

Staying Connected and Staying Strong



A handbook for families and friends
of those incarcerated in Minnesota
State Correctional Facilities



July 2015



The Council on Crime and Justice and the Minnesota Department of Corrections collaboratively created this handbook as an aide to the families and friends of those incarcerated in Minnesota prisons.



The mission of the Minnesota Department of Corrections is to Reduce recidivism by promoting offender change through proven strategies during safe and secure incarceration and effective community supervision.



The Council on Crime and Justice is an independent non-profit organization that works with the community and the criminal justice system to address the causes and consequences of crime and violence through research, demonstration and advocacy.

Council on Crime and Justice

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Prison Information

Facility Locations, Telephone Numbers and Addresses

Central Office:

Minnesota Department of Corrections

1450 Energy Park Drive
Suite 200
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108-5219
Phone: (651) 361-7200 Fax: (651) 642-0223

Adult Male Correctional Facilities:

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Faribault

1101 Linden Lane
Faribault, Minnesota 55021-0730
Phone: (507) 334-0700 Fax: (507) 334-0730

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Lino Lakes

7525 Fourth Avenue
Lino Lakes, Minnesota 55014
Phone: (651) 717-6100 Fax: (651) 717-6105

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Oak Park Heights

5329 Osgood Avenue North
Stillwater, Minnesota 55082
Phone: (651) 779-1400 Fax: (651) 779-1385

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Rush City

7600 - 525th Street
Rush City, Minnesota 55069
Phone: (320) 358-0400 Fax: (763) 689-7543

Minnesota Correctional Facility-St. Cloud

2305 Minnesota Boulevard SE
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56304
Phone: (320) 240-3000 Fax: (320) 240-3054

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Stillwater

970 Pickett Street North
Bayport, Minnesota 55003
Phone: (651) 779-2700 Fax: (651) 351-3600

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Willow River/ Moose Lake

1000 Lake Shore Drive
Moose Lake, Minnesota 55767
Phone: (218) 485-5000 Fax: (218) 485-5007

Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP)

86032 County Highway 61
Willow River, Minnesota 55795
Phone: (218) 372-3101 Fax: (218) 372-3090

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Togo

62741 County Road 551
Togo, Minnesota 55723
Phone: (218) 376-4411 Fax: (218) 376-4489

Adult Female Correctional Facility:

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Shakopee

1010 West Sixth Avenue
Shakopee, Minnesota 55379
Phone: (952) 496-4440 Fax: (952) 496-4476

Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP)

1010 West Sixth Avenue
Shakopee, Minnesota 55379
Phone: (952) 496-4440 Fax: (952) 496-4476

Adult Male and Juvenile Male Correctional Facility*:

Minnesota Correctional Facility-Red Wing

1079 Highway 292
Red Wing, Minnesota 55066
Phone: (651) 267-3600 Fax: (651) 267-3761

* Adults and juveniles are housed and provided programming separately.

Map of Minnesota Correctional Facilities

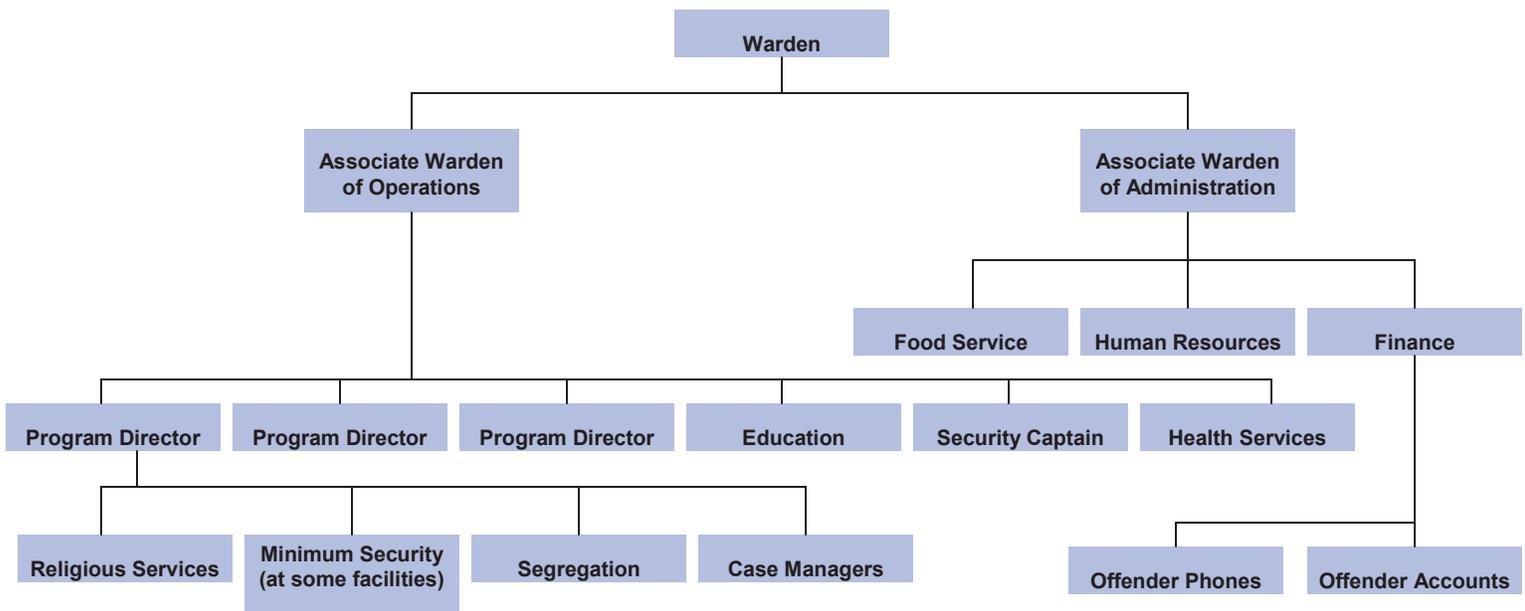


Facility Custody Levels:	
Faribault:	Level 2 Minimum. Level 3 Medium
Lino Lakes:	Level 2 Minimum, Level 3 Medium
Oak Park Heights:	Level 5 Maximum
Rush City:	Level 4 Close
Red Wing:	Adult Minimum, Juvenile Males
St. Cloud:	Level 4 Close
Shakopee:	All Security Levels (females)
Stillwater:	Level 2 Minimum, Level 4 Close
TOGO:	Adult Males
Willow River/Moose Lake:	Level 1 Minimum (WR), Level 3 Medium (ML)

Typical Facility Staff Organization

In each facility there is a chain of command for corrections staff. Here is a chart that shows the typical organization of a correctional facility in Minnesota. As shown, a warden has the highest level of authority in the facility. The chain of

command is designed so that an issue can be brought up to the staff that has the most immediate authority. If the issue is not resolved by that staff member, the issue can then be passed upward until it is resolved.



Prison Lingo

Here are terms and abbreviations you may hear used by corrections staff and your incarcerated loved one.

Canteen -----	facility store
Kite -----	an internal memo form for offenders to communicate with staff
Flag -----	main floor recreation space in living unit
Switch-in/Switch-out -----	mandatory time to enter or exit cells or rooms
Gallery/Galley/Tier -----	in older-style facilities, these are levels on which a cell is located in living unit
Bubble -----	glass-enclosed officer station
Seg/Segregation -----	restricted living unit used to house offenders who have violated major rules
Double bunk -----	two offenders housed in one cell

Abbreviations commonly used in Minnesota corrections:

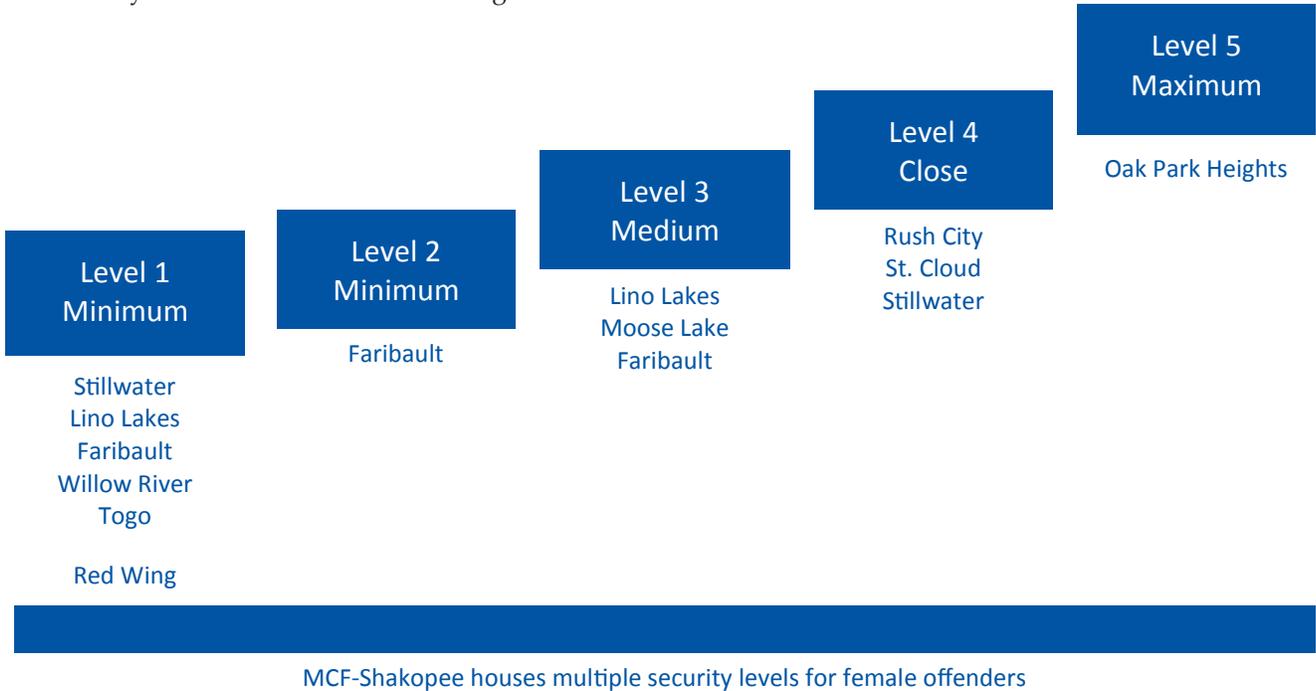
ABE: Adult Basic Education (education programming offered at all DOC facilities)	LOP: Loss of privileges (restrictions resulting from misbehavior in a facility)
AOD: Alcohol and other drugs (reference to treatment programs at several DOC facilities)	MCF: Minnesota Correctional Facility
CD: Chemical dependency	MHU: Mental Health Unit
CIP: Challenge Incarceration Program (located at Minnesota Correctional Facility-Willow River and Minnesota Correctional Facility-Togo)	OID: Offender Identification (ID number assigned to each inmate in DOC facilities)
CM: Case manager	PO: Probation or parole officer
CO: Correctional officer	PSI: Pre-Sentence Investigation (a court-ordered social history report)
DOC: Department of Corrections	PRT: Program Review Team (a team of DOC staff who review and make program recommendations for inmates)
ICWC: Institution/Community Work Crew (a DOC work service program in the community)	SRD: Supervised release date (date an inmate is released to supervision in the community)
IR: Incident Report	
ISR: Intensive Supervised Release (enhanced supervision status for certain released offenders)	

Five-Level Custody Classification System

The Minnesota correctional system has a five-level classification structure ranging from level 1, which is minimum custody, to level 5, which is maximum custody (see chart).

Using the automated, objective system, inmates are assigned a classification score within 30 to 45 days of admission. This risk score determines to what custody level the offender will be assigned.

This illustration shows the DOC's five-level custody classification system (the Shakopee facility for women has all custody levels). The system is based on the availability of beds at a particular level.



What determines the facility where an offender will stay?

The DOC has a five-level classification system. This system is responsible for properly assigning offender facility placement based upon numerous factors. Some of these factors may include length of sentence, offense characteristics, programming directives, criminal history, institutional adjustment, detainees, escape history, and prior incarcerations.

The Minnesota Correctional Facility-St. Cloud (SCL) is the intake facility for all adult males. Shakopee receives all adult females. All male offenders, with the

exception of release violators, are placed at SCL for case planning and orientation. Offenders then may be transferred to another facility based upon classification and department policies and procedures. The department may house any offender at any location based upon the needs of the department. Release violators are received at the Minnesota Correctional Facility-Lino Lakes (LL).

Staying in Touch with Your Incarcerated Loved One



What the child imagines about the incarcerated parent's condition and circumstances is likely to be much worse and more frightening than the reality.

As depressing as a prison visiting room may be, it is far better than what many children imagine.



Children of Prisoners LIBRARY

www.fcnetwork.org

Facts and Issues: CPL 102

Why Maintain Relationships?

By Ann Adalist-Estrin

*Adapted from **How Can I Help?**, published by the Osborne Association, Long Island, New York, used with permission.*

Is prison visiting good for the child of a prisoner? Is it good for the parent in prison? Is it good for the family?

There is no one right answer for every situation or family. But there are many families and children that can benefit from maintaining family ties through the crises of incarceration.

Can contact with a parent in prison benefit children?

Each family situation is different. The potential benefit to children depends greatly on how much support they receive. There are many adults who are important in the lives of children of prisoners. Children can benefit when adults help with letter writing and phone calls. They can also benefit when these adults participate in preparing for and conducting visits.

Potential Benefits to Children

- **Correcting frightening images**

What the child imagines about the incarcerated parent's condition and circumstances is likely to be much worse and more frightening than the reality. As depressing as a prison visiting room may be, it is far better than what many children imagine.

- **Talking face to face**

Parents in prison can talk with their children about their crime and life behind bars in ways that can decrease the child's guilt and feelings of responsibility. Parents in prison can help their children feel worthy and lovable.

- **Learning you are not alone**

Seeing other children and families at prison visits helps families know their situation is not unique. There are people who understand.

- **Preparing for release**

Maintaining contact through visits, phone and mail is also important to prepare the incarcerated parent to be re-united with the family upon release. Without contact, the child may experience the parent's return as an intrusion. The child may be confused when the newly released parent brings a change in parenting style and rules to an established routine in the family. This can be true whether or not the parent will live with the child.

- **Preventing termination of parental rights**

For children placed in foster care because of parental incarceration, visits are important to avoid permanent placement. These visits assure children that their parents have not voluntarily abandoned them to strangers. In the lives of foster children, ongoing visiting creates continuity. Also, courts may be less inclined to terminate the rights of a parent who, while incarcerated, worked to provide parental support.

Children of Prisoners Library

CPL #102: Why Maintain Relationships?

- **Healing grief and loss**

The pain of separation can overwhelm children in foster care and other children of prisoners. Maintaining the relationship between the child and the parent in prison is important to the child's adjustment and healing.

Can contact with family members behind bars benefit families?

Families can benefit from bridging the gap between jail and community. Families are complex systems. The absence of a part of the system has a powerful impact on its functioning. Family members in prison can be a vibrant part of the family if communication exists.

While prison limits the activities that a family member can perform, a prisoner can still fill an important role in family life as mother, father, spouse, partner, or sibling.

But families can only benefit from their relationship with an incarcerated member when and if they stay in communication.

Can contact with families benefit prisoners?

The family is probably this country's most valuable weapon in fighting crime. Prisoners who receive visitors, maintain family ties, and are released to a stable home environment are more likely to succeed in leading productive, crime-free lives.

What the child imagines about the incarcerated parent's condition and circumstances is likely to be much worse and more frightening than the reality. As depressing as a prison visiting room may be, it is far better than what many children imagine.

Prison inmates clearly benefit from family efforts to stay in touch. Families can provide an incentive for prisoners to grow, learn and change. Families can help prisoners stay in touch with what's going on in the world, easing their transition back to society. Some parole authorities see strong family ties as an indicator that a prisoner is better prepared for release.

Many parents in prison can contribute positively to a child's upbringing. Prisoners who have failed as citizens can succeed as parents. Prison can be an opportunity to become a better parent—more caring, concerned and informed.

Prison may not be the best place to improve one's parenting, but it has been done. Around the country, there is growing interest in starting and expanding programs to help prisoners learn the skills of parenting. The Directory of Programs at www.fcnetwork.org lists many examples.

There are several ways children can benefit from visits to their parents in prison.

There are many reasons for families separated by arrest and imprisonment to keep in touch. There are also many reasons that doing so is difficult.

Children of Prisoners Library pamphlets are designed to make the process a little easier. For more ideas on maintaining relationships, see CPL pamphlets 103, 105 and 107 and 201 – 204.



Reprinted with permission from the Family and Corrections Network. The full Children of Prisoners library is available online at: www.fcnetwork.org

Visiting

Visiting in prison can be an important part of keeping your loved one connected with family and friends in a meaningful way during the incarceration. The DOC recognizes that visiting is an avenue to maintain healthy family relationships, but also views personal visits as a privilege for the offenders. During visits, prison staff will be focused on maintaining order and security in the facility. For this reason, it is important to be aware of the visiting rules and to follow them. Knowing what is expected of you and your loved one will allow you to feel as comfortable as possible, focus on your relationships and make the most of each visit! In this section, we will take you through the visiting process so you can be prepared before you go.

Application

To visit, you must be on the offender's approved visiting list. You must first fill out a Visiting Privilege Application Form and send it to the prison where the offender is housed. Applications can be picked up at the facilities, mailed to you by offenders or downloaded from the DOC public website. The facilities do not mail out applications. Make sure to fill out the application completely and honestly. Falsifying an application will result in a ban from all correctional facilities for a period of time. Having a criminal record or being on probation does not automatically keep you from being approved to visit.

Once you have sent in the Visiting Application, it will be reviewed. As part of the review, a criminal history check is done on all adults applying to visit an offender. It is the offender's responsibility to let you know if your application was approved. The facility will not inform the offender as to why an application was denied, that is up to the visitor. Do not attempt to visit an offender before you have received confirmation that you have been approved, since you may not be allowed to visit.

Identification and Registration

When you arrive at the facility, there are a few steps before your visit can begin. First, you need to bring a valid form of identification each time you go for a visit. You must bring in the same form of identification that you listed on your Visiting Application. You will have to register at the registration desk and present your identification. You will not be allowed in if you do not register with the proper identification. These are the only forms of ID that will be allowed 

Security Checks and Contraband

The security checks are used to ensure that contraband is not brought into the facilities. Cell phones, laptops and notepads are contraband. It is illegal to bring the following items onto the grounds of a correctional facility: any weapon, firearm, ammunition, explosive device, tear gas, pepper spray, alcohol or controlled substance, tobacco, lighters, cameras and recording devices. It is also illegal to take letters and other written documents to or from an offender.

For security reasons, you may be required to pass through a metal detector after you register and before you move into the visiting area. The metal detectors can be very sensitive. Metal jewelry, including piercings, and metal on your clothing are likely to set them off. For this reason, please be aware of what you are wearing so you are not held back and can pass through quickly. Remove all metal jewelry and try not to wear clothing with metal pieces, including undergarments with metal wires and clasps. Please bring only necessary items into the facility. If you drove, leave what you don't need in your car. There are lockers in the lobby where you may also leave your belongings. You will not be allowed to bring unnecessary items such as wallets, handbags, cell phones or pagers into the visit room.

Security staff may ask you to allow a pat search where reasonable suspicion exists or if you fail to pass through the metal detector. Again, where reasonable suspicion exists, unclothed body searches or body cavity searches may be conducted by staff of the same sex, but only when authorized by the warden, superintendent or designee. These searches are not meant to be invasive or make your visits uncomfortable; however, the facility staff needs to maintain security and order. The DOC will conduct these searches in order to allow you to safely visit your loved one. You have the right to refuse a pat or body search, but if you do not pass through the metal detector and refuse these searches your visit may be denied or changed to a non-contact visit.

- A valid driver's license from your state of residence
- A valid state photo identification card from your state of residence
- A valid photo military identification card (active duty only)
- A valid passport if you are a resident of a foreign country
- A valid tribal identification card

Visiting

What Should I Wear?

The DOC has a dress code for all visitors, so be sure to wear clothing that is appropriate for a public facility. The dress code is in place to maintain order in the facility and to ensure that contraband is not being passed between an offender and a visitor. Clothing that is too revealing is generally not acceptable, as well as garments such as hats, sunglasses, hooded sweatshirts and jackets. The facility staff has the authority to determine what acceptable visiting attire is, and their decision is final. If your visit is refused because of what you are wearing, you will be able to leave the facility to change and return to the facility without penalty. Please keep the following guidelines in mind when choosing what you wear to a visit to eliminate any problems.

- ◆ All visitors must be fully clothed, including shoes
- ◆ All visitors must wear undergarments. No under-wire bras, please. They create problems with the metal detectors
- ◆ No spandex or lycra, leggings, or other form-fitting clothing (this includes shirts, shorts, skirts, dresses and pants)
- ◆ All shorts, skirts, dresses, or slits in skirts or dresses must be mid-knee or longer when seated
- ◆ No low cut or v-cut, scoop necklines, or other tops which allow cleavage to show
- ◆ No halter tops, crop tops, tank tops, tops with cut-out backs, or tops with large armholes which reveal undergarments
- ◆ No sheer or see-through clothing
- ◆ No electronic devices, such as pagers or cell phones
- ◆ No sunglasses
- ◆ No headwear of any kind
- ◆ No coats, jackets, hooded sweatshirts, or hooded exercise jackets

Types of Visits

What is a contact visit?

A contact visit occurs in the visiting area, and you will be in the same room with the offender. Both you and the offender will be assigned seats in the visiting area. While contact visits allow you to be physically next to your loved one, it has limits. Intimacy is limited to one brief kiss on the cheek, a hug and a handshake at both the beginning and end of each visit. Although this may be a difficult rule to follow, you must stay within the limits of visiting regulations. The DOC regards visits as a privilege, and holds both the offender and visitor responsible for their conduct during a visit. If you do not comply with the rules, your visit may be terminated. Other consequences may follow, such as placement on non-contact status or being banned from visiting in the future. Make the most of your visits while following the prison's rules so you don't jeopardize your visiting privileges!

What is a non-contact visit?

In a non-contact visit, you will visit the offender in a non-contact booth using a telephone or video camera. In this type of visit, you are separated from the offender by a physical barrier. Non-contact visits are limited to one hour because of limited space. Offenders who are placed in the segregation unit are only allowed non-contact visits, and these visits must be scheduled 24 hours in advance. Also, non-contact visits are used when a visitor is unable to pass through the metal detector, or when a visitor or offender has violated a visiting rule and been placed on non-contact status.

What Are the Visiting Rules?

On the next page, you will find a list of violations. The list identifies behaviors that are NOT acceptable when visiting. If you do not follow the visiting rules, there are consequences that could include termination or denial of visit, suspension from DOC visits for a period of time or a permanent ban from all Minnesota correctional facilities. The DOC has a number of rules for visiting, but they are not unreasonable. As long as you are aware of what is expected of you, you can focus on your visit instead of the rules.

Restrictions for Visitors

Minnesota Department of Corrections Restrictions for Visitors

Engaging in any of the behaviors described below will cause you to be banned from visiting for an extended period, or possibly permanently, depending on the seriousness of the incident.

- Involvement in smuggling drugs, alcohol, other intoxicants, tobacco, weapons, simulated weapons, ammunition, or escape paraphernalia to an offender. Involvement in escape or attempted escape. Applies throughout the facility.
- Smuggling or attempting to smuggle contraband other than listed above. Applies throughout the facility.
- Disturbances: Lack of control of children on facility grounds.
- Refusing an authorized search in the visiting area.
- Abuse (verbal or written) of staff, offenders, visitors, or others.
- Threats (verbal or written) to offenders, visitors, or staff.
- Physical or attempted assault of staff, offenders or visitors.
- Inappropriate sexual behavior and/or physical contact in the visiting area.
- Masturbation, mutual masturbation, oral sex or sexual intercourse in the visiting area.
- Falsification of information to obtain visiting privilege.
- Visiting or attempting to visit with a false I.D. or under a false identity.
- Conduct or other indications that the visitor is under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or other intoxicants.
- Visitor misconduct on facility grounds.
- Unauthorized verbal or non-verbal communication through perimeter or other barriers.

How Do I Visit with Children?

Bringing a child into a facility to visit can be a very meaningful way for the child to connect with an incarcerated parent and continue a relationship. To prevent any unexpected delays and make the visit a positive experience for the child, make sure you and the child know what to expect. Each prison in Minnesota has different rules about visiting with children that you should be aware of before you bring a child in for a visit.

There are some universal guidelines for guardians and parents bringing children to visit in any facility:

- In all DOC facilities, a guardian can bring in a see-through bottle of formula, diapers that are not packaged, wet wipes in a see-through bag, and a blanket.
- Anyone under 18 years of age must be escorted by their parent or legal guardian.
- Prior to visiting, minors must be added to the offenders list. This is done by including a copy of the minors official birth certificate with the application.
- If children are escorted by an adult other than their parent or legal guardian, a signed and notarized authorization by the child's parent (s) must accompany the birth certificate.

While these rules apply to all DOC facilities, there may be additional restrictions or options for children. Some facilities may have a play room for children or allow you to bring in some paper and crayons for drawing, while others may not. It's a good idea to call the visiting office before you visit with a child so you know what is allowed at the facility you will be visiting. You can find the telephone numbers listed under each facility on the following pages in the "What are the visiting schedules?" section.

Finally, before you take the child to see a parent, prepare the child for a prison visit. If possible, make one or two visits alone before the child or children visit so you can tell them what the prison looks like, where the visits take place, how long the visit will be, what the visitation rules are, etc. Alternately, a virtual tour of each prison is available on the DOC web site (www.doc.state.mn.us).



What are the Visiting Schedules?

Visiting in DOC facilities must be conducted in as accommodating a manner as possible while maintaining order, the safety of persons, the security of the facilities, and the requirements of correctional activities and operations. It is a privilege for offenders to have personal visits while confined in DOC facilities. Offenders are aware that failure to comply with the established regulations and policies by either their visitors and/or the offender may result in warning, termination of visits, placement on non-contact visiting status, suspension or revocation of the visiting privilege, including permanent loss of visits.

The DOC Visiting Program is intended as an avenue to develop and maintain healthy family and community relationships. The DOC web site provides general information to answer the most asked questions. Visiting practices may vary at correctional facilities based on the security needs of the facilities and their physical structures.

All visiting information is available on the DOC website, which is continually updated.

<http://www.doc.state.mn.us/offenders/visiting.htm>

The information in this web site is provided for your use and convenience. Please pay particular attention to the visiting regulations so that your visits occur with as little inconvenience as possible. If you have specific questions, telephone numbers are provided. We hope you will assist us in making your visiting experience a pleasant one for you, your family, friends, and the person you are visiting.

Each facility has a different visiting schedule. Make sure that you plan your visits during visiting hours. If you need to schedule your visit ahead of time, make sure you have made the necessary arrangements.

There is no visiting on the following holidays in any of the DOC facilities:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- Memorial Day
- July 4 (Independence Day)
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving and the following Friday
- Christmas Day

Transportation: Transportation is available through Metro Transit bus service (612-373-3333).

Mail

Communicating with your loved one through mail can be a great way to stay connected, and it is less expensive than visiting or phone calls. Beyond writing letters, mailings can also be a useful way to share important family and friend matters. While your loved one is incarcerated, he or she will be less involved with your family's daily routines and decisions, but mail correspondence can allow you to share some of this information. However, when sending mail into a correctional facility you should be aware of the guidelines. Certain things cannot be mailed into prisons. Here we'll tell you what you can send and how you should send it so you can avoid any problems with delivery.

What is the mail review?

All mail that is sent to an offender will be opened and reviewed by staff to check for items that are not allowed. Staff will check for certain items and also the content of writing. The only exception to this rule is legal and special mail that is legally confidential. When you send mail to your loved one, it will be opened as a security measure.

What is acceptable mail?

Here is a list of what you CAN mail to an inmate:

Paper with words/drawings; signed greeting cards, postcards and unmusical commercial greeting cards and postcards. Photographs (Polaroid photos must have the backing removed); subscribed periodicals (no single issues) and published materials shipped from the publisher; and clippings or photocopies of published materials that meet criteria.

What is not allowed in mailings?

Here is a list of what you CANNOT mail to an offender. If you send mail including any of these items or try to send a letter discussing prohibited topics, it will be denied by the mail review staff and your loved

one will not receive it.

You may not send cash; coded material; photos of DOC staff; sexually explicit materials; personal photos displaying nudity; and/or unsanitary items such as hair, saliva, body secretions and perfumed letters.

You may not write about the following things: criminal activity; security threats; and advocating inferiority of an ethnic, racial or religious group.

What is special and legal mail?

Special and legal mail is the only mail that does not get inspected because it is legally confidential. Legal mail includes correspondence to or from courts, court staff and attorneys. Special mail includes correspondence to or from state and federal elected/appointed/regulatory agencies and officials.

Special and legal mail may be sent or received in a sealed envelope. Incoming special/legal mail will be opened only in the presence of the offender. Staff may check the contents to ensure that the mail is legal or official in nature. Legal mail is logged.

How should I address mail to an inmate?

You must include the offender's full commit name and Offender Identification number (OID), as well as the proper facility address. Here's an example of how to address an envelope being sent to an offender at the Minnesota Correctional Facility-St. Cloud. Be sure to send mail to the location where your loved one is being held. You can find the address to each facility listed under "Prison Information" at the beginning of this handbook.

John Doe
OID# 000000
Minnesota Correctional Facility-St. Cloud
2305 Minnesota Boulevard SE
St. Cloud, MN 56304

Sending Email, Money and Telephone Calls

How do I send email to an offender?

Offenders can be emailed through the use of **JPay**. To send an email to an offender, please visit www.jpayers.com to create an account and send letters electronically.

Messages are printed and given to the offenders after passing security checks. Before you send an email you will need the offender's ID number. Offenders are only able to reply to your electronic message through the use of regular mail. The cost is 40 cents per message.

What if I want to send money to an offender?

If you want to send money to your loved one, you need to send it to the right location and in the right form (not cash!). If your mailing is sent to the wrong address or not filled out properly, it will be returned to you.

How do I send money?

Funds must be sent to offenders via **JPay**, an electronic funds transfer. Information on **JPay** and how to set-up an account can be found on the DOC website, under 'How to Send Money'.

Money can also be sent in the form of a money order or cashier's check made payable to **JPay** and sent to the following address: PO Box 246450, Pembroke Pines, FL 33024. Please include the offenders name, OID and facility. Cash is accepted through **MoneyGram** at locations including CVS and Walmart.

NO money orders or cashier's checks will be accepted at the facility address.

Offenders are not allowed to receive money from another incarcerated offender's family, visitor, or anyone living at another offender's correspondent address. Funds sent in violation of DOC policy will be placed in the offenders HOLD account until his/her release. Funds placed in HOLD are subject to deductions.

Note: Per policy, the department collects 10 percent of all money received by offenders to go towards cost of confinement, and, if applicable, a restitution surcharge will be deducted from funds received.

What address do I use to send money to an offender?

For offenders at any DOC facility, all payments, including government and business checks, tribal distributions, vendor refunds and payments enclosed with legal and special mail, must be addressed to the offender's facility address. No money orders or cashier's checks will be accepted at the facility address.

Offender name, OID number

MCF-(facility name where offender is housed)

Street Address

City, MN Zip Code

What if I want to speak with an offender on the phone?

While your loved one is incarcerated, communicating over the telephone is another option you have in addition to mailings and visiting. Communication with friends and family is important to an offender, and phone calls can provide that contact when visiting is not possible. While regular telephone calls may be more convenient than visiting and writing letters, make sure you are aware of the cost. Phone calls can get expensive, and you don't want to go beyond what you can afford!

Do phone calls from prison cost money?

Yes. Offenders can place collect phone calls or buy a phone card. A collect phone call will charge the recipient of the phone call, and the phone card is pre-paid by the offender.

Can I call an offender?

No. An offender can only make calls during specific times that are allotted for them to do so. If you call a facility, you will not be allowed to speak with your loved one! If there is an emergency, you can leave a message for the offender. (See Emergency Contacts below.)

Are phone conversations monitored?

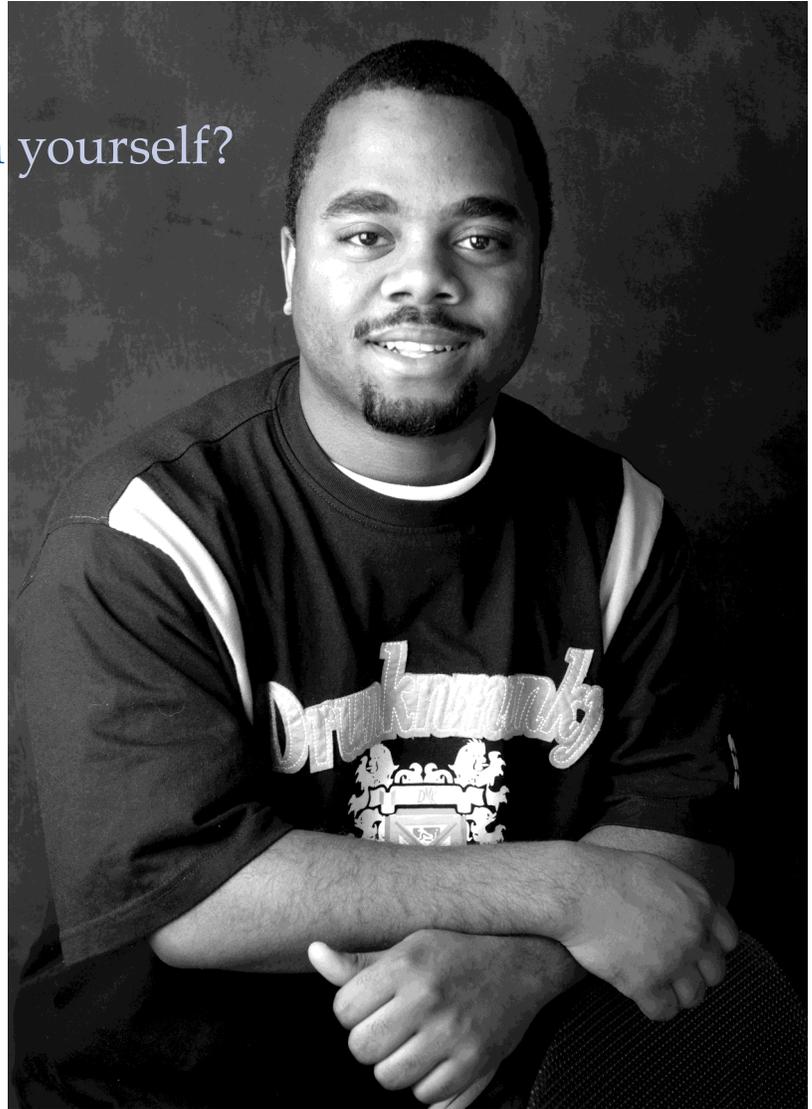
Yes, they may be listened to or recorded by staff. As with visits and mail, communication that offenders have with individuals outside of the prison is monitored for security purposes. Three-way phone calls or forwarding a call when on the phone with an offender are not allowed.

In case of emergency contacts

If there is a death or serious illness or injury in an offender's family, you can call the facility where the offender is housed and leave a message. The message will be relayed to the inmate. Staff will first check to see if the message is true and, once they have verified it, give the message to the offender.

Money Saver Tip: Local collect calls are less expensive than long distance collect calls. (If the prison has an area code of 320, the call will be less expensive to another number that also has an area code of 320 than to a number with a different area code.) If you will be communicating frequently over the phone with an inmate who calls you collect, you can get a cell phone with the area code of the prison to cut down on costs.

Why focus on yourself?



Having my father in prison changed my life by causing me to be by myself more. And it made me get involved; I try to do things for other people rather than myself. It's almost like A.D.D.: I have to do something, **I have to try to achieve more**. Why am I doing this all? You feel like there's a deeper problem or issue that you gotta solve, but you can't figure out what it is. It's hard to get at the roots of it. Maybe one day I'll find out the meaning of all this, why he got locked up and stuff like that. One day it's gonna unravel and I'll find out why. And hopefully **make my life better**.



Children of Prisoners LIBRARY

www.fcnetwork.org

For Caregivers: CPL 204

Tips for Caregivers **—from Caregivers**

By Ann Adalist-Estrin

- **Talk about feelings with children**

“You look sad. Are you missing Daddy?” or, “When you get that angry at little things I wonder if you are also angry at your Mom for going to jail?” or, “I wish your dad could have seen you play ball tonight and I bet you do too.”

- **Be as honest with children as possible**

“Mommy won’t be coming home for a very long time. It will be 4 more birthdays (or 2 more summer vacations).”

- **Remember to keep your feelings separate from each child’s**

“We feel different things about this, I am angry at your dad and don’t really want to see him but I want you to go because he’s your Dad and you love him.”

- **Set up family discussion times**

Tuesday night is the family “meeting.” Or Wednesday night is “Let’s wait for dad’s call tonight and talk about how we are all doing with this.” Or Saturday morning’s breakfast is a “prison and jail talk is off limits” time—a moment of relief to those who need a break from the subject.

- **Talk about the family’s choice to tell others or keep it a secret from certain people.**

Let children know why the choice is necessary. Provide plenty of opportunity to talk about it at home.

- **Encourage children to write or talk to their parents whenever possible.**

For ideas on this, see CPL 106, Jail and Prison Procedures and

CPL 107, Communication Tips.

- **Help children to start a picture or story that their parent adds onto, then the child adds on, and so on and so on by mailing it back and forth.**

- **Read with your children.**

Encourage your library to include books and pamphlets about children of prisoners in its collection.

- **Get support and help for the children and yourself...through friends, clergy, or counselors.**

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Coping with Incarceration

This section will focus on you and your family. Your life, as well as the lives of other family members and friends, has been affected by incarceration. It's important to remember that both you and the person incarcerated have to adjust to changes. While you may be concerned about taking care of the inmate, it is very important that you also take care of yourself and your family.

Much of society's concern is focused on the victim of the crime or on the offender. Yet your life has also been affected. If you have a family member who is incarcerated, you may feel guilty or others may make you feel like you've done something wrong. Many families feel stigmatized because another family member has been incarcerated. While this is unfair, it is common, and you may want help to deal with these issues. In this section on taking care of yourself and your family, we will offer some advice on ways to deal with having a loved one incarcerated.

Relationships and Prison

Being a parent, spouse, child or close friend to someone in prison is often hard. Having a close relationship with an offender in prison causes stress and hardships. You may feel that it is up to you to sustain and nurture the relationship. At times, you may feel that you are "doing time" just like the offender. Below, suggestions are offered to help keep yourself and the relationship healthy.

Dating an Offender

If you are dating someone in prison, it may be difficult to really get to know the inmate. You may be the offender's only connection to the outside world. The offender may lean on you more so than if you were dating on the outside. Therefore, your letters, visits, and telephone communications become very important to the offender. The offender may also depend heavily on you to send gifts, money or to do things you don't really want or can't afford to do.

Try not to let the offender put pressure on you. Don't focus only on the needs of the offender and don't feel pressured into taking care of only his or her needs. Be sure to find time for yourself and keep a proper focus on your own needs and feelings. When you communicate with each other, try to talk about your past and your goals and hopes for the future. A more balanced relationship will help you decide if you want to maintain

it after the offender is released.

Married to an Offender

Having your spouse incarcerated may put a lot of strain on your marriage. You have to deal with both the physical and emotional separation, since you will not be able to communicate with each other in a relaxed, natural setting. In order to stay committed to each other, you will need to find ways to express your love and concern for your spouse. You will also need to find ways to help your marriage continue to grow.

Here are some suggestions:

- Write letters daily and share honest details about your lives. Tell your spouse about your schedule and events you have planned.
- Visit often, weekly if possible.
- Talk on the telephone, as your budget will permit.
- Bring some of your friends to visit with your spouse (refer to Visiting Section).
- Share a common interest, such as reading the same book or watching the same television show.
- Share your budgeting concerns with each other.
- Make decisions about finances, children, housing, and jobs together.

Your spouse may feel a lack of control in your relationship. The offender may be angry or irritable when you are not around when he or she telephones you or when you miss a visit. Your spouse may also get upset if you have to make an emergency decision about an important matter without his or her input. Some offenders are also uncomfortable having to depend upon others. These changes are normal, and your spouse's fears are understandable. In these situations, talk about your feelings and concerns with each other openly and honestly. You will also have to learn to say 'no' when you cannot do something for your spouse. Overall, you need to take care of yourself even if your spouse feels threatened at times.

Coping with Incarceration

Parent of an Offender

Having a child who is incarcerated can place a heavy burden on you. You may have many mixed feelings. You may feel guilty and think that you should have done more for your child. You may feel that you have done something wrong which lead to your child being incarcerated. These feelings of guilt are shared by many parents. It is common for parents to become consumed or obsessed with their incarcerated child, such as thinking that you need to “make up for” what you think you did not do “right” in the past. You might need to remind yourself that every person is responsible for his or her own actions and that you are not responsible for your child’s incarceration. To become obsessed with your child will only increase your stress; it will not free your son or daughter.

You may also feel angry with your child because of what he or she did. Your child might have brought you embarrassment or shame from people in your community. You may also be suffering physical and emotional hardships or have feelings of resentment and even hate. These feelings you experience may also be mixed with feelings of love. Anger mixed with love is common. Don’t try to mask these feelings, because they are normal. Talk about your feelings with family members or friends with whom you feel comfortable. This will help you find a way to move toward accepting the fact that one of your children is in a correctional facility.

Eventually, you may come to terms with these mixed feelings. However, it is important for your own health and well-being to continue to live a full life on your own. Get involved in activities that you enjoy. Consider a new activity or hobby. Concentrate on your spouse or other children; taking an interest in them will help you adjust to the new situation.

Children of an Offender

A child can experience many different emotions when a parent is in prison. Children often become confused and fearful, thinking, “What is going to happen now that Mom or Dad is gone?” They may feel that someone close has been lost and may grieve this loss. A child may also feel abandoned and lonely when a parent goes to a facility. You and your family may be busy trying to make ends meet and supporting the inmate in a facility and, as a result, not have as much time for your child as you did before all this happened. A child may feel like he or she is being shuffled around in the process. Children who

have a parent incarcerated need reassurance that both the absent parent and the caregiver parent still care.

What should I expect from children who have an incarcerated parent?

Children may feel guilty about having a parent in prison. Young children may not understand that it was Mom or Dad who did something wrong. They may think it is their fault and have thoughts such as, “If only I had been a better child, this would have never happened.” If the child was home when the parent was arrested, he or she may feel upset by the sight of a parent being handcuffed or may feel guilty if he or she opened the door for the police to come into the home.

At first, a child may also feel anger or fear toward Mom or Dad who is in a facility, and may not want anything to do with the parent. Children often feel the offender caused him or her a lot of pain and may not want to deal with the situation. If substance abuse or domestic violence occurred in the home before the arrest, a child may be fearful of having a parent who might be released to re-abuse him or her.

Shame may affect a child of an inmate. Due to the social stigma of having a parent in prison, a child may be embarrassed because he or she needs time off for visiting a parent in a facility. Other children may bully and tease him or her. Studies show that some children will withdraw and may even become depressed while others become aggressive, anxious and hostile. Having so many strong feelings can make the child feel sad or upset. Therefore, it is important for you to try to encourage your child to talk about his or her feelings.

If a child does not talk about the feelings, he or she may act them out; sometimes in destructive ways. The child may do poorly in school, wet the bed, get into fights, cry a lot for no reason, steal things, or have bad dreams. You may notice some of these or other new behaviors in your child. These changes in behavior are cries for help, and they need to be heard.

How can I help children cope?

To help your child deal with all of these feelings, it is important to tell the truth about what is happening. It is more frightening for your child not to know the truth. If you tell a child that Mom or Dad is away at school or in the Army, it can be harmful because your child will wonder why Mom or Dad never comes home to visit. When you tell your child a story to protect him or her from the truth, you have to keep making up more stories

How Can I Help Children Cope?

to answer further questions. By telling your child the truth, you can help him or her build trust in you. Therefore, talk with your child and answer questions honestly. One way to share what is happening with your child is to say something like, “Daddy or Mommy did something wrong; he/she broke the law. He/she is not a bad person just because they did a bad thing. He/she loves you and does not like to be away from you, but he/she was sent to a facility to be punished.” From here, you can talk about what life is like without Dad or Mom being home and talk about visiting at the facility. You can also talk with your child about what to say to kids at school or folks in your neighborhood. When your child sees that you can handle the new situation, your child will feel more confident about being able to handle the situation as well. Keep in mind that every child is different and will react in different ways to the truth about a parent being in a facility. Help your child draw his or her own conclusions about the situation. Overall, you and your child will have a better relationship and feel good about each other because you are dealing honestly with the new situation together.

The first talk with your child or children will be one of many. Your child will continue to have questions and feelings about a parent being locked up. You may also notice that your child is competing for the time and attention from the Mom or Dad who is incarcerated. This may happen when your child is feeling insecure. Your child needs your attention, love, understanding, and honesty more than ever now. If you feel too much stress on your own to help your child deal with the situation, talk with someone about the problem. You may be able to talk with a school guidance counselor, a mental health professional or a ministry group. You may also be able to find a mentor for your child. In some communities, you may also be able to connect with other families who have loved ones incarcerated. These people can help support you and your child because they understand your situation as no one else can.

Overall, encourage your child to stay in touch with a parent in prison. Suggest that he or she write letters and send holiday or birthday cards. You can also suggest sending school work, report cards, photos of themselves, or pictures he or she has drawn.

Also, encourage and support your child to do things that help him or her feel better. When children explore outside interests and special talents such as sports, painting, dancing, biking, or reading, it helps build up their confidence so that they can feel good about

themselves. Try to make time to do some of these activities with your child. By helping to build your child’s confidence, you will find that you are building your own confidence at the same time. You can be a family, even with one parent in a facility! Your child

Tips to help children cope:

Allow children to express their feelings and respond to them. It is important not to tell children what they should be feeling, but encourage them to talk about it. It is also important to remember that a child may not want to talk about it right away. Give children space to explore their feelings and come to you when they are ready to talk.

Listen to children’s words and actions. If a child says they miss mom or dad, that’s a good time to begin talking about his or her feelings. Also, if you see a change in behavior during special occasions such as Father’s Day or Mother’s Day, that is an opening for conversation. Be prepared for holidays and other special days like these. Think of creative ways to spend the day, such as making a holiday card and sending it to Mom or Dad.

Talk to the child about the parent’s absence. For example, some children may feel better knowing that their parent is no longer in danger because they are not on the streets. Answer their questions honestly.

Help a child express his or her feelings in appropriate ways. Words or tears are a better way of expressing feelings than fighting, getting into trouble with the law, or using alcohol or drugs.

Support the child who wants to write his or her parent in prison, send pictures or greeting cards, etc.

If you are angry with your partner, you may want to punish him or her by withholding visitation. This is harmful to your child. Studies have shown that children who stay in touch with an incarcerated parent tend to adjust much better.

Outside support can often help a child and family. A favorite aunt or uncle, a teacher, social worker, church, a ministry group in your area, or community programs such as the Big Brother/Big Sister Program can help support you and the child or children during this difficult time.

When the time comes, help the child prepare for his or her parent’s release. This can also be especially important if a child will not be reunited with the parent.

Family Finances

needs to know this.

During an incarceration, family members on the outside and the family member inside the facility become very concerned about money issues. Having a family member in prison can cause a real strain on your budget. You may have lost a paycheck or a child's caretaker. You probably will have to come up with money for a mortgage payment or rent, as well as money for food, clothing, medication, and other living expenses.

If the offender is incarcerated far from your home, you will also have the expense of long-distance collect calls, travel, food, and other costs when visiting. In the offender's desire to see you and phone you, he or she may forget how tough it is to budget these expenses. Your loved one may want you to buy things you just cannot afford. Life in a facility can be boring if the offender is not involved with programming. He or she may want you to buy a television or send money to buy things at the canteen. This can leave you torn between showing that you care by sending money and paying bills that have to be paid.

Even if the offender understands that you cannot afford to send much money, money can still be an issue. Your loved one may have many different feelings about finances and may feel guilty or worthless since he or she is not contributing to the family budget. The longer your loved one is in a facility, the more difficult it is for the offender to understand how much things cost and how difficult it can be to survive on the outside.

The offender may also become angry if you apply for temporary financial or medical assistance from a social service agency, such as welfare or Medical Assistance. However, you need to consider your family's health needs and need for a stable home and good nutrition. There are a number of programs designed to provide short-term assistance. If you have a child, you can have a surprisingly high income and still receive some types of assistance. Minnesota has many special programs to help maintain families through crises. Contact your local County Assistance Office for information.

Financial issues can be a problem for any family. One of the best ways to share financial responsibilities is for you to go over the family budget with the offender. Make sure you work on the budget together and talk with each other about financial concerns. Be honest about your financial situation and listen to the offender's concerns. Figuring out your budget can help you plan and also help answer

all the inmate's questions about finances. Communicating these issues can help limit stress and frustrations so you can focus on yourself, your family and your relationship.

Other Financial Considerations

Your family may have other financial burdens when a member is incarcerated. Below, we will suggest ways to handle these possible issues.

Child support

If an offender who is sent to prison is paying child support, you may be able to stop or reduce payments until he or she is released. Here are the steps the offender must take:

- Send a written request to the child support agency to review your support order. The request should state why you want a review.
- The child support agency will look at the information you provided to see if, based on the obligor's (inmate's) current income, changing the existing order would result in a significant change in circumstances as defined in Minnesota statute. If the order meets the standard for agency review, the child support office will send you a packet of forms and instructions.
- Follow the instructions carefully. You must complete the forms and return them to the child support agency within 20 days.
- If the order does not meet the standard for agency review, the child support office will send you a letter telling you that the child support agency will not file a motion for modification of your child support order and, if you still want a review, you can file a motion asking the court to modify your support.

Health insurance

As well as a contributing paycheck, your family may also have lost health insurance when a member was sent to prison, or maybe you didn't previously have health insurance. Medical care is important for you and also your children! If you do not have health insurance, you may be able to use one of the Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP). These insurance programs are for low-income families and individuals and are made available through the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

For more information or to apply for a Minnesota Health Care Program, you should call the state Minnesota Care office at (651) 297-3862 or (800) 657-3672. When you call, you will receive more information and can have an application sent to you.

Resources and Programs

Having an incarcerated loved one can cause stress and hardships that may seem too difficult to handle. While it may often feel like you are alone and have no support, there are community and social service organizations that can help you and your family manage your situation and find strength. You can find resources to assist you with things such as food, clothing, child care necessities, housing, employment, education, counseling and mentorship programs. Here are a few ways to locate these resources in your community:

- Call United Way's First Call for Help. From a land line dial 211 or call 1-800-543-7709
- Call your County's Social or Human Services office
- Visit these websites that list resources across the state of Minnesota: www.minnesotahelp.info and www.beehive.org

Child Mentorship Programs for Children of Incarcerated Parents

Organizations like Big Brothers, Big Sisters (BBBS) and Bridge Builders for Kids offer special programs and mentors for children who have an incarcerated parent. When children are separated from a parent, they can greatly benefit from having a positive role model in their lives as an additional support. Like you, children who have an incarcerated parent need outside support. These programs can offer children a supportive relationship that can encourage them and build their confidence, while coping with having an incarcerated parent.

You can contact these programs and get more information:

BBBS: (651) 789-2400 or www.bigstwincities.org

Bridge Builders for Kids: (651) 251-3837 or www.bridgebuilders.cc

Kinship of Greater Minneapolis: (612) 588-4655 or www.kinship.org

Central Minnesota Foster Grandparents Program: (320) 299-4588 or www.ccstcloud.org

Family Strengthening Project

The Family Strengthening Project (FSP) is a demonstration project of the Council on Crime and Justice in Minneapolis.

It is a holistic program for incarcerated fathers and the families and children impacted by incarceration. FSP promotes responsible fatherhood by strengthening marriages and relationships, fostering healthy connections with children and increasing the family's economic self-sufficiency. FSP serves not only the incarcerated individual but the entire family and works together with the family to recognize strengths, needs and ways to reduce the impact of incarceration. The wrap-around services provided for the family include case advocacy and support, educational classes in financial literacy, marriage/relationships and parenting as well as individual counseling with a focus on family

FSP project goals:

- Intervening early with a family experiencing incarceration
- Strengthening commitment to marriage/relationships by building communication, parenting skills and conflict resolution
- Improving both parents' ability to support and foster healthy connections with their children through incarceration and upon release
- Increasing the family's economic self-sufficiency to provide a stable base for continued growth

FSP program eligibility requirements:

- Both the incarcerated father and the partner in the community must volunteer to participate in the project
- The partners must be married or in a committed relationship
- One or both of the partners must be a parent (child is either biological, step-child, foster child or adopted)
- No legal barriers to contact with the family (e.g., Orders for Protection, Harassment Restraining Orders and/or No-Contact Orders)
- From the seven-county Twin Cities metro area (counties of Hennepin, Ramsey, Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott and Washington)
- Prison release date expected by the end of 2010 or earlier

When the Offender Comes Home

relationships. The FSP works to promote responsible fatherhood and strengthen families.

Your family and incarcerated loved one may be anxiously waiting the time he or she returns home. Expectations that everything will be perfect are common with friends and family members. However, these expectations may not be realistic.

Even if the offender had a relatively short sentence, both of you will have experienced many changes since you were last together. The person who remained outside had to become the sole head of the household. Your primary duties may have changed or expanded since a member of your family was absent. If you managed the home before the offender's arrest, you may have had to become more independent or start working outside the home. You might have had to use daycare for your children for the first time. If you were used to working before the incarceration, it may have been a change when you had to handle child and home care duties.

For the offender, the facility experience was a radical change from his or her previous life. Even the most humane facility environment is stressful. The prison environment is made up of very strict rules, and the offender must be aware of his or her behavior.

On the positive side, the offender may have received treatment and education that addresses problems that could have limited his or her ability to get along in society. For example, if the offender has a substance abuse problem when arrested, he/she may have received treatment. Education is available for most inmates. The offender may have grown both emotionally and intellectually as a result of attending these facility programs. Either way, the offender has had many experiences that could change the way he or she acts in certain situations.

If you have children, they have probably grown up in a one-parent household. He or she may not remember

a time when both parents lived together. Your child may not be used to sharing you with someone else or obeying someone else.

With all of these changes, it may take a while after the release before your family settles back into a comfortable routine. Meeting the obligations of supervised release, getting the family financially stable and dealing with mandatory treatment can be overwhelming. You may feel as though you are starting all over again. If you have difficulty in dealing with some of these issues, you might want to seek some support or counseling to help you through this period.

Although counseling can be expensive, many agencies have sliding fees to make help available for anyone who needs it. Services that have sliding fees charge based on the ability to pay. If you go to an agency that has sliding fees, you may have to document your income to receive the discounted fees, but you may receive reduced fees or even free services.

Some agencies have transition groups that are specifically designed to help you and the offender adjust. These are run by professionals and can assist a former offender in his or her adjustment to life outside of the criminal justice system. Support is offered in order to help a releasee avoid returning to the criminal justice system and to develop other skills necessary to "make it" in society. The groups also provide support for the family or an offender in order to help them adjust to the difficulties that result from an offender's return to society. If no groups are available in your area, you may want to speak with a counselor or a social worker for individual counseling. It may help to remember that starting over can mean a fresh start as well. You have the strength to take this opportunity to make a better life for you and your family.

Thank You



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Council on Crime and Justice



Minnesota Department of Corrections