

Connecticut Department of Correction



Family and Friends Handbook



FAMILY AND FRIENDS' HANDBOOK
Published by
The Connecticut Department of Correction

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Department of Correction Mission Statement

The Department of Correction shall protect the public, protect staff and provide safe, secure and humane supervision of offenders with opportunities that support restitution, rehabilitation and successful community reintegration.

Department of Correction Motto

P.R.I.D.E. Professionalism **R**espect **I**ntegrity **D**ignity **E**xcellence

Department of Correction website

As a public service, the Department of Correction maintains a website that provides valuable information about the Agency. You can access this site by going to www.ct.gov/doc. The site includes information about each individual offender, the organization of the Department, location and directions to the facilities, Administrative Directives, reports, publications, newsletters, Board of Pardons and Paroles, and victim services. You will also find detailed information regarding inmate programs, services, and family assistance.

You will find a specific Family and Friends section on the left hand toolbar that provides answers to the most commonly asked questions.

Throughout this handbook specific Administrative Directives are referenced for certain topics. These directives are easily accessible on the website and can provide greater details on the subject. The Department would encourage you to spend time reviewing this site, as it will supplement the information contained in this handbook. It is a tremendous tool to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have if a friend or family member has been incarcerated.

INTRODUCTION

The Family and Friends' Handbook was created to provide you with information about the Department of Correction and what happens when someone is incarcerated. When inmates go to jail or prison, they are not the only ones affected; their family and friends are too. Loved ones are separated emotionally as well as physically. The inmate and their family members now live in different worlds and live by different rules.

It might be hard to understand the complex process of the criminal justice system, including jails and prisons. But, when people have accurate information, they are better able to handle new experiences and make informed choices.

The Connecticut Department of Correction has developed this handbook to provide a brief overview of life “on the inside” as well as important information about how to stay connected.

Inmates who have positive family support and relationships do not return to prison as much as those who lack this support. Studies have shown that children of inmates with negative family relationships are seven times more likely to end up incarcerated. That is why the Department of Correction is committed to helping inmates and their families work toward positive relationships. The Department does understand that there are situations in which this may not be possible or even sensible.

In the appendix section of this handbook, there are two articles from the family advocacy group Families in Crisis that may assist you and your family to adjust when a loved one or a friend has been incarcerated. Their website is www.FamiliesinCrisis.org, and it is linked to the DOC website.

Help for Hard Times: Suggestions for families and friends when a loved one is imprisoned.

What to tell children when a parent or family member goes to prison.

The Department hopes you find this handbook useful. Please note that things may not stay the same. Rules and regulations can and do change. So use this handbook as a guide. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact the inmate's counselor.

ADMISSION and ORIENTATION

Admission is the process by which an inmate is brought into the legal custody of a correctional facility. Inmates are searched, showered and provided with a health evaluation. The inmate's property will be inventoried and either issued to the inmate or sent home.

What are inmates provided with upon admission to a correctional facility?

Inmates are given a bedroll consisting of sheets, a blanket, uniform pants and shirts and if necessary, underwear and personal hygiene items (shampoo, soap, toothpaste, and toothbrush). Personal hygiene items must be purchased from commissary unless the inmate is indigent (less than \$5.00 in their account) in which case they will be provided free of charge.

What is inmate orientation?

Inmate orientation is information that is provided to inmates by a Correctional Counselor within the first few business days following admission. Facility and departmental rules, behavioral expectations and the disciplinary process are reviewed. Inmates are advised on how they can access medical, mental health, addiction, religious and educational services and programs. Inmates will work with the counselor to establish a visiting and telephone list to communicate with family and friends.

How soon can inmates call home or receive a visit?

An inmate who anticipates regular visits shall submit the name and address of each potential visitor to the assigned counselor. The counselor will then mail out the Visiting application forms to prospective visitors. The prospective visitors shall complete and sign the application forms and mail them back to the assigned counselor. Because this process can take two to three weeks, wardens have the discretion to permit a courtesy visit for up to two (2) adult visitors, 18 years of age or older, from the inmate's immediate family (legal spouse, parent, child or sibling, grandparent or grandchild to include a step/foster relationship) to visit with the inmate prior to the approval of the application. Any children shall be accompanied by an adult on the approved visitor list and remain under the supervision of the adult visitor.

Please note:

Visitors are encouraged to check the "visitation" link on the Department website (www.ct.gov/doc) in the right column of the home page to determine whether visiting has been canceled at a specific facility. Visitors are also encouraged to contact the facility prior to visiting to confirm the visiting schedule and to ensure that the inmate they plan to visit has not lost his or her visiting privileges.

Telephone call lists are initiated by the inmate who shall submit a list of up to 10 phone numbers for approval. The facility will review the numbers to ensure none are restricted. Once approved the inmate may make calls up to 15-minutes in length. Available call times are dictated by facility schedule. Courtesy calls for newly incarcerated inmates may be authorized by the facility warden.

CLASSIFICATION

Classification is a system to match the individual characteristics of an inmate to the appropriate facility and programs, based on an inmate's risk and treatment requirements, to ensure their safety and the safety of the public. It involves a review of many factors, including the inmate's treatment needs, criminal history, length of sentence, history of violence, escape history, pending court cases and gang affiliation.

What does "Level" mean?

When an inmate comes into the Department of Correction they are assigned a "Security Level". Levels range from 1 to 5. The higher the number the higher the Security Level. For example, Level 1 refers to community supervision, Level 2 is minimum security, Level 3 is medium security, Level 4 is high security and Level 5 is maximum security. Over time, most inmates have the opportunity to have their levels lowered based upon good behavior. A level reduction is not a guarantee. Inmates can be denied a level reduction due to poor behavior while incarcerated, gang affiliation, criminal history, or other issues.

Correctional staff cannot discuss an inmate's level. This information is confidential and private. An inmate can share this information with you if he or she chooses to do so.

How can a Level be reduced?

Inmates meet regularly with their Classification Counselors and are given a date that they are eligible for a Level reduction. If an inmate displays good behavior and engages in suggested programming, he or she may have a better chance for a level reduction. The lower the Security Level, the greater the privileges and opportunities for community release.

COMMUNITY RELEASE

Community Release is a privilege that can provide appropriate inmates with the opportunity to return to the community, under supervision, prior to the end of sentence as a means of supporting their successful reintegration. There are various kinds of community releases, including halfway houses, residential programs, Transitional Supervision (TS), Reentry Furlough and Parole.

Can an inmate be released early?

When an inmate comes to the Department of Correction, and they are fully sentenced on all matters, he or she will meet with the assigned unit counselor who can tell them if and when they are eligible for community release. This information is given to the inmate in writing and he or she can share it with you if they so choose.

The counselor is not allowed to give out community release information because it is confidential.

Generally, for sentences of two years or less, community release is at the discretion of the warden. For sentences of two years or more, the Board of Pardons and Paroles has jurisdiction.

If an inmate does meet the eligibility requirements and is approved, he or she may be placed on community release. Each inmate is given a specific plan and rules to follow. If the inmate cannot follow the rules, he or she will be returned to prison to finish the remainder of the sentence.

How is the paperwork processed?

When an inmate is ready to apply for community release (residential program or TS) he or she fills out paperwork with the Classification Counselor. The counselor then gets together all of the paperwork needed to complete the package. The package then goes to the Classification Counselor Supervisor for review. Upon completion of this review it is forwarded to the Deputy Warden of Treatment and then the Warden. This process takes time and it may be several weeks before the inmate finds out if he or she has been approved or denied for community release.

What are Halfway Houses and Residential Programs?

Halfway houses and residential programs are structured environments approved by the Department of Correction to provide transitional services for inmates returning to the community. An inmate has the opportunity to receive counseling, attend programs and find employment. Each halfway house has specific rules and regulations and if an inmate cannot follow them, he or she may be returned to the institution to finish the sentence. Placement is based

on bed availability and the treatment needs of the inmate. Most inmates are not released to a Halfway House until the last six months of their sentence of their Voted to Parole Date (see Parole section for more detail).

What are the eligibility requirements for halfway houses and residential programs?

- Must be Level 2/3 before submitting the paperwork
- Must be within 18 months of the discharge date or Voted to Parole (VTP) date
- Must be clear of Class A disciplinary reports for 120 days and Class B disciplinary reports for 60 days
- Must not have any escapes in the past 6 months
- No failures on community release in the last four months
- If an inmate has charges in another state and the charges are not severe he or she may be considered for community release.

What is Transitional Supervision (TS)?

Another type of release is Transitional Supervision (TS) in which an inmate lives in a person's home. This person has volunteered to be their sponsor and must be approved by the Department.

What are the eligibility requirements for transitional supervision?

- Must have a sentence of 2 years or less
- Level must be below 5
- Must have served fifty percent (50%) of his or her sentence minus jail credit
- No Class A disciplinary reports for 120 days and no Class B disciplinary report for 60 days
- Must not be a designated Security Risk Group (gang) member
- Must have an approved sponsor in the community in Connecticut
- No community release escapes in the last 120 days
- If the inmate has charges in another state and the charges are not severe he or she may be considered for TS.

What is a Reentry Furlough?

Based upon an offender's behavior and other requirements, a warden has the discretionary authority to grant a Reentry Furlough for up to the last 45 days of an offender's incarceration, to support and assist in that offender's reintegration back into law abiding society. For more information see Furloughs.

How does a person qualify to be a sponsor?

The Department of Correction wants to place an inmate in a positive and safe environment when he or she is released to the community. Sponsorship is an important decision. Sponsoring an inmate may impact the dynamics of your home. Please do not feel pressured to sponsor someone. Your sponsorship may make a positive difference in the inmate's life. Once an inmate is in your home and you find that you no longer want to be their sponsor, please be aware it may take some time to remove the inmate from your home.

To qualify as a sponsor, at a minimum you must:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Have no pending federal or state charges
- Have no weapons in the home
- Not be living in senior or Section 8 housing, unless the inmate's name is on the lease
- Must not be a victim of the inmates crime

Community supervision personnel will visit the home and go over the rules of release with the individual who is asking to be a sponsor.

COMMISSARY

Commissary is a term the Department uses for the service from which inmates are allowed to purchase items. Commissary provides a variety of personal hygiene products, over-the-counter medications, food and snack items, clothing, underwear, writing materials, footwear, religious items and various approved electronics. Items may vary at each facility dependent on the security level and gender of the inmate.

How do inmates purchase items from commissary?

A form is available in every housing unit for the inmate to fill out, which lists all the items that can be ordered from the Commissary. The forms are collected once per week by Commissary staff for processing. Orders are delivered the following week.

How much can inmates spend each week?

Each inmate may spend up to \$75.00 a week. This amount does not include major items such as televisions, radios, clothing, watches and other electronics, footwear, religious items and audiocassettes or CDs. Limitations are imposed on the number of electronic items (one of each) and footwear (2 pair) that an inmate can purchase and have in their possession at any given time.

Under no circumstances is credit allowed for Commissary purchases. All funds must be in the inmate's account at the time the order is processed.

Can an inmate purchase items for another inmate?

Inmates are not allowed to purchase items for other inmates.

The practice of loaning, selling or bartering of commissary items is an infraction of departmental rules, which could result in disciplinary action.

COMMUNICATIONS

Inmates may communicate with those in the community through the use of an inmate telephone or by written correspondence. Visitation is another way inmates can communicate. Please refer to the section on visitation for more information.

Does an inmate have access to a telephone?

Each facility provides “collect call only” telephones to inmates for outgoing calls that are billed through Securus. In order to receive calls, you must set up an account by contacting Securus at 1-800-844-6591 or www.securustech.net. All phone calls are recorded and may be monitored. Inmates are not allowed to receive telephone calls. Third party calls are not permitted. The use of a “collect call only” telephone is deemed a privilege and may be restricted for disciplinary purposes. Inmates who are hearing impaired will be provided with a TDD/TTY machine in order to make phone calls. When opening an account with Securus, there are options for pre-paid accounts which provide calls at a reduced rate. This information is detailed on the agency website on page two of the Securus pamphlet.

A Personal Identification Number (PIN) is assigned to each inmate in order to use the phones. An inmate may submit a list of up to ten phone numbers to his or her unit counselor. This list is reviewed and if a person is a victim of the inmate, they will not be placed on the phone list. There is no appeal process.

Is inmate use of the telephone limited to certain times of day?

Each facility has a telephone schedule that is provided to the inmates.

How can I get my phone number removed from an inmate's telephone list?

To remove your phone number, write a letter to the warden of the facility where the inmate is housed and request that your number be removed from the inmate's phone list.

If I receive an unwanted or threatening call, what do I do?

As soon as possible, contact your local police department and then report it to the facility by asking for the Lieutenant's Office. You will need to provide them with any necessary information for follow-up.

Who do I contact if there is an emergency illness or death of a family member?

You may call the facility and ask to speak to the Lieutenant's Office. You will be asked to provide specific information which includes the inmate's name, DOC number, the name and relationship of the family member, and if applicable, the phone number and address of the funeral home. It is very important that this information is correct so we can inform the inmate and provide support.

Can I write to someone who is incarcerated?

All correspondence must include the inmate's full name, inmate number and address of the facility. There shall be no limit placed on the number of letters an inmate may write or receive at personal expense, unless a penalty has been placed as a result of disciplinary action. All correspondence is opened and inspected for contraband.

Who can an inmate write to?

An inmate may write to anyone except:

- A victim of any criminal offense for which the inmate has served or is serving a sentence, stands convicted of or where a disposition is pending.
- Any person under the age of 18 when the person's parent or guardian objects in writing to such correspondence.

- An inmate in another correctional facility, other than immediate family.

- A parolee or inmate on community confinement without the permission of the Unit Administrator and the addressee's supervisor.

- Any person whom the inmate is restrained from writing to by court order.

- Any other person, when prohibiting such correspondence is generally necessary to further the substantial interests of security, order or rehabilitation.

Incoming legal mail from lawyers, legal assistance to prisoners, state and federal court officials shall be opened in the presence of the inmate to ensure that contraband is not being introduced into the facility. At no time is this type of correspondence read by staff.

How shall correspondence to an inmate be addressed?

- Inmate Name and Number
- Name of Facility
- Street address
- City, State and Zip Code

Caution! Those engaging in correspondence with inmates are encouraged to exercise caution with regard to the release of any personal information that could compromise their safety. Additionally, discretion is advised when utilizing inmate information from alternative sources such as pen pal websites that may be misleading or inaccurate. The Department does not control the content of information posted on inmate pen pal websites.

Who should I contact if I have received unwanted or threatening mail from an inmate?

As soon as possible, contact your local police department and then report it to the facility by asking for the Lieutenant's Office. You will need to provide them with a copy of the correspondence.

Can I mail money to an inmate?

You no longer need to be on an inmate's visiting list in order to send funds to an inmate. The Inmate Trust Fund (ITF) office is responsible for receiving funds for incarcerated offenders, for making payments from, and maintaining all records associated with offender accounts.

Funds must be sent directly to Inmate Trust Fund. Please send only a remitter form with the funds and do not send correspondence. Please refer to the section on Inmate Money for further information.

DISCIPLINARY SYSTEM

The disciplinary system is designed to hold inmates to the same level of individual responsibility as a member of the free public. Administrative Directive 9.5 Code of Penal Discipline can provide further information.

What is a Disciplinary Report?

A Disciplinary Report (DR) is an allegation that an inmate has violated a unit or departmental rule. When the charges are presented to the inmate, the inmate may choose to voluntarily offer a plea of guilty or not guilty. If a plea of not guilty is given, they will appear before a Disciplinary Hearing Officer (DHO).

The DHO is an impartial Department of Correction employee who will evaluate the evidence and find the inmate guilty or innocent. If the inmate is found not guilty, the disciplinary report will be dismissed. If the inmate is found guilty, the DHO will determine the appropriate sanctions according to Department policy and the inmate's past disciplinary history.

Is there an appeal process for inmates?

If an inmate enters a plea of guilty, no appeal is permitted. If the inmate pleads not guilty and is found guilty, he or she may appeal the disciplinary report, within 15 days, to the appropriate District Administrator.

What are the sanctions imposed if an inmate is found guilty of a disciplinary report?

Sanctions may include:

- confinement in segregation
- loss of recreation for up to 30 calendar days
- loss of telephone privileges for up to 90 calendar days
- loss of commissary privileges for up to 90 calendar days
- modification or loss of visiting privileges for up to 60 calendar days
- confinement to quarters
- loss of social correspondence for up to 60 calendar days
- restitution for loss of state property
- extra work duty

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Programs and Treatment Division provides educational programming through Unified School District #1 (USD#1). USD #1 is dedicated to providing quality educational programs for incarcerated individuals.

Priority for enrollment is given to inmates under 21 years of age. Inmates over the age of 21 may sign up and will be admitted as space allows.

What kinds of educational programs are available?

Adult Basic Education (ABE) is instruction designed to provide training in basic academic skills in the areas of reading, mathematics, language, general science and social studies. The program is directed toward increasing proficiency to the eighth grade level.

The General Educational Diploma (GED) program offers instruction for students functioning above an eighth grade level who wish to earn a high school diploma through the examination process.

Teaching English to Students of Other Languages (TESOL) is an instructional program for students whose primary language is not English. TESOL instruction helps students to speak, read and write English and assists them in developing the language skills necessary for overall academic and vocational progress.

What kinds of Vocational Education courses are available?

Vocational education courses incorporate classroom instruction and occupational training. Students are provided with the opportunity to learn different trades and a variety of marketable skills in preparation for entry-level jobs upon release. Vocational courses offered at various facilities include:

Auto Body Technology	Culinary Arts
Automation Machining	Dental Technology
Automotive Technology	Drafting CAD/CAM
Bicycle/Wheelchair Repair	Electronics
Building Maintenance	Electro-Mechanical
Business Education	Graphic & Printing Technologies
Cabinet Making	Horticulture and Landscaping
Carpentry	Microcomputer
Commercial Cleaning	Nurse's Aide
Computer Education	Optical Technology
Computer Repair	Pre-Vocational
Cosmetology/Barbering	Small Engine Repair

Are services available for students with disabilities or who need special education?

A comprehensive identification and referral process is used as a tool to identify those potential new inmate students within the Department of Correction who have disabilities or special needs that qualify them for Special Education and related services. Unified School District #1 complies with all federal and state educational requirements including assessment, identification, and instruction and support services.

Parental involvement in the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) process is very important and appreciated. We make every effort for a parent or legal guardian to participate in education meetings concerning their child. In the event a parent or legal guardian is unable to attend the PPT meeting, a copy of their child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is mailed to their home. At any time, a parent or guardian may contact the Principal at their child's facility or the Director of Special Education if they have any questions regarding educational programming.

Services are designed to meet the educational needs of students who have special needs or are educationally handicapped. Handicapped students receive Life Skills instruction, counseling and transition services. We encourage parents to be involved in their child's education by attending meetings and communicating with education staff.

Are library services available?

Library services are available in most facilities. Books are available as well as some limited legal resource information.

Are transition services available for students returning to the community?

As inmates approach release, Transition Coordinators, Counselors and a Job Developer assist them with planning and placement for their exit to the community. Inmates may be helped through counseling services, referrals, employment classes, job fairs, housing and clothing resources and mock interviews.

FACILITY TRANSFERS

An inmate may be transferred to another facility for various reasons. Transfers involve looking at the inmate's level, their need and risk scores, bed space availability and the safety and security concerns of the Department of Correction.

Some inmates request a "hardship transfer." A hardship transfer request will be reviewed and considered when an inmate's immediate family member is so seriously ill that the family member cannot travel to visit the inmate at the facility where he or she is currently incarcerated. Immediate family member includes; mother, father, brother, sister, child, grandparents or legally married husband or wife.

FURLOUGHS

Furloughs are a complicated process, and are approved only at the level of the Warden (Unit Administrator). Please be advised that home visit furloughs are rarely approved.

What is a Re-entry Furlough?

The most common type of furlough is the Re-entry Furlough. If approved, this allows the inmate to leave up to 45 days prior to his/her discharge or Voted to Parole date. The inmate must have an approved sponsor who will pick up the inmate at the institution on the day of the Re-entry Furlough.

The inmate will be under the supervision of a parole officer during the course of the furlough. If an inmate breaks the rules he or she may be returned to complete the remainder of his or her sentence. A partial listing of what an inmate cannot do while on furlough is listed below:

- drive
- work without the Warden's (Unit Administrator's) approval
- get married
- leave the town they are furloughed to
- use alcohol or illegal drugs
- be late for curfew

FUNERALS

The Department recognizes the emotional effect the death of an immediate family member can have on an inmate. To insure the safety of staff, inmates and the public, we do not allow inmates to attend funeral services. We may allow an inmate to attend a private viewing of an immediate family member if approved by the Warden. An immediate family member is defined as legal spouse, parent, child or sibling, grandparent or grandchild to include a step/foster relationship. During the viewing, the inmate is not allowed to see any other family member or friend.

Are inmates allowed to visit a critically ill family member?

An inmate may visit a critically ill immediate family member who is hospitalized if approved by the Warden.

INMATE MONEY

Upon admission, if an inmate is in possession of any money, it will be placed in the inmate's account. Inmates can also receive money from a person, regardless of whether they are on the inmate's visiting list. Money must be in an acceptable form for it to be deposited in the inmate's account.

What forms of money are acceptable?

- money orders
- certified check
- electronic deposits

Funds are accepted from the following sources:

Money Order or Certified/Cashier's Check, along with complete and legible remitter information *

Attorney checks, along with cover letter

Employer checks, along with pay stub

Refund check from Vendors

Social Security checks

Social Services checks

Tax Refunds

Unemployment checks

Veterans Administration checks

Where do I send funds and how should it be sent?

A remitter form must accompany the funds. These forms are available on the website under forms and in the visiting areas of all correctional facilities. You may also call the Inmate Trust Fund at 860-692-7670 to have the form mailed to you or send a written request to:

Inmate Trust Fund
P.O. Box 290800
Wethersfield, CT 06129-0800.

What should I remember when sending funds?

Do not send correspondence to the Trust Fund. All letters and cards should be addressed to the facility where the inmate is housed. All correspondence sent to the Trust Fund will be returned to the sender.

Make sure you fill in all the information requested on the remitter slip.

Make sure you fill in all the information, including your address, on the money order and make it payable to the inmate. Include the inmate's number on the money order.

Money orders with “white out” on them cannot be accepted.
Money orders that have been altered or mutilated in anyway cannot be accepted.

What happens if an inmate has no money?

Inmates who meet the Department's guidelines for being indigent will be supplied with essentials such as personal hygiene items, underwear, footwear and writing materials.

INMATE SAFETY

Correctional staff is available to the inmate population twenty-four hours a day. Supervisory staff is assigned to all shifts to ensure any issues that arise are handled in an appropriate and timely manner.

If an inmate has any concerns, he or she should immediately report them to any staff member. Inmates can speak with staff members as they tour the housing units or contact them via the written request system.

What if an inmate has known enemies in the inmate population?

Inmates should report all known enemies to correctional staff. All efforts will be made to keep these individuals separated to avoid any further contact and ensure their safety.

Is Protective Custody available?

If an inmate has a valid safety concern, which could result in physical harm, he or she may be transferred to a unit for Protective Custody confinement. If at any time an inmate feels that his or her safety is in jeopardy, he or she should immediately report their concerns to correctional staff.

Can an inmate have a sexual relationship with another inmate or an employee of the Department of Correction?

It is against policy for an inmate to have a sexual relationship with another inmate. It is against the law for an employee to have a sexual relationship with an inmate.

How do I file a complaint regarding issues at the facility?

You should always attempt to call the facility first. You may ask to speak with the Warden's office and they can direct your call to the appropriate staff for action. If you feel your issue was not addressed, you may contact the

appropriate District Administrator's office. Please refer to the DOC website for a listing of facility and office telephone numbers.

Are services available for inmates who become depressed or despondent?

All inmates are screened upon intake and assessed for signs and symptoms of depression. Security staff will monitor newly admitted inmates every 15 minutes to ensure their safety.

At any time, if a staff member detects a need for intervention, they can refer the inmate to mental health for an evaluation, without the inmate requesting it. Inmates can also contact Health Services directly or through a staff member.

What should I do if my loved one sounds suicidal?

Sometimes when inmates are very depressed or upset, they may think about hurting themselves. They may even talk about hurting themselves. They may say they are suicidal. If an inmate tells you these or similar statements, it is an important signal that he or she needs help. You should immediately notify the Lieutenant's office about your concerns and what the inmate said. Health Services staff will respond and will do a suicide risk assessment. You should also advise the inmate to get help.

You may be the only person that the inmate has shared these feelings with. He or she may ask you not to say anything to anyone. However, you must notify the facility because it could save a life. Later, you can explain that you did the right thing even though he or she might not realize or appreciate it at the time.

Another thing to consider is that sometimes bad news can have a negative affect on an inmate. If you have concerns about how an inmate will respond, you should inform the inmate's counselor ahead of time. They will either meet with the inmate or will notify Health Services.

Can family be given special information about their relative?

Many issues pertaining to an inmate's incarceration cannot be discussed without the inmate signing a release. If the inmate approves, information can be given to family or friends. If you want to inquire about an inmate's general well being, you may call the facility and ask to speak with their counselor.

LEGAL SERVICES

The Department of Correction contracts with a law firm to provide legal assistance to inmates regarding conditions of confinement and access to the civil judicial system. Inmate Legal Aid Program is located at 265 Orange Street, New Haven, CT 06510 and may be contacted at 1-866-311-4527. Please refer to Administrative Directive 10.3, Legal Assistance to Prisoners on our website. Should you have a legal concern, you may also contact the 211-Infoline for resources in your local community.

LOCKDOWNS

A “lockdown” is when normal activities such as phone calls and visitation are cancelled. Although infrequent, there are times when a correctional facility will experience a lockdown. Lockdowns can be for a variety of reasons that relate to the safety and security of inmates, staff and the facility.

MARRIAGES

Inmates may be able to get married while incarcerated, with the Warden’s permission. The process can take some time as there are certain things that have to be done prior to approval. For further information please contact the Warden or refer to Administrative Directive 10.9, Inmate Marriages on our website.

MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

The Department of Correction provides comprehensive health care to the inmate population that meets a community standard of care, and includes medical, mental health, dental, addiction and ancillary services in compliance with applicable state and federal laws and consent decrees. These services are carried out through a partnership between the Department of Correction and the University of Connecticut Correctional Managed Health Care.

When does an inmate receive medical and mental health services?

Every inmate receives an initial medical and mental health screening upon arrival at a Department of Correction facility. Inmates are given information regarding emergency health care, sick call, access to medical and mental health services, dental services, HIV testing and related health care. Based on the outcome of this assessment, staff may make referrals for follow-up services.

How does an inmate access medical and mental health services?

After the initial assessment, inmates may access routine health services, mental health services and dental care through the inmate request system. It is important to remember that every correctional facility does not offer the same level of on-site health services. A transfer may be necessary when specialized care is required.

Should you have a concern regarding the health care of your family member or friend, you should contact the health services department or the Warden's office of the facility where they are incarcerated.

Is dental care provided?

Dental care is provided under the direction and supervision of a dentist licensed in the State of Connecticut. Each newly admitted inmate receives a dental screening and referrals are made if specialized care is necessary. Instruction in oral hygiene and preventive dental care is provided during orientation.

What is palliative and hospice care?

Palliative care is active total care for inmate-patients, designed to improve quality of life and minimize suffering. Palliative care is initiated when terminal illness is diagnosed but 24-hour infirmary care is not yet required.

Hospice is a place in Department of Correction facilities where end of life care is provided. The hospice care interdisciplinary team includes staff, volunteers, inmate patients and their families and encompasses body, mind and spirit.

When terminal illness prevails, and a medical cure is no longer possible, hospice provides dignified, peaceful and pain-free end of life care.

If you would like more information, please contact the Director of Health and Addiction Services.

Are inmate medical records confidential?

Medical records are confidential. You will not be able to receive any health care information regarding an inmate unless he or she has signed a release of information indicating the information may be shared with you.

Parents and Legal Guardians of incarcerated minors may receive health services information regarding the minor without a release of information.

ADDICTION SERVICES

Substance abuse

What treatment is available for inmates?

All sentenced inmates are assessed upon admission to the Department of Correction for substance abuse treatment needs. The Addiction Services Unit offers various levels of substance abuse services, ranging from basic orientation to therapeutic communities, and specialty programs such as DUI and pre-release substance abuse programs. Programming is also offered for offenders on Parole or Transitional Supervision.

OFFENDERS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

All male offenders under the age of eighteen (18) are housed at Manson Youth Institution in Cheshire, Connecticut. All female offenders under the age of eighteen (18) are housed at York C.I. in Niantic, Connecticut.

The Department of Correction recognizes that having a child who is incarcerated can present many challenges and concerns for families, guardians and friends. If you are the parent or legal guardian of an incarcerated offender under the age of 18, we encourage and welcome your questions and concerns. The Department will provide assistance to help you identify resources in the community.

Are programs available for offenders under the age of 18?

Programming opportunities are abundant at both York C.I. and Manson Youth Institution. Some of the major programs include but are not limited to: education, vocational education, substance abuse treatment, parenting, fatherhood, AIDS/HIV, self awareness, victim awareness, religious and recreational services. We encourage you to consult the Program Compendium on the Department of Correction website home page under programs/services for more detailed information.

How can I work with the school on behalf of my child?

Unified School District #1 provides Educational and Special Education services for your child during his or her period of incarceration. For students who have graduated high school, we offer post-secondary education opportunities.

Your encouragement and support of your child's achievements are greatly valued. Family members will be invited to attend graduation ceremonies for students who have successfully completed their GED.

Parents or Legal Guardians of Special Education students will be invited to participate in meetings that will address the educational needs of their child. Transitional Services are provided for students scheduled to discharge from the facility. The Department's educational staff is happy to serve as a resource and answer any questions or help to arrange high school or continuing education services to your child upon release.

PAROLE

Parole is a type of release from a correctional facility, prior to the inmate's discharge date. Each prison is assigned a Parole Officer that handles parole issues and prepares parole packages for the Board of Pardons and Paroles, which has the authority to grant this form of release.

Who is eligible for Parole?

Generally, most inmates with a sentence of over two years are eligible to be considered for parole. If an inmate is eligible, it does not mean they are automatically approved for parole.

What is a Parole Eligibility Date (PED)?

If an inmate qualifies for parole, the PED is the earliest date an inmate can be released on parole. The PED date will either be 50% (fifty percent) or 85% (eighty-five percent) of an inmate's sentence. A 50% PED is usually for inmates with non-violent crimes. An 85% PED is usually for inmates with violent offenses or a history of violent offenses.

The Department of Correction web site (www.ct.gov/doc) lists violent and non-violent offenses. This web site can also tell you if there are any new changes in the laws, which can change parole procedures. The web site will have the most updated information on parole.

What is a Parole Hearing and an Administrative Review?

A Parole Hearing or Administrative Review is a meeting at which the Board of Pardons and Paroles approves or denies parole. This is usually done 6 (six) months before the inmate's PED.

A Parole Hearing is for inmates with an 85% PED, and the inmate, family members or friends and the victim may attend. If you plan to attend, you must contact the facility Parole Officer for information. In some prisons, the hearing may take place by videoconferencing.

An Administrative Review is for inmates with a 50% PED. Inmates and the public may not attend.

What happens when an inmate is approved or denied parole?

If approved, the inmate is given a Voted to Parole (VTP) date. This is the date that the inmate can be released to parole. The VTP date and the PED date are not the same thing. The Board of Pardons and Paroles does not have to give a

VTP date exactly on the day an inmate is eligible for parole, but can pick any date on or after the PED to serve as the VTP date.

If denied, the inmate may be given a new hearing date or not be seen again during the remainder of his or her incarceration. This will be explained to the inmate in writing. If this happens, you may contact the Parole District Office.

What if the inmate is not released on their VTP date?

Parole involves a tremendous amount of planning and sponsor cooperation. Every effort is made for inmates to leave on their VTP date.

PROBATION

Probation is a type of supervision that the courts can sentence a person to and can occur before or after a prison sentence. The Department of Correction does not grant or supervise people on probation; it is a function of the courts. If an inmate has probation after discharge, the sentencing paperwork, called a Mittimus or “mitt”, will state how long the probation will last. If an inmate wants a copy of their Mittimus, they can contact their unit counselor.

An inmate who has been sentenced to probation will be responsible for contacting the appropriate Probation Officer upon release. It is extremely important that the inmate follows all the rules of probation. If the inmate violates any of the rules, it will be considered a violation of probation and he or she may be returned to a correctional facility to serve the remainder of the sentence. Violation of Probation is a crime and if convicted, the judge may impose the remaining portion of the probationary period for the underlying offense.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The Department provides a wide range of programming that is designed to bring about changes in the individual to improve attitudes, increase positive behavior, and develop educational, social and work skills. The DOC web site can provide you with a detailed description of over 300 programs and the facilities in which they are located.

What kinds of services are available to inmates?

The Department provides medical, dental, mental health, substance abuse and religious services to meet the health and spiritual needs of inmates.

Are there services available to families and friends of inmates?

211- Infoline is a wonderful resource that is available free of charge to assist you and your family for nearly every kind of health and human service available. By dialing 211, you will be able to speak to a professional caseworker who can give you specific information and referrals to services in your local community. These services include housing, employment, child care, elder care, substance abuse treatment, transportation, counseling, suicide hotline, and parenting programs.

The people who staff this toll free number can be accessed 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, from anywhere in Connecticut by just dialing 211. Multilingual caseworkers and TDD access (for the hearing impaired) are available. The information is continuously updated and can be accessed through the Internet at www.211infoline.org.

Also, Families in Crisis, Inc. is available at (860) 236-3593 and through their website, which is linked to the DOC website.

RE-ENTRY

Re-entry is the process that is aimed at providing opportunities to the offender that support their successful reintegration into law abiding society. The Department believes this process actually begins on the first day of incarceration and goes beyond arranging food, shelter and employment upon release. The Department has over 300 distinct programs and services that can help inmates be successful while incarcerated and remain crime free once released.

It is important that inmates are willing to take responsibility and become active participants by enrolling in school and taking programs that might be offered at their particular facility. Each day can be productive and each day is a step closer to release.

What is an Offender Accountability Plan?

All offenders will be provided with an assessment of their needs and deficiencies as well as a corresponding list of programs that they should utilize during their incarceration to address these issues. Compliance with this plan will be taken into account in any consideration for community supervision and may allow for offenders to earn Risk Reduction Earned Credits (RREC).

What is the Transitional Services Program?

Transitional Services are offered through both the education department and facility transitional counselors. The program is designed to systematically give inmates information, instruction and the ability to acquire the tools they may need to find a job, housing, food, clothing, and transportation. Some of these tools include identification cards, birth certificates, social security cards, and driver's licenses. The program consists of a workbook and corresponding videos.

The purpose of this program is to reduce recidivism by helping inmates prepare themselves to successfully re-enter society prior to discharge. This is not a mandatory program. However, every offender who qualifies with 6 months or less to their discharge date will be given the opportunity to take part in this program. Ultimately, the inmate is responsible for his or her own success. Facilities are responsible to provide the information and give each inmate the opportunity to participate.

What is discharge planning?

Discharge planning is a formal process that begins 60 days before an inmate discharges to make arrangements for basic necessities. A counselor will meet with the inmate to discuss the following items.

medication
DNA registration, if applicable
clothing
housing
employment
inmate account money
transportation
identification
aftercare programs and referrals

A family member or friend can pick up an inmate directly at the facility on the day of their discharge. If a ride is not available, transportation can be provided to the facility closest to the inmate's home address. The inmate must notify their counselor in advance to make arrangements.

VICTIM SERVICES

If you have been a victim of a crime and want to be notified when an inmate is being released or have any other questions, you can contact the Victim Services Unit by calling toll-free 888-869-7057.

VISITATION

In order for a person, including children under the age of 16, to visit an inmate they must be placed on the inmate's visiting list. The process begins with the inmate submitting the names and addresses of each potential visitor to their counselor. The counselor will mail out a Visiting Application and Inmate Visiting Rules and Regulations to the potential visitor. The visitor must complete and sign the application and mail it back to the counselor. Once approved, the visitor's name will be placed on the inmate's visiting list. An adult who is an immediate family member and on the inmate's approved visiting list, must accompany children under the age of 16. Those under 16 will require a birth certificate as well as a second form of identification to participate in visits. Only those on the approved visiting list are allowed to visit an inmate. The inmate will inform you as to whether you have been added to his or her visiting list.

Will criminal history be checked?

A criminal history check is done on every potential visitor. If you are denied visiting privileges, you may appeal by sending a letter to the Warden.

What kinds of identification are required to visit?

The types of identification include a valid driver's license, a state identification card, passport, and military identification. Identification is required for any visitor who is age 16 and over.

What are the visitation times?

Visiting days and times are established by each facility and are subject to change. Please refer to the facility for this information. Specific facility visiting schedules can be checked on the website, www.ct.gov/doc.

What is the dress code for visitation?

Each visitor shall dress in suitable attire with reasonable modesty. Revealing, seductive or offensive clothing that draws attention will not be accepted. Lockers may be provided to store clothing and any personal items.

Can a visitor be searched?

All visitors will be required to pass all security checks, including successfully clearing a metal detector when entering a correctional facility. Please refer to the Appendix for further information regarding the visiting rules and regulations.

What if I am unable to visit on the inmate's scheduled visiting day?

You may contact the inmate's counselor and request a special visit. Special visits are usually reserved for those traveling an extremely long distance.

How many visitors can an inmate have during visiting hours?

In general, three visitors are allowed including children, for contact visits and two visitors for non-contact visits. The number is also dependent on the amount of space available.

What is a non-contact visit?

The visitor sits behind a screen or window that physically separates the inmate from the visitor.

Are restrooms available?

All visitors are encouraged to use the lobby restrooms prior to the start of a visit. A visitor leaving the visiting room may not be able to return.

What can be given to an inmate during a visit?

No visitor shall give or receive any item, including written correspondence, to an inmate during a visit.

Is physical contact allowed during a visit?

The facilities that have contact visiting may allow a brief hug and kiss at the beginning and end of the visit.

Can I lose my visiting privileges?

Visiting privileges can be suspended or removed. Please refer to the Appendix for further information regarding the visiting rules and regulations.



Inmate Visiting Rules Connecticut Department of Correction

Attachment A
Rev 10/23/13
AD 10.6

All persons entering into a correctional institution for the purpose of visiting an inmate are entitled to do so in a safe and respectful environment. Therefore, the following rules shall apply to all visitors and inmates without exception. Violation of any rule may be considered grounds for denial or termination of a visit. The Department reserves the right to take further administrative or legal action as the circumstances warrant.

All visitors to Connecticut Correction Institutions are required to present valid identification. Visitors age 16 and above shall be verified through a driver's license or other appropriate photo identification prior to the visit (ID must be presented prior to each visit). Adults supervising children under the age of 16 shall be required to present a birth certificate and one other document with the child's name on it (e.g., social security card, report card, etc.) prior to each visit.

All visitors to Connecticut Correction Institutions are required to pass security inspection by passing through metal detectors to gain entry. Failure to successfully pass inspection shall be grounds for denial of entry to a correctional institution.

In accordance with Section 18-81v of the Connecticut General Statutes, any visitor who activates a walk-through metal detector shall be given the opportunity to submit to a search with a portable or hand-held metal detector in order to gain entrance into the correctional institution. If the visitor consents to a search with a portable or hand-held metal detector, the visitor shall be escorted by a correction officer of the same sex to a separate room, restroom or other private location within the correctional institution, where the visitor shall first remove any object or article of clothing that activated the walk-through metal detector and then submit to a portable or hand-held metal detector search. If the portable or hand-held metal detector is not activated during such search, the visitor shall be allowed to reapply the object or article of clothing that activated the walk-through metal detector before exiting the separate room, restroom or other private location where the portable or hand-held metal detector search is conducted and shall be allowed to enter the correctional institution. If the portable or hand-held metal detector is activated during such search, the visitor shall be escorted out of the correctional institution.

Visitors who have an internal medical device and who either activate or cannot pass through a walk-through metal detector, shall NOT be searched with a portable or hand held metal detector. The visitor may be screened by a pat down if he or she consents. If consent is provided and the pat down completed, a visit may be authorized under the terms and conditions deemed appropriate in the discretion of the Unit Administrator or designee. At all times, the Unit Administrator or designee shall maintain the right to permit, limit or deny a visit in furtherance of the safety and security of the facility.

1. The following are examples of items that may cause a visitor to be unable to clear the metal detectors; undergarments (with metal); shoes/boots; pins; jewelry; belts; hair clips/ornaments; body piercings; and * metal surgically implanted in the body for medical purposes.

It is important to consider the above prior to visiting a correctional institution to avoid the possibility of being denied visiting privileges.

In cases where (*) above applies, a medical certificate shall be required for verification purposes.

2. Visits shall be conducted in a quiet, orderly and dignified manner. Yelling, loud talking or use of profanity during visits is prohibited.
3. Visitors shall not deliver any items to inmates or other visitors during the course of the visit.
4. Proper attire is required. Revealing, seductive, offensive clothing or attire that may present a safety and/or security risk may result in a visitor being denied access to or being removed from the visiting room.
5. Children under the age of 18 shall be accompanied by an authorized adult immediate or expanded family member on the approved visiting list, legal guardian or an adult properly authorized by the Department of Children and Families or an adult approved by the Unit Administrator, and remain under adult supervision at all times. Children under the age of 18 must be an immediate or expanded family member of the inmate being visited and must have been approved through the visiting application process in accordance with A.D. 10.6.
6. No children shall be left unattended anywhere on institutional grounds including the visiting waiting room.
7. All visitors shall wait in the designated waiting room.
8. All correctional institutions are smoke free.
9. Visitors who appear to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol shall not be permitted to sign-up or visit and may be reported to the police.
10. Visitors and inmates shall remain seated at all times during the visit unless otherwise directed or approved by a staff member.
11. An inmate authorized a contact visit may be permitted a brief embrace and kiss at the beginning and end of a visit, but excessive intimacy, to include inappropriate kissing and/or touching shall be strictly prohibited.
12. No personal items are permitted in the visiting room (including, but not limited to: pocketbooks; coats; paper; food; chewing gum; electronic wireless communication device; etc.), visitors may secure personal items at their own risk in the lockers provided. The Department will not assume any responsibility for loss or damage to any items stored in the lockers or left anywhere on institutional property. Staff shall not retain or take custody of any personal property belonging to a visitor.
13. Visiting space is limited; visits shall be signed-up on a first come first serve basis.
14. Visitors shall be present when the visit is called or it shall be canceled.
15. Visitors who leave the visiting room during a visit shall not be allowed to reenter and the visit shall be terminated with the exception of female visitors who request to breast feed. Those individuals shall be allowed to return for their remaining visit providing time and space are available.
16. Visitors shall sign-up at least 15 minutes before the visiting session begins in accordance with the posted schedule.
17. Children shall be included toward the number of visitors allowed in the visiting room.
18. Visitors shall be responsible for the conduct of any person accompanying them to a correctional institution. Violations of rules of these persons may subject the visitor to removal from the visiting list.
19. In accordance with Sections 53a-174 through 53a-174b of the Connecticut General Statutes, conveying, passing or causing to be conveyed or passed any controlled drug, intoxicating liquor, firearm, weapon, dangerous instrument or explosive, United States currency, or any rope, ladder or other instrument or device for use in making, attempting or aiding an escape is a crime. Any person not authorized by law who conveys into a correctional facility any letter or other missive which is intended for any person confined therein, or who conveys from within the enclosure to the outside of such facility any letter or other missive written or given by any person confined therein is a crime. Any person not authorized by the Commissioner of Correction or the commissioner's designee who (1) conveys or possesses with intent to convey an electronic wireless communication device to any inmate of a correctional institution while such inmate is in such institution, or (2) uses an electronic wireless communication device to take a photographic or digital image in a correctional institution is a crime. Violators shall be prosecuted.

VISIT TERMINATION: A single visit, or all visits, may be canceled, denied or terminated by a supervisor at any time that institutional security requires. Termination may occur due to reasonable belief that the continuation of the visit could jeopardize safety and order.



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www.familiesincrisis.org

Help for Hard Times

suggestions for families and friends when a loved one is imprisoned

First things first

Take care of yourself – both physically and emotionally. You won't be much help to others if you're not in a good place yourself.

Seek out and connect with people who are in the same situation as you – they know what you are going through...maybe you can even share resources (baby sit for each other, carpool to visit, etc.).

Build on the positive – stay focused on what you can do or change - not on what you can't.

Live your life! You have a life to lead on "the outside" – it may include children, your home, job or religious community – stay involved and find joy where you can.

Don't hesitate to ask others you know and trust for help. Often, your family and friends may want to be supportive but aren't sure how to approach you. Unlike death and divorce, there are no social rules or rituals for others to follow. It's up to you to set the tone.

If children are involved

It is important to keep the explanation simple and age appropriate when you tell a child that a loved one is in prison. Prepare what you want to say and allow plenty of time to answer questions about prison, prison life, the crime, and what this will mean for them.

Children will react differently. For some children, the experience can be overwhelming while for others it is less serious. Sometimes it is a relief.

The child's age, understanding of the situation, and the reaction of others all play a part in the affect the parent's incarceration will have.

Children may have different feelings, and sometimes even several feelings at once, or one right after the other. Some of those feelings may be sadness, fear, guilt, disbelief, anxiety or anger. It is important to understand and recognize all their feelings.



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What to tell children when a parent or family member goes to prison

Should you tell? Who should tell? What could you say?

Some guidelines

When a parent or family member goes to prison, often, the family's first reaction is to protect the children by not telling them the truth...or to tell them only part of the truth. Perhaps, the parent in prison is afraid what the children will think of him or her? Afraid they won't love and respect them anymore?

The reality is that **children usually find out the truth anyway**. They hear adults talking, or a friend may tell them or they simply figure things out for themselves. So, what is the best thing to do? While every family must decide for themselves, here are some key things to keep in mind.

Children need to trust the adults who take care of them. **You build their trust when you tell the truth – even if it hurts**. Besides, if they find out you lied about a loved one in prison, they'll be hurt twice as hard...about the imprisonment and your deception. Also, if you lie about this, what else are you not telling the truth about?

Children are smart. While you may believe that you can explain a loved one's absence with a vague answer (they are in the hospital, working for the state or away at school) children usually find out. Phone calls and letters declare when someone communicates from a correctional facility, or the children see the barbed wire when they visit, or their loved one never comes home – even if they beg or it's a holiday. These are just **some of the clues** that even the youngest of children can put together.

If children aren't given an explanation that makes sense – **they will tell themselves something** to fill in the gap. That something may be worse than the truth. If you want them to come to you for information or comfort, you must demonstrate the "door is open" for honest communication. Be open and patient when they approach you.