii. Not attending and/or participating in classes conducted as part of the program,
 - iii. Not actively participating in the program's unit based governmental meetings,
 - iv. A major disciplinary sanction,
 - v. Failure to make progress toward treatment or program goals,
 - vi. A pattern exists of minor disciplinary infractions or rule violations,
 - vii. Failure to follow dress code or maintain personal space and property in the appropriate manner.
 5. Selection Committee – This is a committee appointed by the Facility Administrator. The committee will be made up of the HP counselor, a representative from education, a Juvenile Care Worker staff representative, the mayor of the Honors Program, a medical program representative, and one member at large. Admission to the Honors Program will be by majority vote of the committee. The HP counselor will be the chair of the committee. The committee will meet at a minimum of twice a month to consider students for entry into the program. Once a student is selected into the program the Facility Administrator or designee will review the application and render final approval for admission.

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- C. Education - Youth in the HP will attend the regular educational programs at the Oakley Youth Development Center. However, they will also receive specialized classes conducted for youth that focus on elements of the program.
1. School Program - Youth involved in the HP will attend the regular school program at the Oakley Youth Development Center. They are expected to meet all educational and behavioral expectations.
 2. Program Specific Education - Special classes will be taught in the housing unit where the youth are living. These sessions overseen by the HP counselor and may be taught by the HP counselor, direct care staff assigned to the program and/or volunteers. These classes may focus on the following subjects:
 - i. The government and how it works
 - ii. Civic duty and responsibility
 - iii. Elections and the political process
 - iv. Parliamentary procedures and rules of order
 - v. Honors to the Nation
 - vi. Character Development
 - vii. Civics and social studies
 - viii. Municipal government
 - ix. Transition back into the community
- D. Leadership - Youth in the program will assist in the structure of the HP. The specific rules and guidelines will be reviewed by the youth, HP counselor, and staff assigned to the program. However, it is anticipated the formal program will include the following:
1. Program Rules and Guidelines - Staff and youth assigned to the program will develop a manual for the operation of the program. This manual will define the roles of staff, how the unit based governmental process will operate, and the process that will be used to make decisions about the functioning of the program. Review of the manual and revisions, if necessary, will be made yearly.
 2. Program Leadership - Youth in the program will conduct elections to select key leaders to help make decisions about how the program will function. These elected positions will include:
 - i. Mayor
 - ii. Secretary
 - iii. Treasurer
 - iv. Sergeant at Arms
 3. Team Leaders - Youth in the program may be organized into teams of five to eight team members. These teams will be assigned and complete specific public service programs. Each team will select a team leader. These team

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leaders will represent their teams by serving as members of the program's unit based government.

- E. Rehabilitation/Treatment - Youth in the HP will participate in the rehabilitative programs and processes developed and available for all students at the Oakley Youth Development Center. The counselor assigned to the program will schedule and conduct treatment teams as required by policy, and will develop and coordinate the implementation of a Service Plan. (*DYS Policies XIII.4 Treatment Teams and XIII.5 Service Plans.*)
- F. Budget - The program will have an account where funds can be managed which will be used to support program activities and learn about budgeting.
 - 1. Account Oversight - The program account will be established by the business office of the facility. The program's counselor and a staff person working in the business office will co-sign all checks written on the account.
 - 2. Income – Funding for off-campus activities will be generated through activities developed by the youth and staff of the program, and coordinated by the HP counselor. These may include the sale of garden products, car washes, and/or other fund raising projects developed by the youth and staff and approved by the Facility Administrator or designee.
- G. Service Projects - Youth in the program will be expected to engage in four to ten hours a month in special work projects that are developed by the youth and HP counselor assigned to the program. At least one on campus work activity and one off campus work activity will be scheduled a month upon approval of the Facility Administrator or designee.
 - 1. On Campus Projects - The program will develop and complete a variety of on campus projects designed to improve the quality of life on the Oakley campus. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Campus beautification;
 - ii. Construction projects;
 - iii. Care of animals;
 - iv. Coordinating incentive activities;
 - v. Mentoring other units;
 - vi. Organizing Educational/Preventative Workshops; and
 - vii. Vegetable garden.
 - 2. Off Campus Projects - Youth eligible to leave campus will complete projects in the community that support the philosophy and goals of the program. At least one off campus special events will be scheduled a month. These might include:
 - i. Community cleanup/beautification,
 - ii. Landscaping,

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- iii. Building projects
- iv. Graffiti removal, Assistance in community programs.

H. Privileges - Youth living in the HP will receive additional privileges. These will be outlined in detail in the Stage Privilege Chart (*DYS Policy XIII.10 Behavior Incentive System, Attachment E*). However, the additional privileges will focus in the following areas:

1. Personal Property - Youth will be allowed the following items in addition to that which is available to all youth.
 - i. May keep in the room books or magazines in addition to the religious book that may be possessed by any youth.
 - ii. May have family pictures, with some posted in an approved location on the wall, as well as unlimited personal letters.
 - iii. May decorate their rooms by attaching photos or artwork to the walls and possessing blankets, stuffed animals, or other safe objects

2. Recreation/Access - Youth may be provided access to the following:
 - i. Electronic games
 - ii. Special program functions such as pizza night or special entertainment
 - iii. Extra recreation time

3. Clothing - Youth in the program will be given clothing to enable them to better complete their mission of public service.
 - i. Unit attire - denim jeans, polo type shirts, athletic shoes, web belts.
 - ii. Sports attire - gym shorts and tee shirt, athletic shoes, white socks
 - iii. Work attire - coveralls or work pants and shirts, gloves, protective eye and headgear, boots, web belt and canteen

4. Off Campus Field Trips – Youth will be provided the opportunity for at least one off campus field trip a month, arranged and coordinated by the HP counselor with the approval of the Facility Administrator or designee. Trips may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Zoo Visits
 - ii. Sporting Events
 - iii. Community Events
 - iv. Cultural Events
 - v. Eating at restaurants