

# The Georgia Department of Corrections Employee Education Initiative

The Georgia Department of Corrections is a **learning organization** and values the continuing education of all of its employees. We believe all staff should strive to improve their value to the organization by striving for continuous learning in their chosen profession.

The Georgia Department of Corrections has over 13,000 employees, the majority of whom only have a high school diploma. These employees are dedicated public servants who work hard to keep the community and their facilities and offices safe and secure. **The GDC Education Initiative** seeks to invest in these employees' futures by providing opportunities for higher education and by setting goals for employees to attain the Associate, Bachelor, Master or Doctoral Degree.



## Incentive Compensation

A key component of this initiative is Incentive Compensation. The Commissioner supports a monetary incentive for attainment of an Associate Degree (3% lump sum payment), Bachelor's Degree (5% lump sum payment), Master's Degree (5% lump sum payment) or Doctoral Degree (5% lump sum payment). To be eligible for these monetary incentives an employee must meet the following criteria:

- Be a full-time employee of GDC
- Have obtained one, or more, of the aforementioned degrees during the employee's current period of continuous employment with GDC, and
- Obtain degree after 7/1/05 for Associate or Bachelor, after 7/1/06 for Master and after 7/1/09 for Doctoral
- Be recommended for a monetary award by the Appointing Authority, based on verification of the degree awarded
- Attend an Accredited School

Please review **GDC SOP IVO07-0003** for more information. Employees are eligible for each monetary incentive and some employees could receive all four educational monetary incentives during their employment with GDC.

## Financial Assistance

The amount of financial aid and/or assistance available differs for each individual employee. The first place to start is by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Other websites that have additional information are: [www.gsfc.org](http://www.gsfc.org) (HOPE Grant/Scholarship) [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) (Financial Aid assistance) [www.sdvs.georgia.gov](http://www.sdvs.georgia.gov) (Veterans' benefits) [www.gsu.edu/eoc](http://www.gsu.edu/eoc) (Educational Opportunities Center) [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov) (Federal Student Aid information)

## Current Initiatives

### Contingent Employment as a Probation Officer

Employees with an Associate Degree may apply for Probation Officer positions, contingent upon continuing their education to attain a Bachelor Degree.

### GDC Professional Management Program (PMP)

PMP is a collaborative effort between Columbus State University and GDC offering up to 30-semester hours college credit and a Certificate in Criminal Justice. Employees attend classes at five sites throughout the state during work time and earn 40 hours of POST credit for each week of class over a two-year period. HOPE Grant pays tuition and provides funds for books. CSU will credit the PMP hours toward an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) or Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) Degree in Criminal Justice. Employees can take the 30 hours, take an additional 24 hours of core classes and 9 elective hours to achieve the AAS. Check with your education coordinator for schools that fully accept PMP credits.

### Command College

Command College is offered by the Georgia Law Enforcement Command College and Columbus State University. This is graduate level coursework in Criminal Justice Leadership for Criminal Justice Professionals and Public Safety Managers. GDC employees can earn 280 hours of POST training credit during work time and 21 semester hours of academic credit (electives) that can be applied to the Master of Public Administration or the Bachelor Degree in Criminal Justice. The program is done in seven modules, of 40 hours each, meeting three times per year over a two-year period.

## Current Initiatives (cont.)

### Mercer University at Tift Campus

A Master of Science in Public Safety Leadership by Mercer University is planned for 2011 at State Offices South at Tift College. This is subject to approval by the MU accrediting board and final approval by the State of Georgia. This education program is designed specifically for GDC employees and other public safety professionals and leaders. It is a two-year program made up of two courses per 16- week semester with students meeting face-to-face for each course twice only after work hours and the remaining coursework done online.

### Certified Addiction Counselor Program

Currently the counselors at the Day Reporting Centers are being sent to Mercer University to get their classroom hours to enable them to take the test to become a Certified Addiction Counselor. The requirements are:

- Must have a Bachelor degree
- 270 hours of classroom instruction (some college credit may count)
- 300 hours of clinical supervision
- 4000 hours of program delivery
- Must pass a written and oral exam

Once certified, these employees will receive a 10% pay increase.

### Other Educational Opportunities

There are 92 public and private colleges and universities and technical colleges presently accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) in the State of Georgia. Specific information and accreditation status may be found at [www.sacs.org](http://www.sacs.org). Another

accreditation organization is the Council for Higher Education Accreditation at [www.chea.org](http://www.chea.org)

Technical colleges offer certificate and diploma programs throughout the state. Many of them are accredited to offer 2-year degrees. These programs can provide excellent starting points.

### Contact Persons

Contact the Department's Staff Mr. Bob Gaylor (478.992.2835 or 404.783.8049, cell or [gaylor01@dcor.state.ga.us](mailto:gaylor01@dcor.state.ga.us)) or Ms. Delphine Reese (478.992.2834 or 404.665.7370, cell or [reese00@dcor.state.ga.us](mailto:reese00@dcor.state.ga.us)). Deputy Wardens of Care & Treatment and Probation leadership are available to assist staff in planning their education plan of action.

### Accessibility

Supervisors may approve annual or personal leave in order for employees to attend classes, or make schedule adjustments when possible and appropriate. GDC Central Human Resources may be contacted for further information at (478) 992-5211 or [www.dcor.state.ga.us](http://www.dcor.state.ga.us)

### Other Mandatory Information

There are several documents that are mandatory in order to apply to most colleges, universities and technical colleges:

- Completed FAFSA application (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)
- Immunization form
- High school transcripts
- Social security card
- H.S. and College Transcripts

Acquiring these forms may take some time, so it is a good idea to start collecting these **ASAP**.

Department of Corrections  
Operations, Planning, and  
Training Division  
Training Section

## Employee Education Initiative



**Brian Owens**  
Corrections Commissioner

