



Sponsor Support Guide



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INTRODUCTION

1.1 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 ground breaking 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 offenders 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 offenders can be productive contributors in their families and communities. Additionally, the legislation requires the Department of Corrections and Children's Administration to work together on shared cases. Each participant must sign releases of information to be eligible for participation.

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

Use/possession of alcohol/drugs or possession of firearms, around the offender is prohibited. Please review the information given in the CPA offender 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 offender living with you can and cannot do on this partial confinement program. The CCO and Children's Administration will work with you and the offender to ensure the best interests of the child/children are met. You should feel free to contact the assigned CCO at any time and discuss concerns with him/her.

1.2 Mission Statement

In collaboration with the Department of Social and Health Services and other community stakeholders, the Department of Corrections 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.

1.3 Goals

- * To increase the successful reentry of offenders into our communities.
- * To strengthen family units by providing intense monitoring /supervision of offenders granted this alternative.
- * To work with offenders 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 offenders can correct their behavior to the benefit of their families and communities.



2.1 Roles

Roles within your household will change when an offender 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 your spouse or 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 offender 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 offender. Have clear expectations of what you are willing and unwilling to do such as including childcare, finances, transportation, etc.
- * Identify successful parenting strategies you have been using and share those with the offender, so she/she can build upon those. Help the offender 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 offender 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 offender to attend and participate in all required classes, treatment programs, employment, etc. Encourage the offender's active participation in the child/children's education, in reading to the child/children, in spending time with the child/children, and at family dinner time without distractions of TV or other electronic devices.
- * If you are asked to participate in any (or all) of an offender's programming, we hope you feel comfortable in doing so.

3.1 Expectations

An integral part of the success of the CPA program is the relationship you establish with the supervising Community Corrections Officer (CCO). The CCO will investigate the transfer plan to your residence and closely monitor the offender all the time he/she is participating in the program.

You can expect to see the CCO 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 CCO:



DO:

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

Don't:

- Don't bring items or people into the residence that violate the offender'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 offender's ability to remain in the program.
- Don't expect unnecessary schedule changes and home visits.

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

Money/Finances

You are not financially responsible for the offender 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 offender 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 offender spends time in the program, he/she will collaborate with the supervising CCO 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 offender in working on budgeting issues. Keep in mind that the offender cannot enter into any contracts while in the CPA program and the CCO may view banking accounts, receipts, etc. to ensure funds are properly spent. The CCO will also review the offender's budget plan to verify if the offender is on track with spending and savings plan. If you have any concerns with how the offender is managing their finances to include unnecessary purchases and/or failure to pay financial obligations, please communicate this information to the CCO as soon as possible. Once the offender has a job, he/she will be expect to pay 10% of their earnings towards their legal financial obligations.



Transportation

You are not required to provide transportation for the offender. Prior to the offender'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 CCO can assist the offender with finding appropriate transportation.

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

5.1 Medical, Dental and Mental Health

While on the Community Parenting program, the offender 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 offender 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 offenders and or child/children, please discuss these with the CCO, who may have insight into available resources in the community. Any/all trips to a medical provider needs to be documented by the offender on their daily itinerary log and verified with documentation.

5.2 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***. Offenders are required to return to his/her approved residence at the designated time. In an emergency, a telephone call must be made to the CCO if it's during normal business hours. After hours, for all emergencies not covered in the CPA manual, contact the Program Administrator Susan Leavell at (360) 970-3650. The CCO 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 offender, child, or other family member (if no one else is available), proceed with receiving medical attention and notify the CCO 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 CCO 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 CCO to verify the emergency.

6.1 Employment Services

The purpose of this alternative is to enhance the bond between the offender and his/her child/children and to create positive parenting habits and relationships. The initial priority is not employment. During the first 90 days of this alternative, they will have employment restriction that will be discussed with them by their CCO. After that period of time has passed, part of the offender's daily schedule ***may*** be to participate in an employment orientation or job search.



During their daily job search, offenders 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 offender must immediately relay this information to the CCO. The information must include:

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

The CCO will verify the information prior to the offender 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 CCO, schedule change requests must be submitted to modify the employment security hours needed. The CCO will verify with the employer that the offender has informed the employer of their CPA status and employment prohibitions and must be agreeable to the CCO contacting and appearing at the work site.

6.2 Job Restrictions

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

Disciplinary

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

Escape

As previously mentioned, the offender must get prior approval from the CCO before leaving the residence and must return at the approved time. Failure to return at the designated time will be considered an escape and the CCO will issue an escape warrant. It is the offender'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 offender has not returned to the residence at the designated time, please contact the CCO immediately.

Grievances

A grievance is a written, formalized complaint. The Grievance Program gives the offender a way to have complaints heard and resolved in a formal manner. Grievances are handled consistent with DOC policy and a grievance form can be obtained from the CCO or local DOC field office.

Grievance Coordinator:

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