

Guide for Family and Friends



Arkansas Department of Correction

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Mission and Vision

The mission of the Arkansas Department of Correction is to:

- Provide public safety by carrying out the mandates of the courts;
- Provide a safe, humane environment for staff and inmates;
- Provide programs to strengthen the work ethic; and
- Provide opportunities for spiritual, mental and physical growth.

The vision of the Arkansas Department of Correction is to be an elite organization dedicated to public safety through ethical, innovative and professional leadership at all levels delivering superior services to the citizens of Arkansas.

Accreditation

All Arkansas Department of Correction facilities are accredited by the American Correctional Association, the oldest and most prestigious correctional membership organization in the United States. Founded in 1870, ACA represents more than 25,000 correctional practitioners in the United States and Canada.

Arkansas is one of only a few states to have its facilities fully accredited. In fact, the Women's Unit was one of the first in the nation to go through the process and receive national accreditation.

To become ACA accredited, a unit must be in 100% compliance with all applicable mandatory standards and at least 90% compliant with more than 400 non-mandatory standards. The unit must also be rated good or higher on its conditions of confinement and quality of life.

Introduction

The purpose of the "Guide for Family and Friends" is to help you, the family and friends of inmates, understand the functions of the Arkansas Department of Correction. This booklet is designed to answer basic questions about the department's procedures and what is allowed under current policies. Since it contains information that can change, the handbook should be used only as a guide.

We realize that every question about the department is not included, but we hope the information will make things a little easier for you during what can be a difficult time. If you have questions or concerns that are not covered in this booklet, please contact the Constituent Services Officer at (870) 267-6385.

This handbook was prepared for you by the Public Information Office of the ADC.

Diagnostic Process

What happens after an inmate arrives at the Department of Correction?

New inmates go through a diagnostic process called intake. Male inmates are received at the Diagnostic Unit in Pine Bluff for intake. Female inmates go to the McPherson Unit in Newport for intake. During intake, inmates are given medical, mental health and academic examinations, court papers are reviewed, counselors gather information through interviews and a general orientation takes place.

Inmates cannot have visitors during intake, but telephone calls are allowed. Intake generally takes about five days, but can last longer. It is during intake that inmates can set up an account to purchase items from the commissary.

Will the inmates have to get a haircut or shave?

Not if they are in compliance with the department's grooming policy. Male inmates are required to have their hair cut about the ears and collar. Faces must be clean-shaven, except for a small mustache. Female inmates must wear their hair above the shoulders. Exceptions can be made for medical reasons. Failure to comply with the department's grooming policy will result in disciplinary actions.

Classification of Inmates and Transfers

Which criteria are used to determine where an inmate is housed?

After intake, inmates are transferred to a parent unit for their initial assignment. Male inmates are assigned to the Varner, Cummins, East Arkansas, Grimes or Tucker Units. The parent unit for females is McPherson Unit at Newport.

Exceptions for initial assignments may be made for Boot Camp, health reasons or security concerns. Initial assignments last for a minimum of 60 days. Behavior, bed space, job availability and institutional needs dictate future assignments.

What is Boot Camp?

Boot Camp is a 105-day, behavior modification program located at the Wrightsville Unit. It is based on discipline, academic education and substance abuse education. Participation is limited to first time offenders with a sentence of ten years or less for nonviolent and nonsexual crimes. Inmates must volunteer to participate in the military-style program and they must be medically able to meet its stringent program requirements.

Can inmates be transferred if family members cannot visit due to distance?

No. Visitation is not a factor used in determining where an inmate is housed. Unfortunately, the department doesn't have the resources to honor this type of request. Any inmate can request a transfer, but the decision to transfer someone is based on bed space availability, institutional needs and other factors. Sometimes transfers result in easier visitation situations and sometimes they don't.

How are inmates classified and what are the different types of classification?

Inmates are classified in three ways: custody, classification, good time earning classification and medical classification. Custody classification is the result of scoring established criteria including crime, length of sentence, disciplinary record, prior violence, escape history and various other factors that determine risk to the public and risk within the institution. This classification may limit the facilities to which an inmate can be assigned.

Good time classification places inmates in Class I, II, III, or IV status. Class I earns 30 days additional good time credit per month (for example, after 30 days in Class I status, the inmate has 60 days credit); Class II earns 20 days additional credit per month; Class III earns 10 days additional credit per month; and Class IV does not earn any good time. An inmate being held in a city or county jail awaiting transfer to the Department of Correction can be awarded good time at a Class II level.

Class status is not automatic. All inmates are placed in Class II status when they arrive at the department. It is up to them to earn Class I status, and their class can be reduced because of disciplinary problems. Promotions in class status are handled by the Unit Classification Committee, which makes the decisions based on past and current behavior and on recommendations from an inmate’s work supervisor and/or other staff. This same committee may also make decisions regarding an inmate’s classification in protective custody or administrative segregation.

Health care professionals determine an inmate’s medical classification. It is one of the factors used to determine an inmate’s work assignment.

How long can an inmate be housed in administrative segregation?

Indefinitely, but the inmate will be reviewed periodically to determine if administrative segregation remains appropriate.

Smoking Regulations

Are inmates allowed to smoke or have other tobacco products?

No. Inmates are not allowed to have any kind of tobacco. This policy became effective January 17, 2000, and prohibits inmates from possessing “any smoking or smokeless tobacco product.” If an inmate does have tobacco, it is considered contraband and the inmate will be disciplined. Visitors and employees must leave all tobacco products in their vehicle. Bringing tobacco products into a facility will result in loss of visitation privileges.

Correspondence by Mail

How should mail to an inmate be addressed?

- Inmate’s name and ADC number
- Name of Unit
- P.O. Box or street address
- City, state, and zip code

Can I correspond with an inmate by e-mail?

No. Although inmates may have access to computers because of school or work, they do not have access to e-mail or to the Internet. ADC will not forward any email to inmates.

What do I do about unwanted and threatening mail from an inmate?

Notify the warden of the unit where the letter originated. Keep the letter and provide the warden with a copy and a written request for the correspondence from the inmate to stop.

Can I send magazines and books to an inmate?

No. Inmates can't receive publications from you. All books, magazines, newspapers and catalogs must be mailed directly from the publisher, bookstore, educational institution or recognized commercial or charitable outlet.

What can be sent to inmates in the Boot Camp program?

Letters only.

Is inmate mail opened and read?

Yes. All incoming and outgoing inmate mail may be read, except privileged correspondence with the inmate's attorney; federal, state, and local court officials; any administrator of the Department of Correction, Board of Parole and the Board of Corrections; and the media. If properly marked as privileged, the correspondence will be opened in front of the inmate and only inspected for contraband.

What is the requirement for sending inmates packages and food?

Do not send any packages or any food to an inmate.

Inmate Telephone Use

Do inmates have access to a telephone?

Yes. Inmates are provided with coinless telephones during set hours of use. Inmates can only make collect calls to pre-approved numbers. Inmates can lose their telephone privileges for disciplinary reasons.

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

Yes. Each unit has its own telephone policy, so please check with the particular unit for specific hours of use.

Do Boot Camp inmates have access to a telephone?

Yes, but only in emergency situations. Boot Camp inmates may write and receive letters. They may also use the telephone to call family or friends prior to their graduation from the Boot Camp program.

Can I provide an inmate with a cellular phone to use for calls?

No. Inmates cannot have cellular phones. They are contraband, and inmates will be disciplined for having them. Providing cellular phones or other electronic communication devices to an inmate is a felony in Arkansas.

Can I provide a calling card?

No. Inmates cannot have calling cards. The department has a contract with a telephone service provider and calling cards are not part of that contract.

How do I get my number taken off an inmate's calling list?

Send a letter to the warden of the unit where the inmate is calling from and request that your number be removed from the inmate's list.

What do I do about unwanted and threatening calls from inmates?

Report all threatening calls to the warden of the unit where the call originated. To prevent the inmate from calling again, do not accept any more collect calls. Also, with the laser/digital equipment installed, calls are recorded and can easily be monitored by the Department of Correction.

Urgent Messages

How are urgent messages relayed?

Notify the chaplain or mental health office at the inmate's unit about the emergency and a message will be delivered to the inmate.

What is considered to be an urgent message?

Death, critical illness or injury and serious mishaps.

Are inmates allowed to attend funerals or make bedside visits?

Yes. The department may grant an inmate an emergency furlough because of critical illness or death in the immediate family. Immediate family, as defined by department policy, consists of father, mother, sister, brother, spouse, children, grandparent, grandchildren, aunt, uncle, mother-in-law and father-in-law. The inmate must provide the names of immediate family during intake. The inmate's classification and security concerns are factors in deciding whether an emergency furlough is granted. Also, the sheriff in the county where the inmate will be going must approve. The family will be responsible for any fees for certified law enforcement officers escorting inmates to and from the furlough.

Who tells inmates about a death in their family?

The chaplain at the unit notifies the inmate of the death. This is done because the chaplain is trained in various areas of counseling.

Visitation

Is visitation important?

Yes. The department encourages family and friends who have positive influences and serve as good role models to keep strong ties with the inmate. This can help the inmate adjust and succeed after release.

How can I get on an inmate's visitation list?

The inmate must mail you a visitation questionnaire, which you fill out and return to the address listed on the form. The questionnaire is required. You cannot visit until the questionnaire has been reviewed and approved by the warden. Processing takes time. A response can come as quickly as seven days, but sometimes can take two to six weeks. A criminal history check is done on all prospective visitors.

Children 12 years of age or younger are not required to be on an approved list and can only visit with a parent or legal guardian.

Children age 13 to 18 may visit without a parent or legal guardian if prior arrangements are made.

Will criminal history be checked?

Yes. If the person has a prior criminal conviction, he or she might be allowed to visit six months after being released from incarceration.

When is visitation?

Visitation is either on Saturday or Sunday. The inmate's custody classifications can determine when or if visitation is allowed. After you have been approved to visit the inmate, check with the individual unit for specific visiting hours.

May I call to see if the inmate is still allowed visitors?

Yes. Call the unit and ask for the visitation clerk. If the clerk is unavailable, check with the warden's office.

What if I can't visit on the inmate's scheduled visitation date?

If the warden or center supervisor approves, special visits may be allowed during the week for approved visitors who live more than 300 miles from the unit. No special visits are allowed on holidays.

How many visitors can an inmate have during visitation?

Four (4) visitors are allowed during any one visit, including children. However, the spouse of an inmate and all children, regardless of the number, may visit when no other adults are present.

How many inmates may I visit?

Unless you are an immediate family member or approved by the warden, you can only be on one inmate's visitation list.

What physical contact is allowed during visits?

Only a brief hug at the beginning and end of visitation is allowed. There will be no other physical contact during visitation.

What is “non-contact” visitation?

Non-contact visitation, where the inmate and visitor are separated by a glass divider, is used at the discretion of the warden for Death Row and maximum security inmates. It is also the only form of visitation allowed at the Varner Super Max Unit.

What is the dress code during visitation?

You cannot wear sleeveless shirt, shorts, spandex, see through clothing, hats, sunglasses, sagging pants or low cut blouses to any correctional facility. Skirts and dresses must be worn at or below the knee. The department can deny visitation to any person who is dressed inappropriately.

Are children allowed to wear shorts during visitation?

Yes, if the child is 12 years old or younger.

Could I be searched prior to entering the visitation room?

Yes. Any person or vehicle entering a correctional unit can be searched for contraband. Visitors in wheelchairs and those wearing wigs or religious headgear are also subject to search. If a wig is being worn for medical reasons and a medical prescription is provided, the visitor will be searched privately. Visitors must also pass through a metal detector.

What is allowed inside the prison for an infant during visitation?

You can only take a bottle and diapers into the visitation room. No diaper bags, strollers, or infant carriers are allowed in the unit.

Will bathrooms be available?

Yes. All visitors are required to use the bathrooms designated for visitors. Inmates are required to use the bathrooms designated for inmates.

May I take my purse or billfold inside to visitation?

Only small coin purses and billfolds are allowed. You may bring in a small amount of money to pay for purchases from the concession area, but never more than \$20. You will also need to bring identification with your picture on it.

How old does a child have to be before a picture ID is required?

Fourteen (14) years old. That is the age the Arkansas Revenue Department will issue picture ID cards.

What can be given to an inmate during visitation?

Only concession items purchased at the visitation center can be given to the inmate you are visiting. Passing unauthorized items to an inmate can result in disciplinary action for the inmate and a loss of visitation privileges for the visitor.

Are cameras allowed during visitation for family photos?

No. Cameras, video recorders and tape recorders must be left in your vehicle. However, some units have places inside visitation where photographs are taken and made available for purchase.

Are visitors allowed to bring pagers and cellular phones?

No. Pagers and cellular phones must be left in your vehicle.

Are small pocketknives allowed inside for visitation?

No. All pocketknives regardless of size, including small Swiss Army knives must be left in your vehicle.

May I bring cakes, cookies or other food items for the inmate?

No. You cannot bring food to the inmate. But you may purchase food items in the concession area of the visitation center.

Drugs

Should a visitor expect to be checked for drugs?

Yes. The department randomly uses Ion Scanners to test for drug residues. A positive scan can lead to a search of the visitor and his or her vehicle.

What happens if a visitor is caught with drugs at the unit?

The visitor's visitation privileges will be suspended for at least one year, and the case will be turned over to the appropriate authorities so that criminal charges can be filed.

Money

Are inmates provided a wage for work performed while in custody?

No. Inmates earn good time, not money. It costs the state more than \$14,000 a year to house each inmate, and the state pays for all healthcare, eyeglasses, food, clothing, education, vocational education, substance abuse treatment, and other programs.

How do I send money to an inmate?

Send money orders and a deposit slip to the following address
Arkansas Department of Correction
Trust Fund Centralized Banking
P.O. Box 8908
Pine Bluff, AR 71611

Only money orders are accepted. They should be made payable to the inmate's name and ADC number, along with a completed deposit slip so that the correct account can be credited. Deposit slips are available online at the ADC Web site: www.arkansas.gov/doc. Inmates also have access to the deposit slips at each unit and can forward them to family members.

May I use a credit card to deposit money into an inmate's account?

Yes. You may use the ADC Inmate Banking Deposit Service online. It's a fast and secure way to deposit funds into an inmate's account by using a credit card. The minimum deposit amount is \$10 and a 5% transaction fee will be added to the total. Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards are accepted. To use this service, visit www.arkansas.gov/doc.

Is there a limit on how much money an inmate can have in his or her account?

No.

What can inmates purchase with their money and from where?

Each unit has a pen store, or commissary, where inmates can buy snack foods, candy, personal products, radios, shoes and other approved items.

What happens to profits generated from inmate purchases at the pen stores?

The profits go into the Inmate Welfare Fund, which is used to benefit inmates. The Inmate Welfare Fund is used for recreational equipment, movie purchases, money added to inmate accounts at Christmas and gate money when inmates are released from prison.

Is any assistance provided to inmates who receive little or no money?

Yes. If an inmate meets the requirements to be considered indigent, money from the telephone fund allows the inmate to purchase hygiene items. Indigent inmates are also given stamped envelopes so that they can correspond with family and friends.

Will an inmate continue to receive Veterans Administration or other government benefits while incarcerated?

Maybe. ADC contacts the agency providing the benefits and that agency decides whether to continue sending them. Under some circumstances, inmates are allowed to continue receiving benefits.

What happens to profits generated from family and friends' expenditures on collect calls (Inmate Telephone Fund)?

ADC receives a portion of the profits and uses the revenue to improve the quality of life for inmates. Telephone profits have been used to enhance security, to improve the units where inmates live, to provide money for indigent inmates to purchase hygiene items from the commissary and for gate money.

Personal Clothing & Items

What clothing does the department provide?

For male inmates: 3 uniform shirts, 3 uniform pants, 1 pair of shoes, 3 undershorts, 3 pairs of cotton socks, a cap/toboggan (if needed), a jacket or coat (seasonal), insulated underwear (seasonal), soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, safety razor & blade, bath towels, and a pocket comb.

For female inmates: 3 uniform tops, 3 uniform pants, 1 pair of shoes, 3 pairs of underwear, 3 bras, a jacket or coat (seasonal), 3 pairs of socks, 1 thermal top and bottom (seasonal), soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, safety razor & blade, bath towels and feminine hygiene items.

Are Work Release inmates allowed personal clothes?

It depends on the unit or center. Many Work Release inmates wear street clothes throughout their stay in the program. But some Work Release inmates, such as those assigned to the Pine Bluff Unit, are required to wear a Work Release uniform.

What jewelry and other personal items are inmates allowed to have?

Personal jewelry may consist of one wristwatch, one plain metal ring or wedding band and one religious medal or emblem worn on the inmate's ID chain. A separate chain will not be allowed. The religious medal or emblem may not be larger than one and a half inches in length or diameter. The value of each item cannot be more than \$50. A wedding band can have a higher value, but the inmate must sign a waiver of liability.

When an inmate is released, can clothes be mailed to the unit for the inmate to wear home?

No. Clothes cannot be mailed or brought to the unit ahead of time. But family or friends can bring a change of clothes with them to pick up the inmate. Before being released, the inmate may change into the clothes.

What happens if an inmate doesn't have clothes to wear home after being released?

Clothing for inmates to wear home is provided through donations.

Are inmates allowed to have photographs?

Yes. Inmates may have up to five personal photographs that are not nude or sexually suggestive and do not promote gang activity. Photographs cannot be any larger than 4x6 inches and cannot contain things that are disruptive in nature or threatening to security. Digital pictures or images generated by a computer are considered to be photographs.

Medical & Dental Services

How does the department know if an inmate has a health problem when he enters the system?

When an inmate comes into the department, physical and psychological examinations are performed. During this time the inmate should provide healthcare staff with the names and addresses of any/providers facilities where previous medical or mental health care was rendered so a copy of the records can be obtained. A complete dental examination will also be completed within the first few weeks of incarceration.

Where can medical records of past treatments be sent?

Only a physician or other health care provider can send medical records. Records from family or friends will not be accepted. When having records sent, make sure the inmate's full name, date of birth and ADC number (if known) are included. Have the records sent to:

Arkansas Department of Correction
Attn: Medical Records Director
P.O. Box 8707
Pine Bluff, AR 71611

What kinds of medical services are provided?

The Department of Correction provides mental health services and contracts with a nationally known healthcare provider for medical and dental care that is necessary and reasonable. Routine and emergency healthcare services are available. If care in the community is appropriate and necessary, arrangements are made to have those services provided by local providers and/or hospitals.

What kinds of healthcare professionals are provided?

An Arkansas licensed physician and credentialed nursing staff are assigned to each facility. Medical services are provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

May an inmate obtain services other than those provided by the Department of Correction?

No. The department will provide clinical evaluation and treatment that is reasonable and necessary. An evaluation may include requesting and reviewing medical records for care provided prior to incarceration, examinations by more than one physician including specialists and testing at outside facilities when indicated.

How does the inmate obtain health care?

If an inmate has a medical or dental emergency, he or she should inform a correctional officer who will notify the medical department immediately for evaluation. If the problem is routine, the inmate should submit a Sick Call Request form, which will be reviewed by the Medical Department within 24 hours, and an examination will be scheduled thereafter. Inmates may be required to pay a \$3 co-pay fee for any inmate-generated health service request.

Is there special housing for the elderly or sick inmates?

Special housing is available for inmates who are elderly, chronically ill or recovering from severe illnesses. Clinical staff will work with institution staff to determine appropriate housing for any inmate.

What if the inmate needs to be hospitalized?

The medical contractor operates a licensed general medical hospital within the department, several licensed infirmaries and dispensaries throughout the state. If the care needed is beyond this level, the inmate may be transferred to a community provider.

Are inmates allowed to have visitors at the hospital?

Yes, if the person is on the inmate's approved visitation list. If the inmate is in a unit infirmary, the warden must approve the visit. Inmates admitted to community facilities may be granted visitation approval by the Medical and Dental Services Administrator.

May family and friends accompany or visit an inmate during trips to community healthcare providers?

No. For security reasons, inmates, family and friends are not permitted to know scheduled appointment times and dates. If those dates become known, or if family and friends show up unauthorized, the appointment will be canceled, rescheduled, and routine visitation privileges may be suspended or revoked.

Which kinds of dental services are provided?

In addition to dental emergencies, routine and necessary examinations, treatment and cleanings are provided. Dental prosthetics are provided if needed for chewing food, but will not be provided for cosmetic effect.

Does the Medical Department provide shoes?

If the physician determines that the inmate has a medical need, arrangements will be made to have the patient evaluated by a specialist. If the specialist determines that special shoes are necessary, the Medical Department will provide them. If the specialist determines that a medical need does not exist, the Medical Department will not provide shoes. The inmate may purchase shoes in the pen store or commissary as desired. Family or friends cannot provide shoes to the inmate without the approval of the facility warden.

Does the Medical Department provide glasses?

If the inmate has vision difficulty, a request for an examination should be submitted to the Medical Department. An optometrist will examine the inmate as appropriate and if needed, standard glasses will be provided. The inmate may be examined every two years, and glasses will be provided as needed.

May the family or friends of an inmate provide glasses, medications, vitamins, shoes, or other items for the inmate?

No. The medical contractor will provide all medical items. Family or friends may not provide shoes, glasses or other medical items.

How does the department determine what kind of work the inmate can perform?

Job assignments are based, in part, on the inmate's physical and mental health examinations and the medical history provided to the department. An inmate is medically classified to perform work depending on the current physical and mental conditions.

How does an inmate review his or her medical records?

If an inmate wants to review the medical records, he or she may submit a Request for Interview to the Medical Department Unit Manager. An appointment will be made for the inmate to review the records with the assistance of a Medical Records Clerk. The inmate may take notes, but may not copy any part of the records or remove any part of the records.

Family and friends of the inmate are not permitted to review medical records, and they will not be furnished a copy of any portion of the medical records. Attorneys may obtain copies of specific portions of the medical records by submitting a written request to:

Arkansas Department of Correction
Attn: Medical Records Director
P.O. Box 8707
Pine Bluff, AR 71611

How does an inmate register a complaint about healthcare?

If an inmate has a question or is not satisfied with the healthcare services provided, an informal complaint can be submitted to the Medical Department Unit Manager. For all initial complaints, the Unit Manager will arrange for a medical staff member to interview the inmate. If the inmate is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal complaint, a formal grievance may be submitted and will be investigated.

Who should the family or friends contact regarding medical or dental services for an inmate?

The Medical and Dental Services Administrator should be contacted. The address is:

Arkansas Department of Correction
P.O. Box 8707
Pine Bluff, AR 71603

The phone number is (870) 267-6330, fax number is (870) 267-6363 and e-mail is john.byus@arkansas.gov. Family and friends who call unit medical departments will not be given information regarding an inmate. Medical information cannot be released by those personnel without permission of the Medical and Dental Services Administrator.

Mental Health Services

What types of mental health services are provided?

Inmates can receive individual and group outpatient treatment from psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and counselors. The Special Program Unit provides intensive treatment and specialized assessment. Special Management Barracks are available for inmates with mental health management and counseling needs. The Tucker Habilitation program provides management and treatment for the developmentally disabled. Crisis intervention and management of self-injurious behavior is available at all units.

Who do I contact if I think mental services are needed for an inmate?

Contact the mental health staff at the unit where the inmate is housed.

Treatment Programs

Which substance abuse treatment programs are available?

There are programs at most units that provide short-term residential substance abuse treatment. There also are two Therapeutic Community programs, which are nine-month programs for inmates with more severe substance abuse histories. The Boot Camp has a substance abuse program called REACT.

What is RSVP?

RSVP stands for Reduction of Sexual Victimization Program. This 12-month treatment program focuses on controlling compulsive sexual behaviors, particularly child molestation. Participants must admit a need for treatment. Participation in the program is voluntary, but the Board of Parole can require completion as a condition of early release.

Education

Which educational programs are offered?

At the beginning of the 1997-98 school year, academic education became mandatory for all inmates who do not have a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate. A full range of academic programs is available at most units, including special education and Title I and Title VI programs.

Summer school is available at some units, and homebound educational services are offered for inmates in segregation. Inmates progress at their own pace and work toward their GED certificate. Vocational technical education and college courses are offered at some units.

What kinds of vocational training are available?

Vocational courses available to inmates include auto mechanics, diesel engine mechanics, graphic arts, electrician, culinary arts, plumbing, drafting, computer technology, auto paint and body, business data processing, heating and air conditioning, horticulture, printing occupations, computerized accounting, farm equipment repair, consumer electronics, cosmetology, cabinet making, carpentry, combination welding and small engine repair.

Religious Programs

Are religious programs and services available to inmates?

Yes. Chaplains and volunteers provide religious services, pastoral counseling, study groups, revivals and other special events.

What is a CRA?

A CRA is a Certified Religious Assistant. They are volunteers who have attended special training to serve as an extension of the department's Chaplaincy Services. Most Certified Religious Assistants are lay people who volunteer on behalf of their denominations.

Is religious interaction permitted in administrative segregation and Death Row?

Yes. Chaplains and spiritual advisors interact according to the religious needs of those inmates.

Marriage

May inmates marry?

Yes, if the marriage follows state and federal laws and department policies.

What is the marriage process for an inmate?

The inmate makes a marriage request to the unit chaplain. The chaplain will schedule an interview so the necessary paperwork can begin. There is a 90-day waiting period that starts on the day of the inmate's interview with the chaplain. The request is sent from the chaplain to the warden for approval. If the warden approves the marriage request, a date is set for the ceremony.

Is an inmate allowed to leave the unit for the ceremony?

No. The ceremony will take place at the unit. The only time the inmate might leave the unit is to be escorted to the courthouse to sign the marriage license. With prior approval from the warden, inmates assigned to the Work Release Program may marry while on furlough.

Who is allowed to perform the ceremony?

It is preferred that the inmate's minister performs the wedding ceremony. But a department chaplain may perform the ceremony if other arrangements are not possible.

Will the couple be allowed to visit after the ceremony?

No.

Can an inmate receive a wedding band from his or her spouse?

Yes.

Who pays for the wedding?

All costs of the wedding, including transportation costs, must be paid by the inmate, his or her family and friends, or another private source.

How many people may attend the wedding?

Up to six guests may attend. Their names must be provided in advance to the warden, and all guests must be on the inmate's approved visitation list.

Are cameras allowed during the wedding?

Yes, but only with prior approval of the warden.

Does the Department of Correction allow conjugal visits for married inmates?

No.

Furloughs

Are there different kinds of furloughs?

Yes. There are three (3) different kinds of furloughs.

- (1) Emergency furloughs may be granted to inmates when there is a critical illness or death in their immediate family.
- (2) Work Release furloughs may be granted one weekend a month to inmates in the Work Release Program.
- (3) Meritorious furloughs may be awarded for exemplary conduct to Class I-A and I-B inmates who are not serving a sentence for certain violent or sexual offenses.

In all cases, the sheriff of the county where the inmate will be going must approve the meritorious furlough.

When might a meritorious furlough be granted?

A meritorious furlough may be granted if an inmate has maintained Class I-A or Class I-B status for one year. The Unit Classification Committee must approve all meritorious furloughs. By state law, meritorious furloughs cannot be granted to inmates sentenced for capitol murder, murder in the first degree, kidnapping, stalking, rape, any other sexual offense or any offense concerning exploitation of children or the use of children in sexual performances.

How long does a meritorious furlough last?

A meritorious furlough cannot exceed five (5) calendar days and cannot begin or end on a weekend or holiday.

Inmates on meritorious furlough must stay at the home of their sponsor. A furlough sponsor must be on the inmate's approved visitation list and the warden has to approve sponsorship. Inmates cannot leave the state or the county where they are staying without the warden's written approval.

Food Service

How many meals are inmates served during the day?

Inmates are served three (3) meals a day. However, some inmates with medical conditions might be served more often. On holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas, inmates might be served two meals. The first is a late breakfast or brunch. The second is a large, holiday meal.

Does the inmate have to pay for meals?

No, not for meals served by the unit. But inmates must pay for food purchases from the commissary or pen store.

Does the department have a certified dietitian?

Yes.

What happens if an inmate requires a certain diet for medical or religious reasons?

The dietitian provides the food services staff with a copy of the diet for the inmate's specific medical condition. If an inmate's religious practices prevent him or her from eating certain meat, substitute meals are offered that are nutritionally balanced.

Sexual Misconduct

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

No. 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. Any sexual misconduct by an inmate or an employee should be reported promptly to correctional staff.

What is the Prison Rape Elimination Act?

On Sept. 4, 2003, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was signed into law. All confinement institutions housing adult and juvenile offenders are accountable to this law which covers both staff sexual misconduct and inmate on inmate sexual assault. One of PREA's goals is to develop and implement national standards for the detection, prevention, reduction and punishment of prison rape.

What if an inmate is assaulted?

Assaults should be reported immediately to correctional staff so that appropriate action can be taken. Inmates can also use the free hotline to report allegations of sexual assault. The hotline is available through the inmate telephone system and the number that inmates dial is 0-870-267-6533. In the case of a rape/sexual assault, an immediate referral will be made to Health Services for physical examination and completion of a rape kit test. (The inmate should not shower or clean up after the incident as it will interfere with the rape test results.) Rape complaints will be kept strictly confidential to protect the victim.

What should an inmate expect if her or she reports a rape or sexual assault?

A swift and thorough investigation will be conducted. Evidence will be collected and stored. The victim will be placed in a safe place where he/she is not subject to retaliation. The unit's PREA Response Team will be notified and will assist the inmate. Statements will be taken from witnesses and findings will be documented. If founded, the case will result in discipline and prosecution.

What should an inmate do if he or she feels they are being pressured into a sexual relationship?

If someone is pressuring an inmate to have sexual relations, the inmate can use the free hotline in the barracks to report the allegations to ADC. The hotline number is 0-870-267-6533. All calls will be reviewed. The department has a policy of zero tolerance for sexual abuse of inmates.

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

The inmate should report all known enemies to correctional staff and request that their names be added to his or her enemy list. This will help avoid difficult situations.

Is Protective Custody available?

Yes. Protective custody is available at some units. If it is determined that protective custody is needed, a transfer can be made to an appropriate unit.

Disciplinary Action

What does it mean when an inmate is written a disciplinary?

It means the inmate has been accused of breaking a rule. A disciplinary hearing officer, who decides whether the inmate is guilty or innocent, will hear the inmate's case. Being found guilty of a rule violation can result in a loss of privileges, classification level, job assignment and good time. Rule violations can also lead to confinement in punitive isolation.

Is there an appeal process for inmates?

Yes. The appeal process is explained in the Inmate Handbook and in department policies available in the unit law libraries.

Can inmates in punitive isolation use the telephone?

Only in emergency situations. All other telephone use is prohibited while an inmate is on punitive status. The inmate may use the phone while out on 48-hour relief.

What happens if an inmate commits a crime while incarcerated?

If the Department of Correction has reason to believe a crime has been committed by an inmate, the Arkansas State Police will be called in to conduct a criminal investigation. Their case file will be turned over to the prosecutor, who will decide on charges. A conviction could result in additional prison time.

Legal Services

There are two licensed Arkansas attorneys to assist with legal advice and explanations of court documents. The attorneys cannot represent inmates in lawsuits against the Department of Correction or its employees or on matters concerning their criminal convictions. But they can represent inmates in certain divorce or Department of Human Services matters.

Do inmates have access to a law library?

Yes. All units, except Work Release centers, have a law library that is open during set hours. The attorneys for inmates make sure information available at unit law libraries is kept up to date.

Do inmates have a way to file complaints?

Yes. Inmate complaints are called grievances and there is an established procedure for filing them. The process, including a description of grievable issues, is outlined in policies available to inmates in their unit law libraries.

Can the Arkansas Department of Correction change an inmate's sentence?

No. An inmate's sentence can be changed only by the courts or commutation from the governor.

Work Assignments

Do inmates work?

Yes. All inmates work unless there is a severe security or medical concern. Based in part on their medical classification, inmates are assigned jobs. Failure to work will result in disciplinary action. An inmate is not automatically excluded from receiving a work assignment because of a handicap or disability.

How are inmates assigned to these jobs?

New inmates spend a minimum of 60 days working on a hoe squad. After successfully completing this initial work assignment, inmates become eligible for different jobs. Job assignments depend on a variety of factors such as type of crime, behavior, classification, job availability, institutional needs, medical classification, security concerns and the skill level of the inmate. The Unit Classification Committee determines work assignments.

What kinds of work do they do?

Job assignments vary. Some inmates work inside the institutions as porters and clerks. Others work in food services, laundry and maintenance. Outside jobs include lawn crew, field utility and Regional Maintenance. Work assignments are also available in agriculture, industry, and construction.

Can I pay somebody to get a better work assignment for an inmate?

No. It is against the law to sell inmate work assignments. If anyone offers to sell a work assignment, report it immediately to the warden of the unit or to the Internal Affairs division of the central office.

If an inmate has job skills, who should be told about them?

The inmate should tell intake personnel or the Unit Classification Committee about any job skills that he or she possesses.

Do inmates work when it's very cold or very hot outside?

If the temperature is very cold, outside work might be limited to only essential duties such as feeding livestock or making necessary repairs. When the temperature is very hot, water breaks are increased and work hours are adjusted for some outside crews to avoid the hottest part of the day. New inmates go through a two-week adjustment period that allows them to gradually get used to the heat.

What is the Work Release Program?

In the Work Release Program, inmates are housed in correctional facilities and they hold paid jobs in the community. From the wages they earn, the inmates partially reimburse the state for their care and custody. Work Release inmates must be Class I-A, and no more than 30 months from their release or parole eligibility date. Because of their crimes, many inmates are ineligible for the program.

What is the 309 Program?

Under the Act 309 Program, eligible ADC inmates are housed in certain county or city jails for work purposes. Participating counties and cities request inmates by skill and the inmates are not paid for their work. Eligibility requirements include a good disciplinary record, at least six months in the ADC system after initial assignment and no convictions for capital murder, first degree murder, sexual offenses or stalking. If the inmate is more than 30 months from parole eligibility, the sheriff or chief of police in the county of conviction must approve the inmate's participation in the program.

Parole

What is parole or transfer?

Parole or transfer is early release from incarceration that is supervised and conditional. Since parole is a privilege and not a right, it may carry several conditions such as substance abuse treatment, drug screenings, electronic monitoring, counseling and maintaining a job. If the conditions of release are not met or if the offender fails to follow the reporting schedule, parole can be revoked and the offender can be sent back to prison.

Before being released on parole, an offender can be required by the Board of Parole to complete certain ADC programming such as substance abuse treatment, academic education, vocational education or the Reduction of Sexual Victimization Program.

Who is eligible for parole/transfer?

All inmates, except those sentenced to life, life without parole, or death, will be eligible for parole/transfer at some point. Their eligibility date will depend on state laws concerning the crime, the sentence and good time. The inmate's eligibility date can change because of disciplinary action or additional convictions.

Do inmates have to pay to get a parole or transfer eligibility date?

No. The Arkansas Department of Correction automatically calculates parole/transfer eligibility dates. No fee is charged.

Who decides which inmates are released on parole?

Board of Parole hearings are held monthly at each unit.

What is the EPA?

The Emergency Powers Act gives the Board of Corrections the authority to declare a prison-overcrowding emergency and to move parole/transfer eligibility dates forward by up to 90 days for eligible inmates. Even if the EPA is in effect, the inmates still must be granted parole by the Board of Parole.

Does the Arkansas Department of Correction supervise parolees/transfers?

No. Parolees/transfers are supervised by the Arkansas Department of Community Correction.

How can an inmate get more information on parole?

Information on parole is available in the Inmate Handbook or from the Institutional Parole Officer at the inmate's unit. Inmates can review state laws governing parole at their unit's law library.

Addresses

Central Office

P.O. Box 8707
Pine Bluff, AR 71611
Phone: (870) 267-6999

Administration Annex East

2403 East Harding Avenue
Pine Bluff, AR 71601
Phone: (870) 850-8510

Benton Unit

6701 Highway 67
Benton, AR 72015
Phone: (501) 315-2252

Boot Camp Program

P.O. Box 1000
Wrightsville, AR 72183
Phone: (501)897-5806

Cummins Unit

P.O. Box 500
Grady, AR 71644
Phone: (870) 850-8899

Delta Regional Unit

880 East Gaines
Dermott, AR 71638
Phone: (870) 538-2000

Diagnostic Unit

7500 Correction Circle
Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Phone: (870) 267-6410

East Arkansas Regional Unit

P.O. Box 180
Brickeys, AR 72320
Phone: (870) 295-4700

Grimes Correctional Facility

300 Wackenhut Way
Newport, AR 72112
Phone: (870) 523-5877

J. Aaron Hawkins, Sr., Center for Women

22522 Asher Road
Wrightsville, AR 72183
Phone (501) 897-2256

Jefferson County Jail/Correctional Facility

7206 West Seventh Avenue
Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Phone: (870) 267-6800

Maximum Security Unit

2501 State Farm Road
Tucker, AR 72168
Phone: (501) 842-3800

McPherson Correctional Facility

302 Wackenhut Way
Newport, AR 72112
Phone: (870) 523-2639

Mississippi County Work Release Center

P.O. Box 10
Luxora, AR 72358
Phone: (870) 658-2214

North Central Unit

HC 62, Box 300
Calico Rock, AR 72519
Phone: (870) 297-4311

Northwest Arkansas Work Release Center

200 East Price Ave.
Springdale, AR 72765
Phone: (479) 756-2037

Addresses

Ouachita River Correctional Unit

P.O. Box 1630
Malvern, AR 72104
Phone: (501) 467-3400

Pine Bluff Unit

890 Free Line Drive
Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Phone: (870) 267-6510

Texarkana Regional Correction Center

305 East 5th Street
Texarkana, AR 71854
Phone: (870) 779-3939

Tucker Unit

P.O. Box 240
Tucker, AR 72168
Phone: (501) 842-2519

Varner Unit

P.O. Box 600
Grady, AR 71644
Phone: (870) 479-3030

Varner Supermax Unit

P.O. Box 400
Grady, AR 71644
(870) 479-3030

Wrightsville Unit

P.O. Box 1000
Wrightsville, AR 72183
Phone: (501) 897-5806

Custody Levels

Benton Unit: Minimum

Boot Camp – Minimum

Cummins Unit: Maximum – Medium – Minimum

Delta Regional Unit: Medium – Maximum

Diagnostic Unit: Medium – Minimum

East Arkansas Regional Unit: Maximum – Medium – Minimum

Grimes Correctional Facility: Maximum – Medium

J. Aaron Hawkins Sr. Center for Women: Medium

Jefferson County Jail/Correctional Facility: Medium – Minimum

Maximum Security Unit: Maximum

McPherson Correctional Facility: Maximum – Medium

Mississippi County Work Release Center: Minimum

North Central Unit: Medium – Minimum

Northwest Arkansas Work Release Center: Minimum

Ouachita River Unit: Medium – Minimum

Pine Bluff Unit: Medium – Minimum

Texarkana Regional Correction Center: Minimum

Tucker Unit: Medium – Minimum

Varner Unit: Maximum – Medium – Minimum

Varner Supermax Unit: Supermax

Wrightsville Unit: Medium – Minimum



Map of Facilities

