



**OREGON YOUTH AUTHORITY**  
**Policy Statement**  
**Part III – Youth Services (Community)**



*Subject:*

**Behavior Incentives and Reinforcing Behavior (Community)**

*Section – Policy Number:*

**C: Case Planning and Review – 1.3**

*Supersedes:*

**III-C-1.3 (04/18)**  
**III-C-1.3 (03/10)**

*Effective Date:*

**10/10/2022**

*Date of Last*

*Revision/Review:*  
**None**

**Related Standards and References:**

- [ORS 182.515-182.525](#) (Evidence-based programs)
- Community Services Individualized Services Handbook
- [OYA policy: I-A-11.0](#) Assessment, Case Planning, and Multidisciplinary Teams
- [II-B-2.0](#) Behavior Incentives and Reinforcing Behavior [Facility]
- [Attachment A](#): Behaviors/Conditions to Reinforce with Incentives/Reinforcements
- DAPP Practice Guide


**Related Procedures:**

- [COM III-C-1.3](#) Youth Incentives – Gift Cards

**Policy Owner:**

Community Services Assistant Director

**Approved:**

  
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 Joseph O'Leary, Director

**I. PURPOSE:**

This policy sets guidelines for OYA field staff in providing incentives and reinforcement to promote positive youth behavior for youth on OYA community supervision.

See OYA policy II-E-1.9 Behavior Management – Incentives and Reinforcement [Facility] regarding guidelines for OYA facility staff when establishing behavior incentives and reinforcement for youth in OYA facilities.

This policy does not address staff travel reimbursement.

**II. POLICY DEFINITIONS:**

**Behavior management:** A comprehensive plan that clearly identifies how positive prosocial behavior is promoted and reinforced and how negative behavior is refocused.

**Incentive:** That which is planned prior to a behavior being performed to increase the likelihood that the behavior will happen.

**Reinforcement:** A response to a behavior that serves to strengthen or increase the likelihood a youth will repeat that behavior. Examples include social praise, tangible items (e.g., gift cards), tokens (e.g., points/levels) or additional

privileges, and the removal of a stimulus a youth dislikes (e.g., curfew, house arrest).

### **III. POLICY:**

OYA has identified diversity, equity and inclusion as an agency priority and initiative, with a goal to build a respectful, diverse, equitable and inclusive environment for youth and staff that is free from harassment, discrimination and bias. Data shows youth of color and LGBTQ+ youth are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system. While OYA is only one part of that system, it plays a critical role in addressing the historical and systemic inequities it perpetuates. It is important for staff to be aware of how their biases may impact their perception of youth behavior, and take action to reduce inequity in acknowledging and reinforcing positive behavior.

OYA's mission is to protect the public by holding youth accountable, promoting change, developing and improving skills, and increasing the likelihood that youth will go on to lead productive, crime-free lives. OYA supports a culture of Positive Human Development (PHD) to assist in achieving this goal. This culture provides a physically, psychologically, and emotionally safe and secure environment, fosters caring and supportive relationships, provides high expectations and accountability, and encourages meaningful participation and connection to communities – to increase public safety and positive youth outcomes. Positive rapport, reinforcement, and incentives are an integral part of OYA's youth behavior management strategy.

The principles of the Developmental Approach to Parole and Probation (DAPP) emphasizes that positive rewards are more predictive of success than sanctions. Therefore, the use of behavioral incentives is a critical component of case management. Applying this approach, OYA uses a youth behavior management system that provides incentives and reinforcements as part of each youth's treatment and case plan. Each youth on OYA supervision in the community has individual treatment goals that target specific behaviors using incentives and reinforcements which are meaningful to the youth. Targeted behaviors are directly related to the youth's case plan goals and competency development.

### **IV. GENERAL STANDARDS:**

- A. A youth's multidisciplinary team (MDT) establishes individual goals to target specific behaviors for that individual youth. The goals are reviewed and updated as needed.

Specific incentives are identified by the youth and agreed on through the MDT process and documented in the case plan.

- B. Staff must verify the targeted behavior prior to establishing or administering a related incentive or reinforcement.
- C. Staff must use positive social behavior incentives and reinforcements as the primary method of promoting positive development. Staff must use incentives or reinforcements from the beginning of a youth's commitment to OYA to reinforce incremental progress.

- D. Procurement of tangible behavior incentives and reinforcements must be controlled and limited.
  - 1. Each OYA field office must follow the Community Services Individualized Services Handbook and Community Services procedure [COM III-C-1.3 Youth Incentives – Gift Cards](#) regarding procurement of tangible items for youth.

The field supervisor must approve of any distribution of tangible incentives or reinforcements prior to the distribution.
  - 2. Staff may not use their personal funds to purchase tangible behavior incentives or reinforcements.
- E. Some examples, but not an exhaustive list, of behaviors to reinforce and appropriate types of behavior incentives and reinforcements to use with youth on community supervision are listed in [Attachment A](#).

**V. GENERAL PROCEDURE REQUIRED: NO**

**Attachment A: Behaviors/Conditions to Reinforce with Incentives/Reinforcements**

**Examples of Behaviors and Conditions to Reinforce**

<b>Behaviors</b>
Displays a positive attitude to learn and grow Avoids situations which may result in harmful or hurtful behavior Demonstrates skills to avoid, manage, or escape from high-risk activity Communicates openly with others Identifies treatment or development goals Efforts and progress towards short- and long-term goals and competencies Appropriate self-advocacy Asks for assistance when needed and uses resources appropriately Achieves treatment benchmarks Manages stressful situations appropriately without physical or verbal acting out Models skills to deal with negative peer pressure Identifies and recognizes the limitations of anti-social peer group Models and promotes the use of non-violent alternatives for resolving conflicts Models and encourages others to use acceptable methods for controlling impulsive behavior Uses learned skills to manage impulsive behaviors Consistently uses effective emotion regulation skills Clean substance use tests Taking steps towards living a sober lifestyle Consistently makes efforts to improve or sustain school achievement (grades, attendance, behavior/graduation) Demonstrates and promotes prosocial relationships with peers Acknowledges the impact that peers can have on them Demonstrates skills to deal with negative peer pressure Respectful towards others Seeks and participates in a variety of prosocial activities Leads by example Displays respect for others' personal boundaries Holds other peers accountable Accepts and provides feedback appropriately Stays away from gang activity Behavior improvements Finds/maintains a job Engages in prosocial community activities Displays responsible decision-making skills Expresses importance of engagement in managing their mental health Takes ownership for their own behavior Displays fiscal responsibility and money management Maintains regular and consistent contact with support systems Respectful of home rules Identifies internal and external triggers in managing anger/aggression Displays good-problem solving skills

<b>Conditions</b>
Payments made towards restitution Engaging with JPPOs during regular check-ins Community service Following through with conditions set by the court Follows Parole/Probation agreement

**Attachment A: Behaviors/Conditions to Reinforce with Incentives/Reinforcements**

**Examples of Incentives and Reinforcements**

<b>Social</b>
Verbal praise and acknowledging incremental progress in behavior or goals Youth in programs - share recognition of good work within program Introduce to supervisor, praising for efforts JPPO attends school, athletic events, graduation Attend special events Attends program graduation Individual attention and youth chooses the activity Let youth choose music in car while transporting Positive court hearing Additional privileges Increase frequency of home visits Longer home visits Driving privileges Celebrations

<b>Tokens</b>
Certificates of accomplishment, acknowledgment of effort Celebrate-success awards Points to purchase agreed-upon rewards

<b>Removal/Reduction of Stimulus</b>
Extend curfew Write off community service hours Modify parole conditions Unsupervised time Less structured time (more free time) Less frequent substance use tests Reduce sanctions Decrease restrictions Early release or transition from a facility or program Early termination of probation/parole

<b>Tangible</b>
Gift cards See the Field Operations Individualized Services Handbook