

INSTITUTIONAL SECURITY AND THE CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION STAFF

SECURITY DEFINED

Institutional security can be defined as the procedures used to:

- Impede offenders from escaping
- Maintain control of the offenders so that employees and offenders are safe from physical harm and personal manipulation
- Preserve the orderly operation of the institution on a daily basis

IMPORTANCE OF SECURITY

Appropriate security procedures are absolutely essential to the orderly operation of a correctional institution. Without security procedures, the institution is unsafe and daily operations, such as education programs, cannot function suitably.

SECURITY ROLE OF CORRECTIONAL EDUCATORS

Correctional educators play a major role in the security of a correctional institution. Although the primary job of correctional educators is to provide educational services, they also must do their part in helping to maintain a safe and secure environment. Correctional educators can do much to assist with institutional security by following these basic guidelines:

- Assist the security staff by observing and reporting suspicious or unusual activities and by cooperating as the security staff performs their duties.
- Obey all institutional rules and require your students to do likewise. Report all rule violations.
- If a conflict arises between you and a member of the security staff, report it through your chain-of-command and never discuss the matter with or in front of inmates.
- Periodically search your work area for contraband.
- Maintain a close inventory of the supplies and equipment located in your work areas.
- Keep all relationships with offenders strictly professional--no personal relations.
- Learn as much as time will allow about security procedures through participation in training or by reading and asking questions.

MAJOR AREAS OF CONCERN FOR CORRECTIONAL EDUCATORS

The correctional school environment and the supporting character of the school staff present many opportunities for inappropriate behavior. Correctional educators should exercise special caution in the following areas:

- Employee/offender personal relations--Anything other than a professional teacher/student relationship endangers the employees, the students, and the institution.
- Partiality--Treat all offenders equally. Partiality leads to rumors, jealousy, and trouble.
- Contraband--School facilities and equipment present many opportunities for offenders to obtain and conceal unauthorized items such as weapons.
- Trafficking and Trading--The school area is often used by offenders to exchange legal and illegal items because it is more difficult to control than the cell block areas.
- Force, Coercion, Language--Periodically, offenders may become unruly in the school. If so, never use physical force, coercion, or language that is offensive. Insulting language, profanity, or the use of slang terms is not acceptable. Do not argue, humiliate, or publicly scold.
- Sexual Misconduct--The school area, if not properly supervised, may present opportunities for offenders to engage in unacceptable sexual acts.

COMMON SECURITY TERMS

The following terms are used frequently by the experienced education staff and the correctional officers. All of these institutional functions have a direct effect on the daily operation of the education programs.

- Shakedown (Search)--To search the area or the individual offender for contraband. Periodically, strip searches are conducted and the inmates must remove all of their clothing.
- Count--Correctional institutions count the offenders several times per day to insure no one has escaped. In some cases, count may be disruptive to the education program but is a vital function of the institution.
- Classification Committee--A committee process used to identify offender problems and deficiencies and to plan a program of treatment. For example, the "committee" is responsible for the initial identification of educational needs.
- Housing assignment--Where the offender sleeps, cellblock assigned, sometimes referred to as "house."
- Disciplinary Report--A prescribed method of reporting an offender rule violation. Educators may be trained and held responsible for writing "cases."
- Sick Call--Offenders who are sick report to the medical department for sick call. Pill lines are used to distribute medicine.
- Lockup--Term used to describe administrative segregation or area where the offender is held due to rule violation or for protection.
- Lockdown--When all offenders are confined to their cell or housing area, and all normal operations of the facility including school are ceased.