

Excerpts from the Massachusetts Department of Corrections Volunteer Handbook

1) PURPOSE

To make individuals aware of policies and procedures and to facilitate the successful presentation of their program material. To define security levels and provide some insight into the Department Philosophy, Mission and Goals.

Read and discuss the Department Vision, Mission and Core Values. (Principal has copy on file).

The Massachusetts Department of Correction is the agency of the Commonwealth responsible for the custody of convicted adult offenders who, in the opinion of the Commonwealth's courts, should be separated from society for various periods of time until they are released through PAROLE, PARDON, or EXPIRATION (ending) of their sentence. The responsibility is fourfold:

CUSTODY; SECURITY; CONTROL; TREATMENT

CUSTODY - Our obligation to the courts to provide for and support the individual until his/her release to society.

SECURITY - Our obligation to society to prevent the individual's return to society until s/he is capable of reintegration.

CONTROL - Our obligation to the institutional climate to provide a safe environment for all inmates and staff.

TREATMENT - Our commitment to the reintegration of the individual back into society.

The Massachusetts D.O.C. includes over eighteen institutions and pre-release centers which span six custody levels: Maximum 6, 5, Medium 4, 3, Minimum 2, and Pre-Release 1. In addition, the D.O.C. contracts for beds and/or services from a number of private and county based correctional facilities.

Our purpose here today is to provide you with information that will make your entry and work in our correctional facilities safer and more rewarding. The services provided by part time instructors at our institution are an integral part of the reintegration process.

Entry Procedures/Rules and Regulations

The Massachusetts Department of Correction is charged with not only the safety of the community at large, but also with the safety of the inmates in our care.

In order to maintain the orderly function of the institution and to facilitate the continuation of outside participation, it is necessary that we require certain rules and regulations be followed.

ALL INSTRUCTORS SHALL:

a. Present themselves at the control center for identification and sign in purposes.

Information provided by signing the MGL 127 sheet shall include:

Name in full

Residence

Reason for visit (name of program)

Answer to "Have you been convicted of a felony?"

Valid identification shall include:

Name in full

Photograph

Social Security identification number or drivers license number

Expiration date

Date of birth

A current driver's license or passport will be sufficient. The senior officer in outer control has the right to deny any individual entry who cannot produce sufficient identification or whose purpose for entry may be suspect. You will also be denied entry if you are not properly dressed. (See page 8)

a. Refrain from carrying into the institution unnecessary, unapproved, or illicit items. A locker key will be available for your use. Please deposit all items not essential for your program in the locker. All items brought into the institution will be inspected by the security staff. The introduction of any item (contraband) into the institution without prior written authorization, or removal of same from the facility, is a FELONY and punishable under statute MGL, C. 268 section 26 and 28. You may want to keep items in your car instead.

We recommend that you limit the amount of expensive or loose items that you bring into the program. It is difficult for us to regain these items after their loss. (i.e. expensive jewelry, watches, etc.)

b. You will be subject to a search of your person and belongings upon entry to the facility.
Normal search procedures include:

Metal detector - A11 metal must be removed from the person, step through at normal pace.

Pat search - An officer of the same gender searches your clothes and body.

Inspection by trained canine - under the supervision of a qualified officer.

These are all considered normal procedures. They may be instituted and changed by the shift commander or designee. They require no written permission or consent and you may leave the trap area if you feel uncomfortable. This does not mean you can try to bring something in and if you feel you are going to be caught, say you feel uncomfortable. If you are suspected, you will be allowed to leave the trap, but not the institution.

It is important to remember that security takes priority over all other activities. You need to exercise patience when you are delayed due to security issues. Remarks made in frustration will not help any situation. If you feel you are being singled out unreasonably, you should contact the school principal and explain what is happening.

You may also be requested to submit to a strip search. The following must take place for this procedure:

The shift commander must be informed and present in the Outer Control.

You must sign a written consent form.

It must take place in a private area, but under the supervision of two officers.

At any time, the outer control supervisor determines that you may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, your entry to the institution will be suspended.

You will be subject to inspection upon exit of the institution.

Please realize that a change of staff during your stay in the facility may slow your departure.

Please understand that it may take extra time to identify people being let out of the facility.

Please remember that these procedures are to protect you and the inmates from harm.

When in the facility you should remain in the area of the institution designated for the program or activity. This is for your safety, so that we may expedite the clearing of the institution if necessary. If you must leave the regular area, let another staff member know where you are going and how long you expect to be there, preferably a correction officer in your area.

2) Inmate Disciplinary Procedures and Code of Offenses

Principals should refer to policy number CMR 430 Inmate Disciplinary Proceedings. Copies are available on the DOC Intranet.

3) Ethics and Professionalism (refer to Article 29 Professional Standards in contract)

Interact with both staff and inmates in a professional manner.

Be aware that conversation may be overheard. Things said may be heard and taken out of context.

4) Inmate Management System

The principal should familiarize the instructor with the IMS system and provide them with specific instructions on what they are expected to enter into the system.

5) Inmate Supervision/Communication Skills/Interpersonal Relations

Do not encourage inmates to fantasize about your relationship with them. What could be a normal caring student teacher relationship may be interpreted by an individual with personal problems as something more intimate. It is important to establish limits and to let inmates know in a polite assertive way when they do something inappropriate. There is a certain amount of judgment involved, but inmates should not be touching you, bumping into you, etc.

Appropriate dress is important in establishing a proper student teacher relationship.
Each instructor should provide a course syllabus to the students when they begin.

This syllabus should also include any rules, policies, and procedures you may have. (i.e. class attendance policy, late paper policy, grading system, etc.). This will keep the inmates from saying they did not know later on.

Also refer to CMR 43 1 Observation and Behavior Reports.

If you have a disruptive student in your class, you should inform him that you will discuss the matter further at break. If the individual persists, walk out in the hall and have them follow. Take them to a spot away from their peers, but within hearing distance to an officer or staff person if the individual persists.

Remember that inmates are very reluctant to back down during a confrontation situation that happens in front of their peers.

Any situation of this nature should be reported to the school principal.

- 6) Workplace Violence
Refer to Policy DOC 237 Prevention and Elimination of Workplace Violence.
- 7) Domestic Violence
Refer to Policy DOC 238 Prohibition of Domestic Violence.
- 8) Dress Code

Dress in appropriate attire and adhere to specific dress codes as necessary. Your appearance will have a great effect on the impression that you make on the inmates. First impressions are important and will affect your relationships with the inmates. Some individuals have stereotypes of what they think an instructor should look like. If you don't fit, it will take you a while to gain their respect.

Specific Dress limitations:

Men will not wear blue jeans, shorts, fatigues, sweat suits, sandals, or large belt buckles.
Women will not wear halter tops, shorts, blue jeans, or see through items.
No bib type overalls are allowed in the institution.
No headwear, other than that of a religious nature.
Avoid wearing clothing with "hidden metal"; it will facilitate your processing.

- 9) Operation Rules and Regulations/Suspension from Program

In the event of an emergency, it is important that you follow the "orders" (directions) of security personnel. In the event of a fire, make sure you let the security personnel know you are out of building and then proceed to outer control for directions.
In the event of a disturbance, you may be directed to go to the vehicle trap rather than to outer control.
The vehicle trap is located _____.

In any instance where the safe and controlled function of the institution is thought to be impacted, any staff member may recommend suspension of an instructor. The following are specific violations which will cause suspension:

- a) Use of program as additional visit.
- b) Violation of institutional regulation.

- c) Activities during program which may endanger the continued existence of the program. (i.e. encouraging strikes or other unified action)
- d) Failure to provide services as agreed upon with the administration. Do not dwell on areas not pertinent to what you are supposed to be teaching.
- e) Participating in or encouraging activities that are determined to be a threat to the security of the facility.

Any suspension or limitation of entry of an instructor is to be accompanied by an incident report. Only the superintendent has the right to permanently suspend an instructor.

A WORD OF CAUTION:

PLEASE! Make yourself familiar with these regulations. Although they may seem restrictive, they are written for your safety and to facilitate your quick entry into and exit from the institution.

WHEN IN DOUBT, please feel free to call the principal or the institution for information.

Not everyone is suited to be an instructor in a correctional institution. You should treat the inmates as students and impress upon your students that you are here to teach. You should also make it clear that security is paramount and that you intend to follow all rules and procedures. If you feel uncomfortable teaching in this environment, let the principal know. You have nothing to be ashamed of if you do not want to continue.

10) PART TIME INSTRUCTORS CODE OF ETHICS

In addition to state and federal, laws, and the rules and regulations for volunteers and visitors, the following regulations are to be observed for your safety:

- a) Instructors are not authorized to do personal favors or errands for any inmate. Let the principal know if you have been asked to do personal favors. Refer the inmate to the principal or his/her counselor.
- b) Instructors will not discuss staff, other inmates or prison issues with inmates, staff, or others. This does not mean you cannot have light conversations about issues, but you should not focus on them or provide advice or personal views about them.
- c) Instructors will not converse with inmates about their personal lives. They have no need to know. That information is not pertinent to what you are there for.
- d) Respect the confidentiality of the inmates. They are legally guaranteed their privacy. You can be sued if an inmate finds out you mentioned to someone where he/she is.
- e) Take nothing, including letters, into or out of the facility unless with prior explicit permission.
- f) Leave nothing in the institution for the use of inmates or groups without explicit permission, even if permission was granted to bring it in. Pertinent course materials are fine.
- g) The donation of money to individual inmates is prohibited without authorization.
- h) Instructors are not allowed to handle keys without prior authorization. Authorized keys are to be left on the person and be used inconspicuously. Loss of any key is to be reported immediately to the nearest corrections staff. If you have a need for keys, let the principal know. Keep in mind that a great deal of responsibility goes along with having keys.
- i) The staff of the institution is employed to provide for the safety and well being of the inmates. Your entrance into the facility creates additional hazards. You will be required to cooperate fully with correctional staff while on the grounds of the institution.
- j) You are not allowed to bring food into the institution.
- k) Instructors are not allowed to visit individual inmates without prior written authorization.

11. GUIDELINES FOR HOSTAGES

- Be cautious of heroics. Don't act foolishly.
- Be cooperative and obey hostage takers' demands without appearing either servile or antagonistic.
- Look for a protected place where you could dive or roll if either authorities or inmates attempt to assault your location with force.
- Keep your cool. Attempt to relax by thinking about pleasant scenes or memories. You might try to recollect the plots of books or movies. This will help you remain functional.
- Keep a low profile. Avoid the appearance of observing crimes that rioters commit. Look down or away. Avoid interfering with their discussions or activities.
- Do not make threats against hostage takers or give any indication that you would testify against them. If inmates are attempting to conceal their identity, make no indication that you recognize them.
- Be reluctant to give up your identification or clothes. Loss of these things is demoralizing. Inmates will use them for bargaining. Be especially resistant to exchange clothes with an inmate. This could put you in much greater danger in case of an assault.
- As a result of the stress of the hostage situation, you may have difficulty retaining fluids. Try to drink water and eat even if you are not hungry. It is important to maintain strength.
- Be conscious of your body language as well as your speech. Do not say or do anything to arouse the hostility or suspicions of your captors. Act neutral and be a good listener if your captors want to talk. Be cautious about making suggestions to your captors as you may be held responsible if something you suggest goes wrong.
- Think of persuasive reasons the hostage takers should keep you and the other hostages alive and not harm you. Encourage them to let authorities know of your whereabouts and condition. Suggest possible ways where you or others may benefit your captors in negotiations that would free you.
- If you as hostage end up serving as negotiator between inmates and authorities, messages between the two groups should be conveyed accurately. If there is an assault to rescue and shots are fired, drop quickly to the floor and seek cover. Keep your hands on your head. When appropriate, identify yourself. Do not resist being apprehended until positive identification is made.
- There is a tremendous psychological and physiological relief when you are released. You should be debriefed. This will give you an opportunity to discuss what happened to you and how you feel. Express your feelings freely. Deal openly with your reactions and any problems you may have subsequently. You have nothing to be ashamed of.
- Even though you must appear disinterested while being held hostage, observe all you can. Insure that you are thoroughly debriefed and make your own notes after release. All of these things will help in the subsequent prosecution of the rioters.

12. ANATOMY OF A "SET-UP" How set-ups work and how to avoid a set up

The Team:

- a) Observers - data collectors, watching for signs of ignoring the rules, play favorites or who appears gullible or "weak."

- b) Contracts - conversational data collectors - traffic in gossip, small talk and compile information about an intended (likes and dislikes, habits) casework - but no desire to help.
- c) Runners - specialist for hire on specific tasks - seeking small favors like cigarettes, pencils, etc., not in on whole scam -just part of testing process.
- d) Turners - specialist who gets into the good graces of an employee, seeking a lever to turn the employee against the system. Uses careful probes and psychology in process. Capitalizes on employee gripes against the system, uses praise of the employee - "best cop in the joint" and cements ties to inmate as the only ones who appreciate the employee. Generally gets progressively more familiar and friendly and eventually seeks to have employee "look the other way" permitting some license or liberties which may be portrayed as in the employee's interest. "I'm going to straighten out the nuisance inmate for you."
- e) Point meu - look outs that guard posts to cover illegal transactions between inmates and employees.

Steps to an Inmate Set-Up:

1. Observation (includes body language, action, and conversation)
2. Victim selection - seeking characteristics that make the set up easier. (May capitalize on race, ethnic, or neighborhood ties.)
3. Testing limits (nudging rules, tolerance levels, can you say no?)
4. Develop a support system, build employee's ego, and develop trust.
5. Create empathy or sympathy. Become indispensable.
6. Plea for help - I want to change my life, confidential sharing.
7. Separate victim from other staff - "They're wrong about you, we like you."
8. Offer protection - stage events and offer to take the heat.
9. May use sex and touching to probe weaknesses in this area.
10. Pulling staff away from victim via the rumor clinic.

When the above 10 steps appear favorable the target is ready for the "turn-out" an incontrovertibly illegal act asking for contraband or favors may result. The inmate may:

1. Begin with something apparently harmless but against the rules.
2. Create a level or motivator to control the employee.
3. Present a shopping list - this exposes the set-up.
4. May resort to blowing the whistle or physical harm if necessary - too difficult to turn back.

HOW TO AVOID SET-UPS

- a. Recognize that you are part of the system and show inmates you intend to have compliance with the regulations. In short, behave like a professional.
- b. Avoid sharing personal data about yourself or other employees and be aware of the strong possibility that staff conversations will be overheard and may be used against you or fellow employees.
- c. Know the rules at least as well as the inmate does. There is a legitimate way of responding to most reasonable requests. If a request is not legitimate -write a D-report. If a minor matter, let the inmate know the request was not legitimate.
- d. Know the set-up pattern, and avoid the desired response.
- e. Check out the inmate who is trying to become "too close." Know him as well as he probably knows you.
- f. Be "mellow" rather than "hard" or "soft."
Hard employees - strictly by the book (inmate's suspect hidden weakness)
Soft employees - overly sympathetic, naive, don't take command
Mellow employees - are appropriate with discretion - can be hard or soft
Latter group seldom victims - too time consuming.
- g. Share inmate "confidences" with another employee or supervisor.

- h. If you've committed a minor indiscretion - acknowledge it take the consequences – blow the whistle on yourself. Don't let inmate begin the escalation process to more serious issues.
- i. If you have avoided becoming a victim, make a note for the turners file. This note can be an information chronology or a behavior chronology. If you see another employee getting the treatment - make him or a supervisor aware.
- j. If in a threatening situation - presentation of a shopping list - stall for time - get away - then report.

13. Education Division Reporting and Record Keeping

- a. Monthly attendance roster
- b. Student folder
- c. Competency checklists
- d. Good time credits

Monthly attendance forms are of critical importance to the school principal and the institution. They must be handed in by the 3rd of each month. The forms he used to award good time, to provide statistical information to the central office and the colleges and to help counselors make classification assessments.