



# Sponsor Support Guide



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# INTRODUCTION

## Welcome

Welcome to the Community Parenting Alternative (CPA) within the Department of Corrections. We are excited to announce the passage of Substitute Senate Bill 6639- The Family and Offender Sentencing Alternative (FOSA).

This groundbreaking legislation has two components:

- 1) The Judicial Sentencing Option (FOSA) for defendants appearing before the court for sentencing who meet specified criteria can receive 12 months of Community Custody in lieu of prison so that they may remain with their children and families;
- 2) The Community Parenting Alternative (CPA) authorizes the Department to transfer Incarcerated individuals who meet specified criteria to Home Detention using electronic monitoring (EM) for up to the final 12 months of their prison sentence. The Department will also establish its own criteria for CPA in addition to the legislative requirements.

The focus of this legislation is the child and family and the importance of strengthening the family bond so incarcerated individuals can be productive contributors in their families and communities. Additionally, the legislation requires the Department of Corrections (DOC) and Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to work together on shared cases. Each participant must sign releases of information to be eligible for participation.

You are hosting an incarcerated individual who is transferring from an institution to your home. It is important that you understand the participant is **not on supervision** but is still an **active inmate** within DOC. All of the participant's activities must be pre-approved by the supervising Corrections Specialist 3(CS3) and cannot be changed without prior approval. The participant must remain in the residence at all times other than occasions for which s/he has previously been approved. Such as to attend school, family activities, treatment, programs and/or employment. You can assist by open, honest communication and assisting the participant to operate within the rules and boundaries for the betterment of their children.

Use/possession of alcohol/drugs or possession of firearms, around the participant is prohibited. Please review the information given in the CPA handbook. It is important that you become familiar with the Standard Rules and the Conditions of the CPA so you are aware of what the participant living with you can and cannot do on this partial confinement program. The CS3 and Children's Administration will work with you and the incarcerated individual to ensure the best interests of the child/children are met. You should feel free to contact the assigned CS3 at any time.

## Mission Statement

In collaboration with DCYF and other community stakeholders, DOC will improve public safety by working together to ensure compliance with court ordered conditions as well as targeting programs and treatment that will enhance the family bonds and relationships in order to strengthen communities, thereby reducing intergenerational incarceration.

## Goals

- \* To increase the successful reentry of incarcerated individuals into our communities.
  - \* To strengthen family units by providing intense monitoring /supervision of incarcerated individuals granted this alternative.
  - \* To work with participants and their families in providing structure, support, and collaboration of services for the greatest impact.
- \* To work with other agencies and organizations in reducing duplicative services and programs.
- \* To intervene at the lowest level, as is appropriate, when violations occur so that the participant can correct their behavior to the benefit of their families and communities.



## Roles

Roles within your household will change when a participant returns home whether or not children are present. You will need to negotiate roles surrounding parenting, daily activities, household chores and rules, etc. If you have been parenting by yourself and the other parent is returning home, it may be difficult to share parenting decision making. If you have been parenting a grandchild/niece/nephew, you may find that the child/children continue to come to you in instances where the parent should be making the decisions. Begin the negotiation process while the participant is still incarcerated so that some expectations are set up in advance.



- \* Recognize that things take time to work out and that nothing is going to be perfect.

- \* Establish your own boundaries and limits and communicate them to the participant. Have clear expectations of what you are willing and unwilling to do such as including childcare, finances, etc.

- \* Identify successful parenting strategies you have been using and share those with the participant, so s/he can build upon those. Help the participant set up expectations for the children and then help everyone follow them. Don't allow the children to "divide and conquer" the adults in their lives.

- \*Consider having a weekly family meeting that everyone attends to foster open, honest communication and discuss what is working and what isn't:

- \*Talk, don't yell, and take a break if things get heated. Consider writing an agreement of expectations for everybody in the household and refer back to it if there are questions/problems.

- \* Spend time with the participant discussing how things are going and helping him/her to problem solve. Help the offender figure out what to do but don't do it for him/her.

- \*Encourage the participant to attend and participate in all required classes, treatment programs, employment, etc. Encourage the participant's active participation in the child/children's education, in reading to the child/children, in spending time with the child/children.

\*If you are asked to participate in any (or all) of a participant's programming, we hope you feel comfortable in doing so.

## Expectations

An integral part of the success of the CPA program is the relationship you establish with the supervising Corrections Specialist 3 (CS3). The CS3 will investigate the transfer plan to your residence and closely monitor the participant all the time he/she is participating in the program. You can expect to see the CS3 at your residence a minimum of once a week and the two of you may also have regular telephone communication. The following are some examples of when to communicate to the CS3:

### DO:

- Ask the CS3 for assistance if you have question/concerns about the rules and expectations of the CPA.
- Call the CS3 if you identify a potential problem requiring mediation with the participant.
- Immediately notify the CS3 if you become aware of or suspect violation behavior. This will help to provide a transparency and minimize potential manipulative behavior; the sooner the CS3 is made aware of an issue, the sooner he/she can intervene with the participant. It is important to note, every disciplinary action does not result in the participant being returned to prison.
- Inform the CS3 if the participant is late returning to the residence and you are aware he/she is not being honest with the CS3 as to the reason for being late.
- Inform the CS3 if the participant consumes alcohol and/or drugs and you know the participant has not been honest with the CS3 regarding the use.
- Know that the participant, and only the participant, is responsible for what he/she does or does not do.
- Encourage the participant to take an active part in their child's education.
- Take time to talk with the participant alone and establish an open line of communication. It is important for all adults to be consistent with household rules and consequences of behavior.

### Don't:

- Don't bring items or people into the residence that violate the participant's CPA rules/conditions and/or put them at risk of violating those rules/conditions.
- Don't allow visitors to your home who may compromise the participant's ability to remain in the program.
- Don't expect unnecessary schedule changes and home visits.

This partial confinement program requires the participant to spend a substantial portion of his/her time in the home (a minimum of 12 hours plus 1 minute per day). Expect the participant to have a curfew while he/she is participating in the program. The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and Revised Code of Washington (RCW) are specific as to what is allowed in partial confinement programs. The participant is accountable for all of his/her time in the community and must communicate that to the CS3. Failure to account for all of his/her time may result in termination from the program and the participant being reclassified back to the institution.

## Money/Finances

You are not financially responsible for the participant and all of his/her needs for the duration of the time he/she is on the CPA program. It is acceptable to assist the participant with primary needs such as housing, a phone line, food and transportation for a short time but this should not go on indefinitely. As the participant spends time in the program, he/she will collaborate with the supervising CS3 in an ongoing plan which may include employment, schooling and/or training. He/she may also be eligible for financial assistance through DSHS. Resources may be available in the community to assist the participant in working on budgeting issues. Keep in mind that the Participant cannot enter into any contracts while in the CPA program and the CS3 may view banking accounts, receipts, etc. to ensure funds are properly spent. The CS3 will also review the participant's budget plan to verify if the participant is on track with spending and savings plan. If you have any concerns with how the participant is managing their finances to include unnecessary purchases and/or failure to pay financial obligations, please communicate this information to the CS3 as soon as possible.

## Transportation

You are not required to provide transportation for the participant. However, whoever is transporting the participant should have the following; a valid driver's license, proof of insurance and vehicle registration. Prior to the participant's transfer to your residence, begin a discussion regarding how s/he will get to and from necessary appointments, programming requirements, children's appointments and activities, etc. Travel has been approved from point to point; any additional stops must have prior approval. Please be honest about what you can and cannot provide so the CS3 can assist the participant with finding appropriate transportation.

Participants may be allowed to drive while on the program if they provide necessary documentation and receive prior authorization from the CS3 and Program Administrator. If you have questions about this, please discuss them with the CS3.

## Medical, Dental and Mental Health

While on the Community Parenting program, the participant will have access to medical, dental and mental health services in the community, and they are responsible for payment of all costs associated with this care. The participant may be eligible for a medical coupon through DSHS, but this is not guaranteed. If you have concerns about physical and/or mental health issues or medications for participant and or child/children, please discuss these with the CS3, who may have insight into available resources in the community. Any/all trips to a medical provider needs to be documented by the participant on their daily itinerary log and verified with documentation.

## Emergencies

For the purpose of the Community Parenting Alternative, an emergency is defined as: ***a sudden, urgent, usually unexpected occurrence or occasion requiring immediate action.*** Participants are required to return to his/her approved residence at the designated time. In an emergency, a telephone call must be made to the CS3 if



it's during normal business hours. After hours, for all emergencies not covered in the CPA handbook, contact the On Duty Supervisor at 360-725-8221. The CS3 will research the emergency to ensure that they did not violate any conditions as it relates to the Community Parenting Alternative and that the emergency was valid. Should immediate unexpected medical attention be required for the participant, child, or other family member (if no one else is available), proceed with receiving medical attention and notify the CS3 as soon as possible.

An example of an emergency and verification would be: The child has an accident and is transported to the emergency room. Call emergency contact number, obtain verification from the hospital, and leave a message with your CS3 regarding your departure and return. Your verification could be the discharge papers from the hospital's emergency room doctor, listing the doctor's name and a contact number for the CS3 to verify the emergency.



## Employment Services

The purpose of this alternative is to enhance the bond between the participant and his/her child/children and to create positive parenting habits and relationships. The initial priority is not employment. During the first phase of this alternative the participant will not be allowed to seek or obtain employment. After that period of time has passed, part of the participant's daily schedule **may** be to participate in an employment orientation or job search.

During their daily job search, participants will be required to complete the Job Search Log and to include names of employers contacted, when the employer was contacted and the results of the contact. Once a job is offered, the participant must immediately relay this information to the CS3. The information must include:

- Supervisor's name
- Work site address
- Hours of work
- Contact information
- Type of employment

The CS3 will verify the information prior to the participant beginning any employment. The employer must comply with all state and federal laws, provide insurance coverage through Labor and Industries or a private company, and comply with Employment Security rules and all Federal Tax Requirements.



Once approved by the CS3, schedule change requests must be submitted to modify the employment security hours needed. The CS3 will verify with the employer that the participant has informed the employer of their CPA status and employment prohibitions and must be agreeable to the CS3 contacting and appearing at the work site.

### **Job Restrictions**

Employment may be a part of the participant's programming while on the CPA but it will not be allowed to replace other programming requirements that are important to a participant's transition to the community. There are some restrictions to employment which are listed in the CPA handbook. In addition, the participants finding employment may necessitate changes in child care needs, daily routines in the family, etc. This requires ongoing conversations between you and the participant to discuss these changes. The CS3 can assist the family in planning for and negotiating these changes.

### **Disciplinary**

Disciplinary procedures for the CPA are similar to those used in Work Release. The CPA handbook outlines behavioral expectations for participants in the community and consequences for violations, which range from verbal warnings up to and including termination.

### **Escape**

As previously mentioned, the participant must get prior approval from the CS3 before leaving the residence and must return at the approved time. Failure to return at the designated time may be considered an escape from the program and the CS3 will issue an escape warrant. It is the participant's responsibility to be aware of his/her own schedule and when s/he needs to return to the residence and to communicate that to family and friends. Should you notice the participant has not returned to the residence at the designated time, please contact the CS3 immediately.

### **Resolution Requests**

A resolution request is a written, formalized complaint.

The Resolution Program gives you a way to have your complaints heard and resolved in a formal manner. Before filing a resolution request, you should try to resolve your issues at the lowest level possible. Discussing an issue with your CS3 or Program Administrator will often clear up any misunderstandings. If your sincere effort has not been successful, then a formal resolution request would be the next step in the process.

Resolution Requests are handled consistent with DOC Policy 550.100 Resolution Program. A DOC 05-165 resolution request form can be obtained from your CS3 or local DOC field office.

### **Transition Day**

This is the day your loved one will be transition home. It is important that you are home this day so that you can allow us entry into your home. We know this is an exciting time for you and your family! However, only the people that live in the home can be at the home during the first 48 hours.