

1.4.E.11 Inmate Hunger Strike

I Policy Index:



Date Signed: 09/01/2021
Distribution: Public
Replaces Policy: N/A
Supersedes Policy Dated: 10/03/2019
Affected Units: All Institutions
Effective Date: 09/02/2021
Scheduled Revision Date: September 2022
Revision Number: 14
Office of Primary Responsibility: DOC Administration

II Policy:

The Department of Corrections (DOC) will establish and maintain processes and procedures for the medical and administrative management of inmates who engage in hunger strikes. It is the responsibility of the DOC to monitor the health and welfare of individual inmates and to ensure procedures are pursued to preserve life.

III Definitions:

Attending Physician:

A physician that provides primary care and directs emergent, chronic and continuing care to inmates. The physician will provide information regarding an inmate's condition, risks to the inmate and effects the hunger strike may have upon the inmate to the Involuntary Feeding and Hydration Treatment Panel.

Behavioral Health Services Staff:

For the purposes of this policy, a psychiatrist, psychologist or behavior health professional employed or contracted by the Department of Social Services to provide behavioral health services to inmates within a DOC institution.

Health Services Staff:

Includes all individuals employed or contracted by the Department of Health to provide health services to inmates.

Hunger Strike:

When an inmate is observed by staff to be refusing sufficient nutrition and/or hydration for nine (9) consecutive meals. Medically imposed fasts for the purpose of conducting medical tests or procedures and religious fasts for a reasonable length of time, consistent with religious doctrine, are exempt from this definition (See DOC policy 1.5.F.2 [Inmate Religious and Medical Diets](#)).

Medical Representative:

A physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner, as defined in SDCL §§ [34-12D-1](#), [36-4A-1](#), [36-9A-12](#) and [24-11B-2](#).