

BROTHERS, PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND HEED!!!

Mentor Removed from Mentor Ministry

It is with the heaviest of hearts we inform you that another mentor has been suspended by the prison until he completes the State of Georgia Volunteer Training Course, and furthermore, that our leadership team has decided to remove him from the mentor ministry.

This mentor:

1. Entered Walker on his "off" mentoring night, presenting himself as going in to meet with his mentee.
2. Instead of meeting with his mentee, he met with another offender with whom he did not receive prior permission to meet.
3. The mentor then conducted activities outside of approved ministry for which he is approved. Suffice it to say that he was NOT mentoring.
4. The mentor obtained use of equipment that he was not authorized to use, and used it in an area he was not authorized to be in, which also is an area where the equipment was not authorized to be used by any person or prisoner.
5. Furthermore, this mentor gave false information to our volunteer ministry leader that he had received Chaplain Stroop's permission to meet with the unauthorized prisoner, and also that he had the Chaplain's permission to conduct the activity he was undertaking.

Subsequently, the Mentor Ministry was warned in a memo from the Chaplain, copied to the Deputy Warden level, that: *These items are serious infractions and can result in the suspension of the host ministry and their entire team's ability to volunteer in all Georgia of Department Correction facilities.*

Do you realize how serious this is? It is the second time in ONE WEEK that a mentor has been suspended for failing to follow rules. We are afraid that it could be "three strikes and you're out", killing our chances to expand this ministry to other prisons in Georgia. Already we are mentoring at Hays and are in the pre-planning for expansion elsewhere.

Is this a systemic issue or one involving only a few individuals who do not keep prison rules as their guiding principles while serving as certified volunteers? Do not become one of them.

Review your Accountability Agreement. Stay on your guard to protect your Christian witness. Avoid discipline and personal embarrassment, and avoid creating problems for the Mentor Ministry as a whole. To date we have mentored 254 prisoners and are only just hitting our stride. If this program is cancelled, thousands of prisoners will never have mentors, and it will cease to be a God honoring ministry altogether. The stakes are high. Thank you for understanding.

Mark Casson and Your Mentor Ministry Group Leaders

Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. (Psalm 34:3)