

***FIELD
MINISTRY
PROGRAM
Handbook***



**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF
CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Rehabilitation Programs Division

2019

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I. Welcome

Congratulations! We highly commend you for successfully completing your seminary education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) College at the Darrington Unit. We believe God has called you and has given you this opportunity to study to be equipped for His work.

We also welcome you to your new ministry as Field Ministers on the unit. We are excited to be a part of what God is doing in you and also to celebrate what God is going to do through you. I also want to remind you of the Scripture, "Haven't I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9). Don't you ever forget that!

This handbook will help you minister effectively within the guidelines of TDCJ policy. We encourage you to read it thoroughly and follow it completely. If you have any questions, please ask your Unit Chaplain(s). They will be able to guide you. If you have any questions, they will bring it to the Program Supervisor V Field Ministry (FMC).

Thank you once again for being part of our team of Field Ministers. You are on your unit to make a difference. I am sure you will be able to help many of your fellow offenders to see the blessing of connecting with God and His higher purpose.

Blessings,



Myron Waddle
*Rehabilitation Programs Division
Program Supervisor V Field Ministry*

II. Ministry Descriptions

Working under the supervision of the Unit Warden and Chaplain(s), listed below are duties in policy for Field Ministers to perform. Be sure to communicate with your Chaplain(s) when the unit leadership wants you to begin each of these duties.

A. Community Service Ministry

1. Field Ministers may be assigned to unit-community, service-oriented ministries:

- a. Intake/Orientation at Unit of Assignment
- b. Mentoring
- c. Personal Improvement
- d. Re-Entry/Pre-Release
- e. Tutoring

B. Crisis Ministry

1. Field Ministers may be assigned to crisis ministries for offenders:

- a. Funeral/Memorial Service
- b. Geriatrics
- c. Grief Counseling
- d. Hospice
- e. Hospital

C. Counseling Ministry

1. Field Ministers may be assigned to counseling ministries:

- a. Family Reconciliation
- b. Offender Forgiveness

- c. Tier-Walking (General Population, Medium Custody, Closed Custody, Administrative Segregation)

D. Faith-Based Ministries

1. Field Ministers may be assigned to faith-based ministries in Chaplaincy religious programming and/or offender-led ministries:
 - a. Teaching Classes
 - b. Prayer Participation
 - c. Preaching
 - d. Worship Service; Planning and Conduction

III. Additional Ministry Proposals

- A. Unit Senior Wardens and Chaplain(s) may propose other ways of using Field Ministers to the Field Ministry Advisory Council.
- B. Once assigned to a unit, Field Ministers shall be allowed to propose new ministry activities to the Unit Chaplain(s) and Warden for initial approval. The Field Minister Coordinator will submit the request to the Field Ministry Advisory Council for final approval.

IV. Daily Meetings

All Field Ministers should meet with the Chaplain(s) daily for a brief devotional thought and prayer. The devotional thought and prayer may be led by anyone present. At this daily meeting the Chaplain(s) will commission Field Ministers to minister in specific areas of the unit.

V. Weekly Meetings

Once a week, Chaplain(s) will meet with Field Ministers along with the Field Minister Coordinator. At the weekly meeting the Field Ministers will share in greater detail about the ministry progress, plans, and also deal with any specific issues or concerns they are facing.

VI. Coordination

- A. Field Ministers should communicate to the Unit Chaplain(s) what they believe their ministry gifts are, and where they would like to minister.
- B. Field Ministers should communicate with their Chaplain(s) so that the Chaplain(s) know where the Field Ministers are ministering. The Chaplain(s) supervise and are responsible for the Field Ministers.
- C. Field Ministers may be rotated to other ministry assignments and locations on the unit, so that the Field Ministers may be cross-trained and all areas of the unit will become familiar with the various ministries.
- D. Field Ministers should plan to take one or two days off weekly. On your workdays you should be doing your ministry job assignment.

VII. Relationship with Chaplains, Offenders, and Staff

Field Ministers have an important ministry relationship with Chaplains, Staff, and Offenders.

A. *Chaplain(s)*:

- 1. Chaplain(s) are the primary supervisor for the Field Ministers. They will guide Field Ministers through various ministries and programs. They will be available to help you connect with the right opportunity based on your gifts and talents.

Most of the units have various ongoing programs, so it will be the role of the Chaplain(s) to dovetail the Field Ministers into the existing chapel ministries. It is important that you stay connected with the Chaplain(s) and report to them about your ministry. Chaplain(s) will be a great resource for your smooth and effective ministry. You should also relate well and connect well with the Chaplain's staff (Offenders, chapel workers, and Certified Volunteer Chaplain Assistants—CVCA's) who will be additional support for your ministry on the unit.

B. *Staff:*

1. The Unit Wardens are also involved in guiding and placing Field Ministers in specific ministry positions based on their unit needs, as well as for some specific ministry assignments. Their staff will guide you in your ministry as well. Always be compliant with directions given to you by unit administration and security staff.

C. *Offenders:*

1. Field Ministers' primary ministry is with offenders. You are an extension of the chaplaincy programming as well as an expansion of the ministry outreach. The impact of one offender influencing another toward positive change may be significant. You have been trained and equipped to help them find a right, pro-social, and godly path. It is important that you be available as well as gracious in your ministry. Many times you will be doing informal ministry outside your job location when you meet with offenders while in the recreation area, dining hall, housing area, infirmary, etc.
2. Field Ministers play a vital role in the following ways:

a. Help Offenders:

1. Field Ministers help with an offender's spiritual needs by being available to them and by responding empathetically to their situation. Empathetic responding happens when the Field Minister listens to another, and then responds, letting the other person know—by restatement—that the Field Minister heard and understands what was said. The gift of listening is a great gift.
2. You are present to help offenders find meaning in life through spiritual means. Your ministry has great potential to bring transformation within the prison culture to make it a more peaceful and godly environment.

b. Institutional Adjustment:

1. Many first-time offenders as well as those coming to the unit for the first time may have various anxieties and fears. Your presence and connection with them can ease tension and fear. You can be there as a calming voice in the midst of chaos and confusion. You can help them transition well and connect them to the right ministry or programs in the chapel.

c. Family Ministry:

1. Many offenders experience difficult times while they are incarcerated. Your presence during these times will normally be greatly valued and appreciated. It will be an opportunity to connect with offenders as you help them survive their loss and grief. Your training and counseling will help this ministry.

VIII. Computer Usage

- A. Under no circumstances should a Field Minister be permitted to use a computer that has internet access or resides on a network that has internet access.
- B. Under no circumstances shall a Field Minister be authorized a computer system password or provided with a computer system password that enables the Field Minister to access any part of the automated information system containing offender data or TDCJ business data that would jeopardize security. Any documented passwords shall be secured in order to prevent access.
- C. Field Ministers' access to offices and workstations with telephones, copy machines, fax machines, two-way radios, typewriters, or computers shall be under direct supervision.
- D. Field Ministers will be permitted to use computers that have been supplied to them as part of the Field Ministry Program. Unit Wardens will make the determination of proximity, in reference to sight and sound supervision and the physical locations for the computers.

IX. Teleconferencing

Field Ministers will occasionally participate in weekly/monthly teleconferences facilitated by the Field Minister Coordinator and supervised by the Unit Chaplain(s).

X. Demeanor and Presence

Remember that you are an agent of peace in your environment. Showing respect (yes sir, no sir, yes ma'am, no ma'am) and exhibiting a gentle and caring presence will facilitate your ministry.

XI. Personal and Spiritual Growth Development

Remember that prayer, study, and spiritual growth should be life-long habits. As you give of yourself, God will need to refill you. Be sure to pray, worship with your faith group, experience small groups, and study your scriptures on a daily basis.

XII. Removal and Reinstatement of Field Ministers

- A. Field Ministers may be removed from the Field Ministry Program if, at any time, they no longer meet the eligibility for Field Ministers due to disciplinary (one Major or three Minor disciplinaries within one year). Removal may be recommended by the Unit Warden or Unit Chaplain(s).
- B. Field Ministers may be reinstated to the Field Ministry Program once they meet the eligibility criteria. When they are eligible, they will be reviewed by the Field Ministry Advisory Council to determine their reentry into the Field Ministry Program.
- C. Field Ministers who are removed from the program will be transferred to the Darrington Unit upon recommendation of their reinstatement. They will be retrained through SWBTS College at Darrington before being deployed again.

XIII. Additional Guidance

- A. Field Ministers shall not use their position to benefit themselves through solicitation or sale of written or other material.
- B. Field Ministers should avoid seeking favors from state agency officials or volunteers.
- C. Field Ministers should not receive confidential information from other offenders as they do their family reconciliation ministries.
- D. Remember that it is often best to do your work without fanfare which draws attention to yourself. Your work will be noted and appreciated without undue promotion.

XIV. Role of the Field Ministry Coordinator

The Field Ministry Coordinator (FMC) is a person employed by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice who is responsible for the coordination of the Field Ministry Program. The Field Ministry Coordinator works closely with Unit Wardens, Chaplains, and Field Ministers as well as with Agency Administration. The Field Ministry Coordinator is a member of the Field Ministry Advisory Council (FMAC). The Field Ministry Coordinator works under the supervision of the Rehabilitation Program Division (RPD) Assistant Executive Director.