

Positive Reinforcement Protocol

Phase programs employ a behavioral modification approach designed to establish positive reinforcement guidelines that incorporates both rewards and consequences to obtain the desired outcome. A structured reinforcement system considers daily pro-social behavior exhibited by the participant that can be identified and reinforced by staff. Likewise, anti-social behavior exhibited by the participant will result in consequences (e.g. removal of rewards/privileges). Research in the criminal justice field recommends at least a 4:1 ratio between rewards and punishers to obtain the best result.

Effective reinforcement protocol will:

- Occur immediately following the pro-social behavior;
- Vary in terms of the type of reward;
- Be applied consistently until the behavior is well developed and then applied intermittently;
- Be desired by the recipient;
- Be individualized;
- Be administered consistently by staff; and
- Outweigh the frequency of punishers.

Similarly, the program follows a sound behavioral approach when punishing behaviors.

Effective consequences of behavior will:

- Be inescapable;
- Occur at the earliest point in an undesired response or action;
- Occur after every occurrence of undesired behavior;
- Be immediate;
- Not be spread out;
- Include the teaching of alternative pro-social behavior(s); and
- Vary in terms of type.

A token economy system will be utilized to facilitate the positive reinforcement protocol. Participants will be rewarded with a token item (e.g. ticket, button, or sticker) each time staff observes pro-social behaviors displayed by the participant. Participants may cash in tokens weekly for reward items of their choice, or save up tokens for a more desirable reward.

Rewards

Tokens may be exchanged for a variety of rewards. These items may include but are not limited to the following:

- Canteen food items — 5 tokens per item

- Hygiene items — 5 tokens per item
- Stationary materials — 5 tokens per item
- Miscellaneous items (e.g. pens, pencils, erasers, composition books) — 5–10 tokens per item
- 10 minutes extended for calls to family/support — 15 tokens
- 10 minutes extended visitation — 25 tokens

Consequences/Sanctions:

- Loss of tokens — (e.g. first infraction 2 tokens, second infraction 5 tokens) Sanctions should be applied based on the severity of the infraction.
- Extra class work/homework relevant to the behavior
- Loss of visitation privileges
- Loss of canteen privileges
- Phase demotion
- Misconduct
- Level demotion

Consequences and/or sanctions may be used independently or in conjunction with one another, depending on the situation or severity of infraction.

(R 05/22)