



FACT SHEET

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2019

TIMOTHY C. WARD COMMISSIONER

TERRY EDGE DIRECTOR OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Office of Professional Development (OPD) with the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) consists of employee education, care and custody and campus operations for GDC Headquarters. Employee training, to include professional training, development and educational opportunities, is offered to all employees at GDC.

All training opportunities for staff are developed through the Georgia Corrections Academy, Leadership Development Unit and Administrative Support Unit.

OVERVIEW

- Provides legally mandated training to all sworn staff
- Advanced and specialized training to sworn and non-sworn employees
- Develops professional development topics and programs in support of the department's mission and vision
- Headquartered at the Georgia Corrections Academy at GDC Headquarters in Forsyth

HISTORY

- Developed in response to a change in Georgia law that required correctional officers to be certified as law enforcement officers
- Basic training was originally conducted at the University of Georgia in Athens
- In 1986, the Georgia Public Safety Training Center was opened in Forsyth and the Corrections Academy relocated
- In December 2009, the Corrections Academy opened at the newly renovated Tift College campus and classes began in January 2010

BASIC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Basic Correctional Officer Training (BCOT)

- Largest basic law enforcement training program in the state
- Approximately 1,800 correctional officers graduate and receive certification annually
- Five-week course taught at the academy
- Paramilitary structure
- Cadets reside on campus during their training and only return home on weekends



ADVANCED AND SPECIALIZED DEVELOPMENT

Special Operations Professional Development Unit

- Responsible for providing training to various GDC Special Operations units
- Specialized areas include:
 - Corrections Emergency Response Teams (CERT)
 - Tactical (TACT) Squads
 - Canine units
 - Fugitive Squad
- Offered to advance an officer's skill level in a particular area, i.e. firearms, drill and ceremony, drug detection, chemical munitions, taser, mobile field force, defensive tactics, auto-pistol and cell extraction skills
- Provides training based on current events and acts as a quick response unit for training issues





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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT UNIT

Instructional

- Teaches and coordinates with adjunct instructors, subject matter experts or university instructors to deliver management, leadership and education courses
- Courses include Sergeants Academy, Supervision, Management, Deputy Wardens Academy, and Pre-Command
- More than 90 different areas of study focus on care and treatment, health and business-related courses such as mental health, basic counseling, food services, advanced purchasing, Thinking for a Change program training and team building.
- Teaches courses and coordinates with adjunct instructors and subject matter experts to offer basic, advanced and specialized training to the department's sworn and non-sworn staff
- Facilitates POST Instructor Training for the agency

Education & E-Learning

- Partners with public and private post-secondary education providers to develop various options for non-traditional students to achieve their educational goals
- Georgia Corrections Automated Learning Systems (GCALS) is an online training option designed to provide staff with the opportunity to receive training conveniently without having to travel resulting in a reduction in the cost for travel. Additionally, GCALS allows staff the convenience of being able to receive training based around their work and personal schedule
- Classes offered via the Georgia Public Safety Training Center
- Classes offered may change periodically and include: CPR/AED/First Aid, PREA, Use of Force and Elder Abuse Prevention, Ethics and Professionalism, Right to Know, and Drug Identification and Use of Deadly Force

Field Development

- Develops and delivers the annual in-service training program to the agencies Facility Operations employees
- Conducts semi-monthly new employee training for all staff
- Certifies all sworn staff with firearms annually
- Supports the Academy by providing firearms training and certification for Corrections Cadets
- Offers additional specialized training to support their facility's mission

