

# Opening & Coordinating an AVP Program at a Facility

(state prison, federal prison, fire camp, jail, the AVP Local Council, Prison Coordinator Council, and the AVPCA Steering Committee)

Finalized May 13, 2020

The intended use of this guide is for programs that have been approved by the Local Council and/or the Steering Committee. If you are curious about the requirements for a program to be approved, please reach out to: [AVPCA.PCC@gmail.com](mailto:AVPCA.PCC@gmail.com). This document is meant to be a guide and not a set of policies. We know that the context of every facility is different and the work to get a program started will look different.

The appointed Prison Coordinator initiates the following steps to work with the facility:

## **Start-Up Meeting**

Who: Introductory meeting with the warden, CRM (Community Resource Manager), AVP Prison Coordinator, and someone from the AVP Prison Coordinator Council.

Purpose: Introduce AVP by sharing the benefits of the program and discuss the logistics that will make the program possible.

## Items to Cover:

- Requirements of AVP to work in the facility
- Ways to best communicate with one another (meeting cadence, phone/email, etc.).
- Annual program review (when will it happen)
- Assignment of staff liaison/sponsor who will be the AVP Prison Coordinator's primary contact.
- Logistics:*
  - Rooms where the workshops will take place. (Need space to set up chairs w/o desks in a circle. Have a phone in the room, for calling staff-- if needed, and a place to store materials)
  - Inmate recruitment (participants and then facilitators)
  - System for inmate sign-ups and monthly list distribution
  - Process for documentation/submission of milestones
  - Clearance process (volunteers + Brown Cards+ state access letter)
  - CDCR requirements and policies for volunteers
  - Process to share concerns
  - Supply kit contents and location (locked in a cabinet)
  - Materials (handouts, copies, etc.)
  - Phone number to contact gate staff to determine status of the facility
  - Establish minimum workshop frequency and duration: monthly (preferred), 18-22 hours over two or three consecutive days (required).

- Approximately 20 participants per workshop. Participants must be present for the whole workshop.
- Lockdown does not necessarily impact workshops
- Depending on workshop hours: Dinner arrangements and outcount
- Clothing requirements/Dress Codes
- Establish guidelines for inmate facilitator communication with AVP Prison Coordinator
- Process for inmates to attend workshops (checking in, sign in sheets, calling from buildings, etc.)
- Inmates will be notified of workshop expectations (ex: visits cannot be planned for that weekend, inmates may need to get time off of work, etc) [PC & CRM will talk through these and agree on a process to let inmates know expectations]
- Closed Custody: How to work with staff to support participants who are in closed custody.
- Programmatic Elements:*
  - Offering all three levels of workshops: Basic, Advanced, Training for Facilitators (T4F) and the option to run mini-workshops (if needed)
  - All workshop participants are volunteers. Diversity of race, ethnicity, age and gang affiliation is encouraged in creating the program as it gets started.
  - Permission to include in workshops outside trainees with clearances (temporary/weekend).
  - Correctional Officers do not attend inside AVP Workshops
  - AVP Workshops can be made available to Correctional Officers and other staff if requested; brief introductions to AVP can be made to any staff and staff meetings if requested.
  - Confidentiality is an AVP program requirement (*See AVP's position on mandated reporting approved by CDCR*)
  - Are inmate activity groups (IAG) going to be allowed in the facility
  - Support groups and ways for inmates to meet and work together (frequency, content, etc.)
  - Graduation: AVP pins, cards, and certificates. Attendance by staff welcome.

## **Follow-up Meetings (Annual)**

Who: The Prison Coordinator will meet with the CRM and Warden (and any other appropriate parties)

Purpose: This will be an annual meeting where you collectively review program successes in summary report form and get feedback from the Warden and CRM.

### Items to Cover:

- Things that have gone well
- Areas of growth
- Data from inmate evaluations

- Workshop numbers (inmates who have completed all 3 workshops, wait list numbers, and number of facilitators)
- Logistics (anything that could make the program run smoother or more efficiently)
- CA AVP data that shows the impact of program across the state [reach out to PC Council at least one month in advance to get connected to person who can help you get that information]

## **Ongoing Meetings**

Who: The AVP/PC and the contact person appointed by the CRM (or in some cases the CRM)

Purpose: Recurring touchpoints where AVP PC & CDCR discuss topics that are important to the program's success and a space where you are building relationships with one another and talking through things that are impacting the program (positive or negative). This will allow us to achieve a smooth and regular operation of AVP within the facility based on the original agreements and adjusted as necessary.

### Items to Cover:

- Be sure to prepare anything that you initially agreed to bring to these ongoing meetings.
- Things that are going well
- Problems that are impacting the program AND some ideas for solutions
- Questions you have
- Logistical things that can be improved
- Impact of the program at the facility

## **Additional Note:**

The AVP/PC will report in writing anything that the CRM might resolve and request a meeting if necessary. The AVP/PC will always alert in writing the local CRM before going to the statewide office, through the AVP CDCR liaison, with any issue unresolvable at the local level. AVP/CA participates in meetings sponsored by the Statewide California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), Division of Adult Institutions (DAI), Office of Policy Standardization.

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