

Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures

10.6 Visits by Chaplains

Policy summary

This policy is about the authority of accredited chaplains and their assistants to visit correctional centres under *clause 67 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014*.

It sets out the accreditation process and the approval a chaplain must have before they can visit a correctional centre as a clause 67 visitor. It also explains the conditions or restrictions that will apply to them, along with their responsibilities, powers and privileges.

The Commissioner can revoke an accreditation at any time.

Unless CSNSW has accredited a chaplain, priest or spiritual advisor, they must not be allowed access under clause 67. However, they may visit as a family member or friend under clause 74.

Management of Public Correctional Centres Service Specifications

Outcome	Decency and Respect
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Scope

This policy & procedures apply to all staff in all correctional centres, inmates and authorised visitors.

Related Documents

Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999

Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014

Management of Public Correctional Centre Outcome Specifications

Related Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures

10.1 – General Visitor Controls and Conditions

10.2 – Visitor Restrictions and Prohibitions

10.3 – Visitors to inmates

MOU – Between Civil Chaplaincy Advisory Committee and CSNSW

Forms and Annexures

Application for on-line CSNSW security awareness course for authorised visitors

Application for authority to enter a place of detention as an authorised visitor

Standard conduct agreement for authorised visitors

Definitions

CCAC	Civil Chaplaincies Advisory Committee
COPP	Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures
CRI	Criminal Record Inquiry
CSNSW	Corrective Services New South Wales
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OIMS	Offender Integrated Management System
SAS	Senior Assistant Superintendent

Table of Contents

1	Policy	4
1.1	Chaplain access to inmates	4
1.2	Taking religious items into or out of a correctional centre	4
1.3	Sacramental wine	5
1.4	Chaplains Assistants	5
1.5	Religious Visitors	5
1.6	Religious festivals	5
2	Procedures	5
2.1	Accreditation	5
2.2	Sacramental Wine	5
2.3	Admitting Chaplains Assistants and Approved Religious Visitors to a Correctional Centre	6
2.4	Other religious organisations	6
2.5	Participation in religious festivals	6
3	Document history	7

1 Policy

A chaplain must be accredited by the Commissioner have access to inmates in line with clause 67 of the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014*.

Approved organisations may run specific programs in the correctional centre like KAIROS and Prison Fellowship under the guidance of the Accredited Chaplain.

Accreditation of chaplains is set out in clause 63 of the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014*. A chaplain must be accredited before being permitted to visit a correctional centre for religious purposes. The CSNSW Chaplaincy Coordinator is responsible for administering this process. People seeking accreditation must contact the Chaplaincy Coordinator for CSNSW.

Chaplains must obtain written approval, in addition to the accreditation, from the Commissioner to have access to visit extreme high security, extreme high risk restricted and national security interest inmates.

Refer to 2.1 for procedures regarding the accreditation process.

1.1 Chaplain access to inmates

A chaplain is allowed to visit the correctional centre they have received accreditation for at all reasonable times, but must not disturb the operational routine or security of the correctional centre.

A visit by a chaplain to an inmate is in addition to an inmate's usual entitlement to visits by family and friends.

An inmate can refuse a visit from an accredited chaplain.

Where no minister of religion of a particular denomination has been accredited for a particular correctional centre, a minister of religion of that denomination may, in consultation with the Chaplaincy Coordinator, and with the approval of the Governor, visit the centre. The minister of religion can have access to inmates of that denomination.

On request by an inmate belonging to a denomination for which no minister of religion has been accredited, the Governor in consultation with the Chaplaincy Coordinator may arrange for the inmate to be visited by a minister of religion of that denomination.

Refer to 2.3 for procedures regarding admitting an approved Chaplain or other religious visitors to a correctional centre.

1.2 Taking religious items into or out of a correctional centre

Accredited chaplains are subject to the same restrictions as any authorised visitor. Only approved items are allowed to be delivered to/from an inmate, from an accredited chaplain. With the approval of the Governor of the correctional centre this may include religious items.

1.3 Sacramental wine

Approved chaplains, may take up to 300 ml of sacramental wine into the correctional centre for a religious service. The wine must be declared to the gate officer on entry to the correctional centre.

Refer to section 2.2 for procedures regarding sacramental wine.

1.4 Chaplains Assistants

Chaplain's assistants are supervised and accountable to the accredited Chaplain. Chaplain's assistants are volunteers to the correctional centre. Chaplain's assistants are approved locally by the Governor of the correctional centre after a *Criminal Record Inquiry (Non Offender) form* has been completed, and the on-line security awareness course has been completed.

After approval, chaplain's assistants are processed as an authorised visitor.

1.5 Religious Visitors

A person who is, or who claims to be, a minister or advisor of religion, who wishes to see individual inmates in a religious capacity will not be admitted into the correctional centre until the Governor has consulted a chaplain accredited to that centre. A religious visitor may be approved by the Governor of the correctional centre under certain circumstances to visit an inmate of that faith.

1.6 Religious festivals

Many religious festivals are marked by preparing and/or eating particular foods, or by the use of particular items. These must be approved by the Commissioner before being made available to inmates during a religious festival.

Refer to 2.5 for procedures regarding religious festivals.

2 Procedures

2.1 Accreditation

A chaplain applying for accreditation must complete and submit a *Criminal Record Inquiry (Non Offender) form*. This will allow a criminal background check to be completed. The accredited chaplain must also complete the online security awareness course before commencement of their duties.

Chaplain accreditation and approval can be revoked at any time. Consequently, the validity of a person's accreditation must be checked on OIMS the each time they attempt to enter a correctional centre. A chaplain, priest or spiritual advisor, must not be allowed to access inmate visits under clause 67 of the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014* if they do not have a current approved accreditation. However, they may visit as a family member or friend as part of a normal contact visit.

2.2 Sacramental Wine

The gate officer must notify the Manager of Security or SAS Security each time an accredited Chaplain wishes to bring sacramental wine to a correctional centre. This wine must be transported in a secure container. The chaplain must take unused sacramental wine out of the correctional centre on departure.

2.3 Admitting Chaplains Assistants and Approved Religious Visitors to a Correctional Centre

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Approve Chaplain's Assistant or other approved Religious Visitor	Governor
2.	On arrival, check the Chaplain's Assistant or approved Religious Visitor has been approved to visit that centre.	OIC visits/Gate
3.	If required, advise the Visits processing staff of the status of the visitor.	Accredited Chaplain of the correctional centre
4.	Check the visitor's identification	OIC visits/Gate
5.	Process the visit	OIC visits/Gate
6.	Record the visit as an authorised visit in OIMS	OIC visits/Gate
7.	Report the accredited visit, and any request to bring in sacramental wine to SAS Security or OIC of the centre	OIC visits/Gate

2.4 Other religious organisations

Representatives of religious organisations wishing to provide services other than chaplaincy services to inmates should be directed to make enquiry through the Director Offender Services and Programs, HDB, 20 Lee St Sydney, 2000 or the correctional centre's Manager Offender Services & Programs or SAS Case Management.

2.5 Participation in religious festivals

To prevent the abuse of the privilege to participate in religious festivals the Governor must ensure the following procedures are completed:

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Ensure appropriate identification is produced by any person stating that they are representing a religious denomination.	OIC visits/Gate
2.	Confirm with the chaplains/ spiritual advisor or their governing bodies that a certain religious festival is forthcoming	Delegated Officer

	Procedure	Responsibility
3.	Search all parcels delivered to the correctional centre by a representative of a religious denomination. If the contents are permitted then give the parcel to the appropriate member of staff for distribution.	Gate / Mail officer

3 Document history

Version	Date	Reason for Amendment
1.0		Initial publication (<i>Replaces section 15.11 of the superseded Operations Procedures Manual</i>)