



POLICY and PROCEDURES
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania • Department of Corrections

Policy Subject: Technology Evaluation Committee		Policy Number: 2.5.1
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I. AUTHORITY

The Authority of the Secretary of Corrections to direct the operation of the Department of Corrections is established by Sections 201, 206, 506, and 901-B of the Administrative Code of 1929, 71 P.S. §§61, 66, 186, and 310-1, Act of April 9, 1929, P.L. 177, No. 175, as amended.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all facilities operated under the jurisdiction of, or conducting business with the Department of Corrections.

III. POLICY

It is the policy of the Department to maintain a Technology Evaluation Committee (TEC) with the responsibility to review, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding the purchase of new products, including security related equipment and information management technology. The goal is to provide for uniformity in the purchase of new products to ensure the lowest possible cost for the most appropriate products for the intended use by the facilities. No purchase or commitment to purchase new products shall take place until recommended by the TEC and approved by the Executive Deputy Secretary/designee.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Technology Evaluation Committee (TEC) Responsibilities

TEC responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. serve as a forum for the presentation of potential technological applications by TEC members;

2. make recommendations to the Executive Deputy Secretary/designee regarding potential technology applications and new product acquisition;
3. ensure the widespread dissemination of information regarding new technology developments and new products throughout the Department; and
4. develop and maintain a user's guide which contains a compilation of the products researched and approved for purchase/acquisition. The user's guide shall be made available to each facility upon request.

B. TEC Membership/Meetings

1. The Chair of the TEC will be appointed by the Executive Deputy Secretary/designee.
2. Voting members of the committee include, but are not limited to, a representative from each of the following areas:
 - a. Security;
 - b. Food Services;
 - c. Specialized Teams;
 - d. Facility Maintenance;
 - e. Bureau of Information Technology (BIT);
 - f. Training Academy;
 - g. Legal Services; and
 - h. Chair.
3. The TEC shall meet quarterly or on an as needed basis, as determined by the Chair.
4. The Chair will post the dates for meetings at least 30 days prior. This announcement will be provided to all Facility Managers and voting members.

C. Evaluation of Technologies and New Products

1. TEC Evaluation
 - a. Technologies or new products consistent with the following areas shall receive priority in the review process:
 - (1) staff safety;

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- (2) concealed weapon/contraband detection;
 - (3) escape prevention;
 - (4) drug detection/testing;
 - (5) transportation;
 - (6) Management Information Systems; and
 - (7) efficiency and effectiveness enhancements.
- b. Requests for review and evaluation of a specific technology or product shall be submitted to the Chair using the **Product Evaluation Request (Attachment A)**.
 - c. Prior to purchase or acquisition of new products, the Facility Manager/designee shall determine if the equipment has been evaluated, using the **Product Evaluation Form (Attachment B)**, and/or whether it is included in the user's guide of approved products located on DOCNet.
 - d. All requests for the budgeting and/or acquisition of new products that have not been previously approved shall be referred to the TEC for review. No purchase or commitment to purchase new products shall take place until approved by the Executive Deputy Secretary/designee.
 - e. The Chair shall direct all requests for research/review to the Executive Deputy Secretary/designee.
 - (1) The Chair shall solicit as much information as possible regarding the technology/product, including:
 - (a) technical data;
 - (b) manufacturer's "cut sheets";
 - (c) performance criteria; and
 - (d) testing results.
 - (2) The Chair shall then schedule the technology/product for initial review by the TEC.
 - f. The TEC shall conduct an initial evaluation of the technology/product and shall make the following determination(s):
 - (1) approve or disapprove the product/technology;
 - (2) if approved, initiate a pilot test of the product/technology, with start and end dates;

- (3) refer the technology/product to a facility for evaluation; and
- (4) request additional information, if applicable.

2. Facility Evaluation

Should the TEC recommend that a technology/product be referred to a facility for further evaluation, the Chair shall coordinate the deployment of the technology/product using the guidelines listed below.

- a. The facility that will evaluate the technology/product must be approved by the Executive Deputy Secretary/designee.
- b. The Facility Manager/designee of the facility must approve the testing/evaluation.
- c. The facility assigned to perform the evaluation will be required to submit a **Product Evaluation Form**, with a brief synopsis of the product's performance. The evaluation should cover, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (1) usefulness to the Department;
 - (2) safety;
 - (3) performance in adverse environmental conditions (i.e., extreme heat or cold);
 - (4) cost;
 - (5) durability;
 - (6) staff training issues; and
 - (7) any other items the evaluator feels should be covered.

D. Cooperation with Related Agencies

1. Consultation for New Technologies

In order to review technologies that may be in use or are being considered at other agencies or correctional sites, the TEC shall, on a regular basis, consult/use sources for new technologies and information, to include the following:

- a. staff concerns, suggestions, and/or recommendations;
- b. professional/technical media, to include newspapers, magazines, journals, etc.;
- c. professional/technical conferences;

- d. product vendors and trade-show exhibits; and
- e. the internet.

2. Collaboration with Other Agencies

The TEC may also collaborate with other agencies with committees on technology review/research, to include the following:

- a. the Federal Bureau of Prisons;
- b. National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Technology Advisory Council;
- c. Northeast Technology Product and Evaluation Committee;
- d. Kansas Department of Corrections Product Evaluation Committee;
- e. Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS);
- f. New York Department of Corrections, Technology Review Committee; and
- g. area colleges/universities.

V. SUSPENSION DURING AN EMERGENCY

In an emergency or extended disruption of normal facility operation, the Secretary, or designee may suspend any provision or section of this policy, for a specific period.

VI. RIGHTS UNDER THIS POLICY

This policy does not create rights in any person nor should it be interpreted or applied in such a manner as to abridge the rights of any individual. This policy should be interpreted to have sufficient flexibility to be consistent with law and to permit the accomplishment of the purpose(s) of the policies of the Department of Corrections.

VII. RELEASE OF INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

A. Release of Information

This policy document is public information and may be released upon request.

B. Distribution of Policy

1. General Distribution

The Department of Corrections' policy and procedure manuals (when applicable) shall be distributed to the members of the Central Office Executive Staff, all Facility Managers, and Community Corrections Regional Directors on a routine basis.

Distribution to other individuals and/or agencies is subject to the approval of the Secretary of Corrections or designee.

2. Distribution to Staff

It is the responsibility of those individuals receiving policies and procedures, as indicated in the "General Distribution" section above, to ensure that each employee expected or required to perform the necessary procedures/duties is issued a copy of the policy and procedures.

VIII. SUPERSEDED POLICY AND CROSS REFERENCE

A. Superseded Policy

1. Department Policy

This document establishes policy on this subject.

2. Facility Policy and Procedures

This document supersedes all facility policy and procedures on this subject.

B. Cross Reference(s)

1. Administrative Manuals

None.

2. ACA Standards

a. Administration of Correctional Agencies: None

b. Adult Correctional Institutions: None

c. Adult Community Residential Services: None

d. Adult Correctional Boot Camp Programs: None

e. Correctional Training Academies: None

**2.5.1, Technology Evaluation Committee
Glossary of Terms**

New Technology/Products – Recent developments and innovations in technologies, hardware, software, security related equipment and other equipment or furnishings which may be adaptable for use within the Department for the protection of the public, staff, and inmates or which allow the Department to operate more efficiently or effectively.

Security Related Equipment – Equipment or devices used to maintain facility/office security or officer safety, includes the following: lethal and non-lethal weapons, chemical agents, ammunition, contraband detection equipment, mechanical and electrical restraints, personal alarm systems, intrusion detection systems, metal detectors, access control systems, surveillance equipment, communication devices, substance abuse testing equipment, audio monitors, and tactical equipment.

Technology Evaluation Committee (TEC) Chair – A staff person, designated by the Executive Deputy Secretary/designee, responsible to coordinate the TEC meetings, gather product information, maintenance of a “user’s guide” and dissemination of information.