

STATE CHAPLAINCY BOARD
WHAT CHAPLAINS NEED TO KNOW

RULES:

Security

The first rule – nothing in – nothing out!

Inmates will try to manipulate you into taking items in and out for them. Any queries regarding this can be referred to an officer. You can offer to speak to an officer on the inmate's behalf if lack of funds is a real problem for the inmate.

There is a procedure in place for legitimate bringing in or taking out of goods:-

- Use proper 'hand in' or 'hand out' forms where items are inspected, forms completed and approval given.
- Most centres no longer permit the purchase of inmate work or handing out of inmate art.
- Religious material and items may be provided for inmates as part of the Chaplain's ministry but no money is to be accepted for this.

Phone Calls

To comply with the monitoring for security reasons, inmates will not use the Chaplain's phone.

If, for compassionate reasons, a phone call is requested, the Chaplain will do so in the absence of the inmate, disregarding any wording he/she may have provided. Such a call should not be made if a Court Order is in process.

System Security

To comply with system security Chaplains need to:-

- Be sure everything coming into the centre is approved, e.g. all items used in ministry.
- Leave mobile phones outside centre.
- Provide list of items to be used for Eucharist Services, Ecumenical Services.
- Obtain permission for carrying prescription medicines and be very discreet in its use in centre
- Regard confidential inmates' affairs in accordance with signed Security Sheet
- Be judicious in any involvement in inmate/staff disputes
- Support staff whenever possible
- Seek advice from Team Leader and State Chaplaincy Board in matters of deep concern

- Maintain close communication with team members so as to avoid manipulation or confusion.
- Work with a tolerant and ecumenical spirit recognizing that theological differences do exist and take care not to set up or encourage friction.

Interpersonal Security

Confidentiality

Chaplains enjoy the confidence of inmates and staff in the matter of confidentiality.

Chaplains should acquaint themselves with the

- Code of Conduct of the State Chaplaincy Board
- Code of Conduct of the Queensland Corrective Services.

Inmates should be aware that serious disclosures may need to be reported, e.g. issues around riots, killings, rapes, suicide, escape, drug deals.

If necessary check with team and/or sponsoring organisation for clarification on confidential requirements.

Personal Security

- Go into inmates' cells only with approval and protection
- Try to remain in clear view of an officer when in units
- Interview rooms are available if needed
- Be aware of operation and location of duress alarms
- Observe total vigilance with regard to centre keys
- Use lanyard and belt if supplied
- Personal details should not be revealed to inmates, e.g. address, phone number, make of car, etc.
- Discretion should be used in any meeting of inmates post release.

Prison Culture

Hierarchy

- Crimes against children – sexual or violent crimes against children are considered to be at the bottom of the hierarchical list.
- Rape is more a power crime than sexual harassment.
- Homosexual liaisons formed in prison seldom last.
- Protection prisons or units are segregated from the mainstream – including child molesters, crown witnesses, high profile persons and the like.

Language

- Keep language simple but not patronizing.

Drugs

- Heroin – smack, hammer – injected into the bloodstream
- Amphetamines – speed – taken orally or intravenously
- Ecstasy – E – taken orally as tablets
- Cocaine – crack – highly addictive
- Marijuana – grass, weed – normally smoked
- Testing done by chemical tests on blood or urine – UTs
- Prescription drugs also abused especially Serepax, Valium, Rohypnol and especially if taken with alcohol
- Cigarettes are usually of the ‘roll your own’ variety because of the expense.
- Alcohol is only permitted as sacramental wine during celebration of Masses
- Brews can be made from any matter which ferments.

Officers

Derogatory terms for officers are generally fading out with new educational policies and improvements within the system.

Sentence Management

- Prisoners are classified as High, Low and Open.
- Initially given Sentence Management Review and classified according to needs – education, courses for addressing of offending behaviour – and risk to community.

Guidelines:

Inmate Behaviour

Chaplains do not handle legals, bail, money for prisoners.

Stressful times for prisoners include:

- While awaiting trial, sentencing
- Times of family crisis
- Pre- and post-release time

Chaplains are often called in to be of support during this time and help prisoners remain calm and clear-headed. It is necessary for Chaplains to be aware of suicide assessment procedures. (See Interpersonal Security.)

Difficulties prisoners can face on release:-

- Crowds
- Public transport
- Inability to choose for themselves
- Fear of sleeping unless locked up
- Families have adjusted to life without them

- Possibility of forming inappropriate or reckless relationships because of fear of being alone.

Chaplains need to be very wary of contact with prisoners after release.

Internal Discipline

- Detention Unit is used for breach offenders –
- Chaplains may visit if required
- Bibles and a copy of regulations are usually permitted
- Mutual respect is expected between Detention Unit Officers and Chaplains.

Breach offences dealt with via system can be given for:-

- Criminal offences
- Insolence
- Failure to obey lawful instructions
- Failure to appear at musters etc.

Detention Unit is also used for prisoner protection

- Observation cells are also in units, Health Centre for prisoners needing constant observation
- Inmates risking self-harm usually wear a safety garment like a dress and no underwear
- Inmates are deprived of anything which could be used in a suicide attempt.

Chaplains need to be aware of grief and trauma counselling procedures for dealing with these prisoners and be aware of own personal safety, e.g. keep hands and arms out of reach when talking with them.

Need to Know:

Chaplains are in Correctional Centres -

- To help staff and inmates
- To provide pastoral care
- To assist and encourage faith development, regardless of faith or denomination – this does not include Satanism as stated in Departmental and Board policy
- To provide religious visits for prisoners whose beliefs are not represented by Chaplaincy Team, e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-Day Adventists, Muslims, Buddhists, etc. General Manager, in consultation with Team Co-ordinator facilitates this.
- To provide all facilities of faith tradition, studies, worship, masses, prayer
- To make arrangements for an authorized person to provide certain sacraments when there is no one on team available for this, e.g. a priest to

celebrate mass, reconciliation, etc.

General approach

- Chaplains provide general Christian teaching. Proselytising is to be avoided – this extends to religious visitors as well.
- All religious groups, non-Christians and religious sects have the right to have their religious needs met.
- Inmates genuinely seek a return to, or searching for spirituality should be treated with sensitivity and compassion. Usually Chaplains are required to provide for the faith the prisoner declares on admission.

Community

Inmates are encouraged to be associated with a worshipping community of their own faith on the outside.

Listening

Chaplains may be the only ‘gospel’ inmates see. It is about reflecting the teachings and person of Christ in the centres. It is important:-

- To listen – without interrupting – this is a healing experience
- To pray – with the prisoner once trust is established
- To love – as children of God
- To study – and research ways to work effectively

System Improvement

Chaplains do not undertake personal campaigns for the system. Chaplains need to:-

- Discern ways to improve prison systems
- Discuss at team meetings
- Pass on to State Chaplaincy Board
- Attend annual inservice training where proposals can be raised.

Self-Care

Prison ministry can be demanding and exhausting. Chaplains need to have some of the following in place:

- Provision for own spiritual and pastoral care
- Debriefing with co-workers or someone understanding of the system
- Have a form of peer to peer support
- Have a spiritual director or confessor
- Pray and talk with team members
- Speak with Church or Board representatives
- Have daily prayer and/or Bible Study
- Plan for regular professional supervision.