

State Chaplaincy Board

The Conducting of Christian Religious Services Policy

The conducting of Christian Services in Correctional Centres:

- i. Each denomination / organization represented at the correctional centre shall be expected to participate in a roster to provide services of Christian worship at an appropriate time each Sunday. Subject to the General Manager's approval the person conducting the service may be either a chaplain or a properly approved resource worker.
- ii. All Christian Sunday services conducted within a correctional centre are intended to be ecumenical in nature in order to accommodate prisoners of all denominations. An ecumenical Service is hereby defined as a service which contains;
 - Appropriate music
 - Prayers
 - Bible Reading(s), and
 - An exposition of the Word

As such, Sunday services should not include denominationally-oriented functions such as mass / communion services, baptism, or other such rites.
- iii. Prisoners are not permitted to conduct services, with or without the presence of a chaplain.

The conducting of other Christian rites:

- i. Masses / Communion services should be held on the duty day of the individual chaplain concerned, or on another suitable day by arrangement with the team meeting.
- ii. Where special circumstances exist, e.g. Easter, where it may reasonably be felt appropriate to hold a mass / communion service on a Sunday, then the mass / communion service should be separate from the main service, clearly announced as such, and opportunity given for prisoners to withdraw at the conclusion of the ecumenical service and prior to the commencement of the mass / communion service.
- iii. Special rites such as baptism and marriage should first be discussed at a team meeting and with centre management, and should only proceed with the approval of both these bodies. In such cases the arrangements must be made with the appropriate involvement of centre management at all stages.
- iv. The nature of Memorial services requires immediate action by the duty chaplain at the time. The memorial service for a deceased prisoner or for a deceased family member of a prisoner should normally be the responsibility the appropriate denominational chaplain, or in the case of an indigenous prisoner, an indigenous chaplain. However, should that be impractical then the duty chaplain for the day shall conduct the service.