

Correctional Services

# Custody Handbook

Adult Correctional Facilities



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# 1 Pre-Ambles



The Custody Handbook is written for you, the person in custody or preparing for custody, to help you understand how the correctional facility operates. It is available online and is a great resource for your family and friends to help them understand what you will be experiencing and processes that may affect them.

[https://novascotia.ca/just/Corrections/adult\\_facilities.asp](https://novascotia.ca/just/Corrections/adult_facilities.asp)

# 2 Introduction

This handbook outlines what to expect and what is expected, or required, of an adult in custody in a Nova Scotia correctional facility. The information in this handbook will help you become familiar with what is available to you in a facility and ways in which you can receive help and stay in contact with your family and friends.

If you have difficulty reading or understanding the handbook, facility staff will help you.

Copies of the handbook are available on a facility tablet or ask a staff member to provide you with one.

# 3 Correctional Services Act and Regulations



The *Correctional Services Act* (Act) and the *Correctional Services Regulations* (Regulations) set down the rules about how correctional services are provided in Nova Scotia. While you are in custody in a facility in Nova Scotia, you are also expected to follow the rules of the Act and Regulations. Many of the rules of the facility come from the Act and Regulations.

If you would like to read the Act or its Regulations, you can access a copy on the facility tablet, or you can ask a staff member for a copy. If you do not understand something in the Act or its Regulations, please ask a staff member to explain it to you or request it be translated for you.

## 4 Your Responsibilities

It is your responsibility to learn and follow the facility rules, daily routine, schedules, and the other information provided in this handbook. If you do not understand what is expected of you it is your responsibility to ask staff questions, so you do understand.

## 5 Staff Responsibilities

Correctional Services staff have made a commitment to supporting people in custody through the guiding principles of care, well-being, safety, and security. Staff strive to build positive relationships that are impartial, respectful, show integrity, and accountability. Staff are accountable to provide services as outlined in policy and enabled by legislation and adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct. Through ongoing training, invested learning and development, correctional services staff are a resource to help you while you are in custody. Rely on staff for day-to-day guidance, conflict resolution and to help you access programming and other resources available for you.

## 6 Inclusivity, Terminology and Language



People in custody come from a wide range of diverse cultural, geographical backgrounds, and abilities.

During the admission process everyone is provided an opportunity to express their gender identity, pronouns, required accommodations and other unique identifying factors. This information is gathered to inform placement, assessment, and case management needs.

Each facility strives to provide support, resources, products, materials, programs, and community outreach so you are represented.

If language or comprehension barriers occur, facility materials can be translated and adapted to meet your needs.

## 7 Admission



**Committal Order:** You will be admitted to a facility on the authority of a committal order. A committal order may be in the form of a remand order, sentence order, parole suspension warrant, or intermittent sentence order.

**Photographs:** You will be photographed when you are admitted to the facility, at the time of discharge, and if there is a change in your appearance. Pictures of injuries, scars and tattoos will be taken during your admission and while you are in custody.

**Video recording:** Video recording devices are used in each facility. You will be video recorded while you are

in custody.

**Identification:** The facility will give you an identification card, wristband, or another form of ID. This is so facility staff know who you are. You must show your ID to staff when they ask you for it.

- Destruction, tampering or loss of your ID may result in a disciplinary report and/or a replacement fee.

**JEIN person number:** You will need this to make calls or use the tablet. This number is also used by your family or friends to put money on your trust or phone account so share it with them. This number will be on your ID, if you don't know your person number, ask for it when you are being admitted.

**Personal Information:** When you are admitted, correctional services staff will ask you questions to learn about who you are. It is important to be honest and answer the questions you are asked because the information you share will help staff know where to place you in the facility and what supports and services you may need. The information being asked includes:

- address, phone numbers
- if you are incompatible with any individuals or groups
- emergency contact information
- sex and gender identity
- information about your safety or well-being
- accommodations needed

If you are living with a disability and may require support and accommodation, correctional services staff will work to assist you upon admission; however, you are

encouraged to discuss this with Correctional Health Services staff. Accessible cells, housing in lower tiers, approved supportive devices, and social work services are a few ways the facility can support your needs.

**Medical Information:** Medical information is normally gathered by Health Services staff. If they are not available a correctional services staff member will ask you basic health questions so immediate medical needs can be identified and addressed.

Health care staff will review your medical history further and contact your pharmacy. They will follow up with you during your period of custody to address changes or concerns with your mental or physical health.

For more information, see the [Health Services section](#) in the Handbook.

**Confidentiality:** Your personal information is protected by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPOP). We are only permitted to share your personal information with other Justice Officials in accordance with FOIPOP. You will be asked to sign a disclosure agreement before information is shared with outside agencies.

**Person Search:** A visual body search will be conducted when you are admitted to the facility. This is done for health and safety reasons. One correctional officer of the same gender as you identified as during the intake and assessment process will lead the search, and a second staff member will be there as a witness. The second staff member may be any gender. The search will be done in a private space.

For more information on searches see the [searches](#)

[section](#) of this handbook.

**Facility Rules:** The facility rules are outlined in the back of this handbook. It is your responsibility to review and understand them. If you do not understand the facility rules, ask a staff member to explain them to you.



**Body Scanner:** Each time you are admitted to the facility, you will be scanned using a whole-body x-ray security screening system, also known as a body scanner. The system is an effective way to identify and limit access to drugs and weapons in correctional facilities.

Scanning people upon admission, and during your custody term, increases safety and security for those in custody and staff.

**Admission Phone Call:** During the admission process you will have an opportunity to make a phone call to a family member or other significant person to let them know that you are in a correctional facility. You may not call people who you are court ordered not to contact.



**Housing Placement in the Facility:** Your placement in the facility is based on several factors (custody status, medical needs, safety, and gender identity) and is determined by the admitting officer. To help determine which unit you will be placed in, staff will complete:

- an Institutional Security Assessment
- a self-identity questionnaire with you

Your placement within a facility may change throughout your period of custody or because of your medical needs, and/or your behavior.

## 8 Personal Property



You cannot retain your personal belongings in the facility. You will be provided with clothing and other essential items when you are admitted. Correctional Services staff will store your personal property in a secure area. They will be returned to you when you are released.

**Items to be stored:** Personal property that must be handed over includes:

- clothing, footwear, and accessories
- wallet
- jewelry, except approved wedding band, and other small body rings that cannot be removed
- pens, pencils etc.
- personal papers and identification, such as birth certificate, driver's license
- money
- medication
- cell phone and other electronics

**Items that may be retained:** You may ask for approval to have items with you if they are not available through the facility services. Retention of these items is at your own risk. The facility is not responsible for loss or damage if any occur.

- required medical equipment
  - insulin pens, may be given to and used through health care services at their discretion
- items to support gender, identification/expression until the institution is able to provide it for you

**Property Form:** All your property is listed on a Personal Property Form. You will review the form and sign it to say it correctly lists the property you arrived with and identifies the property you kept with you. If you do not agree with what is listed on the form, let the correctional services staff know immediately.

**Personal Property Storage:** The personal property you arrived with will be placed in a storage bag and/or secured box. The amount of property you are permitted to store is limited.

It will be stored in the facility's secure personal property area until your release. You may sign out personal property to a visitor. Ask correctional services staff for the form if you wish to sign property out.

**Personal Property Exchange:** You may exchange the items stored in your personal property for another item from outside the facility on a one-for-one basis. Usually, permission will only be given to exchange clothing for special reasons, e.g., being released in a different season (exchanging a winter jacket for a spring jacket), attending your trial.

Request a personal property removal form from correctional services staff to initiate this process. Ties, belts, shoes with laces, and jackets with strings are not accepted during an exchange.

**Money:** When you are admitted with Canadian funds, a trust fund account is setup for you to use while in custody. You can use your money for canteen and the phone system. See [Money](#) section for more information about receiving funds.

## 9 Items Issued on Admission



**Toiletry Items:** You will be issued necessary toiletry items, such as soap, a toothbrush, shampoo, toothpaste, and a comb. Cultural hair care products are available when requested.

Additional items, and more selection of products are available for purchase from the canteen.

If you do not have enough money in your account additional soap, shampoo, and toothpaste will be provided to you, as needed, at no cost. Complete a canteen form each week to receive an amenity pack that contains those items.

Feminine hygiene products are available on your unit or by asking staff. These are provided at no charge to you.

### Clothing Issue

- pants
- tops
- socks
- new underwear
- bra
- 1 pair of footwear
- gender expression garments (gaff, binder etc.) upon request

Additional clothing may be issued for work assignments (outside work, kitchen) as required.

The footwear and clothing issued to you during admission are for use in the facility only. When you leave the facility for an escorted release or an outside appointment, you will wear facility issued clothing and

footwear. If you leave the facility to go to court or for an unescorted release, you must wear your own clothing and footwear from your personal property.

If the clothing you have in your personal property is not appropriate for the season or for other reasons, you may request a clothing exchange by submitting a request form to your correctional case worker. Please submit the request as soon as possible so the clothing can be available at the time of your court date or release.

## Other Items Issued

- 1 towel
- blankets
- sheets
- mattress
- laundry bag with tag
- receiver/radio for the television, with ear buds (select facilities only)
- nail clippers

If you damage or destroy an issued item, you may be required to pay the replacement cost. You may also face disciplinary measures.

**Maximum Number of Items:** You are only allowed to have the number of items that were issued to you, or that you have purchased from the canteen in your cell or dorm. All extra items will be removed during inspections or rounds. Having extra items may also result in disciplinary measures.

## Returning Items on Discharge or Attending in Person

**Court:** You must return all issued items, except underwear when you are discharged from the facility. You may be required to pay the replacement cost of damaged or missing items. Radios (if issued), and nail clippers must be returned in working condition.

# 10 Searches

**Reasons for Searches:** Searches are carried out for the following reasons:

- to prevent contraband from entering the facility
- to find contraband
- to recover stolen items
- to discourage theft
- to help prevent escapes
- to prevent destruction of government property
- to maintain a safe environment

**Search of Areas:** All areas of a correctional facility are searched regularly to ensure the safety and security of staff, those in custody, and the public.



**Person Searches:** People in a correctional facility or on the property may be searched. This includes frisk searches, pat searches, and visual body searches. Electronic scanning devices, e.g., body scanner, metal detectors, ion scanner may be used as part of the search procedure. Those in custody who refuse to participate in a person search may be assessed by correctional services staff to establish accommodations needed or the reason for lack of cooperation. A discipline report may be filed if warranted.

**Visual Body Search:** The correctional officer leading the visual body search will verbally guide you through the search step by step. You will be asked to take off each piece of clothing and your full body will be observed by the staff leading the search. You will be asked to shake out your hair, show behind your ears, the inside of your mouth, the bottoms of your feet and raise your arms. When the search is done you will be given facility clothing to wear. This search is done in a private location.

**Pat or Frisk Search:** The Correctional Officer will physically search your person and clothing while you are fully dressed. They will place one hand at the center of your back and search your arms, back, waist area and legs with their other hand. You may be directed to untuck your socks, remove your shoes, show the inside of your mouth, or shake out your hair.

## 11 Orientation



All individuals admitted to Nova Scotia Correctional Facilities will receive orientation information. Reminders are posted in the dayrooms, reviewed during pre-inspection and staff are available multiple times daily to support your learning style and understanding of expectations.

During your orientation you will be given information on:

- handbook location
- items permitted in cell
- facility daily schedule/routine/unit cleaning (including medication dispensing)
- phone system process and rules
- request process and form

- complaint procedures and form
- ombudsman role and access
- person searches and reason/types of searches
- fire and other emergencies, drills, and evacuations plan
- alerts and risk categories (including incompatibles)
- visit list form and visits
- the disciplinary system, including types and levels of offences, temporary measures, hearings, and appeal processes

**Unit Orientation:** When you get to your assigned unit or dorm, you will receive information specific to that area.

## 12 Legal Matters

You should only discuss your legal matters with a lawyer. Correctional Services staff are not able to give advice or speak to you about your matters.



**Call to a Lawyer:** If you need legal services, you can use the telephone, or tablet in the living unit to call a lawyer or Legal Aid. Your call to your lawyer is privileged and can't be listened to or recorded.

**Nova Scotia Legal Aid:** If you cannot afford a lawyer, you may request the services of Nova Scotia Legal Aid. To get an application for Legal Aid fill out a request form.

If you receive a certificate from Legal Aid to obtain a lawyer a Correctional Case Worker can give you a list of lawyers to choose from.

**Further Resources and Supports:** There are resources and supports available specific to culture, race and gender identity. Ask your Correctional Case Worker or a Social

Worker for information about what resources and supports are available.

**Bail:** You should contact a lawyer to see if you are eligible for bail. Your lawyer can schedule a bail review. Bail calls may be made at the time of admission and can also be made from your unit.

**Disclosure:** You may receive disclosure documents through the mail or courier. Disclosure that comes on a USB storage device can be viewed by using one of the facility laptops upon request. Disclosure documents may be securely stored at the facility in locking boxes.

## 13 Supports and Services

**Case Management Team:** The Case Management Team is made up of Correctional Case Workers, Social Workers, Programmers, Teachers, and facility Chaplain. The team works to support individuals and meet their specific needs as they navigate the justice system from within the facility. If you require any of these services, please complete a request form.



**Correctional Programmers:** Programs for identified needs or interests may be available to you during your custody period. You may have the opportunity to participate in appropriate programs, services, and activities to match your specific risk and need.

Participation into a program depends upon:

- your behavior while in custody
- your identified risks and needs
- the availability of seats in the program

**Correctional Case Workers** develop case plans and provide referrals to facility and community resources in support of release planning.

**Social Workers** provide supportive counseling, facilitate group sessions, provide mental health support and connect you with community resources.

**Teachers** provide educational opportunities such as GED prep, high school credit work, post-secondary school, and community-based learning.

## 14 Spiritual and Cultural Services

**Spiritual Services:** Spiritual support services are coordinated by the facility Chaplain. These services may include grief support, spiritual guidance, and materials. If you wish to attend a spiritual service or program, submit a request form to the Chaplain. If there is no local Chaplain, submit a request to facility management.

**Religious and Cultural Request:** To request a religious or cultural diet or items, submit a request form to the Chaplain. All religious and cultural request must be approved by the Chaplain, Kitchen Manager, or facility management.

### Indigenous Spirituality

If you are Indigenous, you have access to an eagle feather, sweet grass, and a medicine bag and sweat loges where available for Indigenous spiritual purposes.

**Visits by Indigenous Elders and Other Spiritual Advisors:** To ask for a visit from your spiritual advisor, including an Indigenous Elder, you must fill out a request form and give

it to the Chaplain. Your spiritual advisor can also contact the facility and ask to have an appointment with you.

## 15 Non-Government Agency

There are non-governmental agencies that help those in custody with specific needs. A list of contacts is posted in your unit and available from your Correctional Case Worker.

## 16 Contraband



Contraband is any unauthorized substance or property in or on the property of a correctional facility, including on any person in a correctional facility, or the use of an approved substance or property for a reason other than its intended and approved purpose. This can include medication, excessive items stored in your cell, notes for individuals in other dayrooms or areas of the facility, mail not addressed to you, items from damage to property.

- Anyone who possesses contraband in a correctional facility is in breach of a facility rule.
- Anyone who delivers contraband to or takes it from a person in custody or a correctional facility is in breach of a facility rule.

These rules also apply when you are being escorted outside the facility.

**Seizure of Contraband:** Any contraband found in your possession will be taken. Even if it does not belong to you, any contraband found in your cell, or on your person is considered to be in your possession.

**Penalties for Possession of Contraband:** If you are found with contraband disciplinary action may be taken

against you. Depending on the type of contraband, you may also be charged under the Criminal Code of Canada or other federal or provincial legislation.

## 17 Money



**Money on Admission:** Canadian money that you have when you arrive at the facility is placed in a trust account for you. You may use the money to buy prepaid phone time as well as items from the canteen, such as toiletry items, stamps, and snacks. Any money left in your account when you are discharged will be returned to you. Up to \$100 in cash will be provided and the remainder of your money will be provided in the form of a cheque.

**Money from Visitors:** Any money you receive while you are in custody, through the phone system, kiosk, or money order, will be placed in your account.

- Money must be in Canadian funds and in the form of cash, a bank-certified cheque, or a money order.
- Visitors will be given a receipt for money deposited in your account. Personal or business cheques, from visitors or sent through the mail, are not accepted.
- Government issued cheques and money orders must be in their original envelope, unopened when they arrive at the facility.
- Any cheques that are not accepted will be returned to the sender or placed in your personal property.

You may sign money out of your facility trust account and have someone come to the facility and pick it up, or you may mail it to someone upon approval. You can request this by filling out a removal of funds request form.

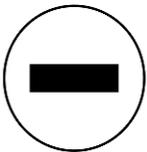
You will receive a voice mail when money is put into your trust account via kiosk or when money is put onto your

phone account. You may request a printout of your trust account to show all transactions.

If you are being bullied or threatened to transfer money to another person in custody or someone in the community, please report this by telling a manager or putting the information on a request form.

**Payment for Damaged Property:** If you damage or destroy property while you are in custody, a fair incident review will be done, and money may be taken from your account to cover the cost of the damaged or destroyed items. For example, you may be charged for any damage to sprinklers, mattresses, bedding, or clothing. You will be notified in writing whenever money is taken from your account. Should you be released or transferred to another facility, the debt against your account will remain until it has been paid in full. Opportunities to complete work duties may be considered to remove owing funds.

## 18 Restricted Areas



Areas out of bounds to you at all times include:

- control modules and staff post areas
- areas marked off in red, such as in day rooms
- staff offices, unless you are with the staff member for a special reason
- cells and bed spaces not assigned to you
- areas around connecting doors/ fire doors (that lead to another dayroom or common area)
- any other area that you are told not to enter by staff member

## 19 Incidents or Emergencies

If an incident or emergency is occurring in your living area, move away from the area or go to your cell if it is safe to do so and wait for further directions. If there are no audible alarms, or announcements, press the intercom or duress button to alert staff of the incident.

## 20 Rules

Rules and disciplinary procedures exist to help:

- maintain the law
- protect your rights, personal safety, and the security of other people in custody, the public, employees, and community partners (outside agencies, volunteers)
- maintain the security of a correctional facility
- promote the orderly operation and effective delivery of programs and services
- protect personal property and correctional facility property

The rules of the facility state you must do the following while in custody:

- perform your work assignments to the standards set by staff
- be prompt and courteous in performing your assigned work duties
- maintain an acceptable level of personal hygiene
- respect the human rights of others, e.g., race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity
- treat others with respect, dignity, and fairness



- obey any additional rules posted by facility
- follow fire and safety requirements

All correctional facilities are tobacco-free. No smoking is permitted. Tobacco products including e-cigarettes, as well as matches and lighters. The use of batteries or electronics to create a spark or flame are contraband. If you are found with tobacco products, or other materials to smoke, it will result in a disciplinary report.

If you do not follow the rules of the facility, disciplinary action may be taken against you. For more information review the next section called Disciplinary Levels and the [list of rules](#) at the back of this book.

## 21 Disciplinary System

Disciplinary action taken by a correctional facility is not a criminal charge.

### Breach Levels

The disciplinary system has three breach levels that address the:

- seriousness of the breach
- behavior and attitude demonstrated at the time of the breach

The three breach levels of the disciplinary system are:

**Level 1:** This is a minor breach of the facility rules, where your behavior is not intending to cause harm or of a serious nature.

**Level 2:** This is a more serious breach of the regulations and facility rules, where your actions are intentional and to cause harm.

**Level 3:** This is the most serious breach of the regulations and facility rules, where you demonstrate an intentional, total disregard for yourself, for others, or for facility property.

Some of these breaches may also be a criminal offence and will be reported to the local police force.

## Disciplinary Adjudication

Level 1 outcomes are determined by the manager on duty. Corrective actions could include a maximum of 3 hours in cell, mediation, additional unit duties, or loss of a privilege.

Disciplinary adjudication for Level 2 and 3 is conducted by the provincial adjudicator.

The provincial adjudicator is an impartial third party, senior manager that will review the incident.

**Hearing:** The adjudicator will hold a hearing, via video booth, phone or in person, into the allegation in the disciplinary report. During the adjudication you will have a chance to explain your actions, unless you are:

- unwilling (refuse) to attend
- facility senior management believes that your presence would jeopardize the safety of a person present at the hearing (behavior, safety, or medical reasons)
- you disrupt the proceedings and are removed from the hearing

**Sanctions:** These are penalties given by the adjudicator and may be one or a combination of the following:

- withdrawal, in whole or in part, of your privileges
- performance of work
- close confinement (max of 5 days for level 2 and max of 7 days for level 3)
- with the approval of the Executive Director, close confinement for an extension of up to 7 days at a time
- a restorative justice process, or restitution of part or all the costs to repair the damage done by you
- loss of remission

## 22 Appeal of Adjudication Outcomes

**Appeal to the Executive Director or Delegate:** If you disagree with the decision made during your adjudication you may request that the Executive Director, The Executive Director or delegate to review the decision. You must make the request, in writing, no later than 10 business days after the date the decision was made.

## 23 Cleanliness and Infection Control



Infection control is a way to stop the spread of germs that can cause disease among persons in custody.

**Reducing the Risk of Infection:** By doing the following you can greatly reduce your risk of coming in contact with germs that can cause disease

- do not use needles to inject any substances and do not get a tattoo while in custody, used needles may contain Hepatitis, HIV, or other deadly infectious diseases
- do not have unprotected sexual contact with others while in custody, condoms and dental dams are available upon request from Correctional Health Services



**Personal Cleanliness:** You are expected to keep clean by doing the following:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water frequently throughout the day, including after each time you use the bathroom
- shower and wash your body and hair regularly
- shower immediately prior to a shift in the kitchen if it is your assigned work duty
- wear clean clothing

**Razors:** Staff will sign out razors to you at a scheduled time. Razors are signed out for a set period of time. You must return it to a staff member intact and covered. You are not permitted to tamper with the razor. Requests for razors at unscheduled times will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

**Laundry Schedule:** The laundry schedule is posted in your living unit. It details when the facility clothing, towels, blankets, and sheets can be cleaned and when they will be returned to you.



**Cell or Bed Area:** You must keep your assigned cell or bed area clean. Cleaning supplies are provided each morning for you to use. Each day you must do the following:

- clean your cell or bed area as frequently as possible with the cleaning products provided
- wipe all surfaces and clean the sink and toilet last
- make your bed neatly
- store your belongings neatly in the storage areas provided, items not stored neatly may be considered

contraband and removed

- sweep and mop your floor
- clear obstructions
- clean any debris from your toilet and sink
- remove garbage from your cell or bed area
- remove excess food
- remove any bedding, clothing, toilet tissue, paper, etc. obstructing the windows, lights, cameras or blocking the view into your area
- you may not have anything attached to the walls

**Living Area:** You must keep your dorm/ living area clean. You must do the following every day or as required:

- empty trash and recycling containers
- sweep, mop
- clean and remove spots from walls
- clean common-use bathrooms and showers and, as required, other areas
- keep the railings free from obstructions (do not hang clothing on the railings)

**Facility:** You may apply for a work detail to assist in the cleaning of the facility. The facility will provide you with any required safety and cleaning equipment.

## 24 Daily Inspection



An inspection is conducted by management to help ensure a high standard of security, operational safety and efficiency, cleanliness, and maintenance.

**Times:** Inspections are completed daily. Inspection times for your unit will be made available to you by

correctional services staff.

**Reporting to Your Cell or Bed Area:** You must report to your assigned cell or unit during morning inspection. During inspection you will be expected to stand by your cell door or bed.

You may be absent from the unit if you have permission, for example, to participate in a program, visit, appointment, or work assignment.

**Speaking with Manager:** To address concerns that you were not able to have satisfied with the unit officer, submit a request form to have the issue addressed further by a manager.

## 25 Health Services



**Health Assessment:** You will be given a health assessment by Correctional Health Services staff. When Correctional Health Services staff are not available, correctional services staff will ask you basic health questions to gather information so immediate medical needs can be identified. Medical information is confidential. During your intake, express any physical or mental health issues/history, food/ product allergies or sensitivities.

Also inform health care of any upcoming diagnostic or specialist appointments you already have scheduled; these appointments may be rescheduled for you to attend while in custody or for when you return to the community.

**Requests to See Health Services:** If you are feeling unwell or have any questions or concerns about your physical or mental health, complete a request form to see Health

Services. If you believe your situation is an emergency speak with correctional services staff right away.

**Health Services Schedule:** Each facility has a schedule for routine health services, such as doctor's clinics, blood collection, and dentist. Wait times vary for each of these services and may not be on a first come first serve basis. After you receive medication, you will be required to participate in a mouth check to make sure all your medication is gone. Some medications require a waiting period before returning to your living unit.

**Referrals:** You need a doctor's referral for special services such as a psychiatrist or psychiatric nurse.

**Outside Medical Appointments:** Staff will escort you to any required medical appointments outside the facility. When you are escorted to an outside medical appointment you must wear handcuffs and, in almost all cases, leg irons. For safety reasons you will not know in advance when your appointment is.

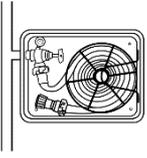
## 26 Intercom and Duress Button Use

Some facilities have intercoms to allow communication between persons in custody and correctional services staff. The intercom is to be used to contact staff in the unit control post for urgent matters only.

Some intercoms, are equipped with a red button on the face plates known as the "duress button." Use the duress button for emergencies only (i.e. individuals being harmed, fire, medical, damage to property).

If you misuse the intercom or duress button disciplinary measures may be taken

## 27 Fire Safety



As mentioned above, smoking of any kind is not allowed at a correctional facility. All correctional facilities have smoke detectors and sprinkler systems.

Fire safety rules and evacuation plans and routes are posted in your unit and throughout the facility to ensure the safety of both staff and persons in custody.

Regular visits from the Office of the Fire Marshall take place to help keep correctional facilities in compliance with fire regulations.

If you hear a fire alarm, remain calm while you wait for direction from correctional services staff. Direction may be given using the facility intercom/overhead PA system or by correctional services staff attending your dayroom.

## 28 Telephone and Tablets



**Telephone:** Telephones are provided in each living area for outgoing local and long-distance telephone calls.

You are automatically set up in the in-custody phone system upon admission to the facility and will be provided a PIN. To put funds on your phone or purchase packages, family and friends can visit [Synergy \(inmatephones.ca\)](http://Synergy(inmatephones.ca)).

The person you call may be charged for local and long-distance telephone calls and video visits. Current rates will be posted in the living area. If you have problems using the facility phone system, dial 211# on the in-custody pay phone and leave a message with customer service. Customer service will resolve the issue and leave a voice mail which can be retrieved during future use of the phone system.

Do not share your phone access with other persons in custody, if you do, Synergy will not be able to help you if someone else made calls using your account.

**Free Professional Calls:** You may make telephone calls free of charge to an approved list of agencies and offices. A list of these agencies and offices is posted in your living unit, and it includes:

- the Office of the Ombudsman
- the Human Rights Commission
- the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner
- the Office of the Director of the Serious Incident Response Team

**Free Personal Calls:** You will be provided with one free phone call per day. The free call is automatically added to your phone account.

**Personal Identification Number:** You must use a personal identification number to make a phone call or tablet use. This number is found on your ID wristband or card.

You will also create your own PIN for additional protection. The in-custody phone system requires voice verification in addition to your identification number and PIN.

Do not share your PIN with other individuals in custody, the PIN will give access to your phone account.

**Telephone System Hours:** The facility sets times for telephone use and video visits based on the telephone system in the facility, schedules, and/or the availability of staff to make calls where required.

**Telephone and Video Visitation Time Limits:** Time limits are set for telephone calls and video visits in each facility. Check with correctional services staff about the time limits at your facility.

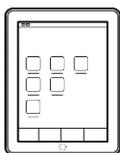
**Three-way Calling:** You must not make three-way or three-party phone calls. Three-way calling is also called third-party calling, call transfers or call switching. The communication system can detect three-way calling and will block the number from any future calls.

**Crime Tip Line:** You can leave an anonymous, confidential voice mail message if you know of a criminal activity which will be occurring or has occurred.

**Monitoring:** Your telephone calls and video visits may be monitored and/or recorded. This does not apply to calls or video visits to your lawyer, to the Office of the Ombudsman, to the Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner, and the Office of the Director of the Serious Incident Response Team.

**Incoming Telephone Calls:** Staff do not accept incoming calls for persons in custody, and they will not take messages for you. Emergency calls for you will be referred to management.

**Voice Mail:** The phone system provides a voicemail feature so that you can receive a voicemail from family, friends, or your lawyer. The system will also notify you by voicemail when funds are deposited into your trust account and prepaid phone account. Any communication on voicemail is not subject to the ordinary protections for communications and may be listened to by Correctional Services Division staff.



**Tablets:** Some facilities have pay for use tablets available and can be used to access TV and movies, news, sports, tablet apps, and video visits. The tablet will take a picture of you during use to confirm your identity.

Family and friends can send a message or voicemail to a person in custody through <https://www.gettingout.com>.

The tablets also have resources such as legal research, educational content, and facility specific information may also be available.

## 29 Mail



**Search of Correspondence:** All incoming and outgoing mail will be searched.

You are permitted to have written communication with people who live outside of provincial and federal facilities.

Mail to and from the following will not be read by correctional services staff:

- privileged correspondence to and from your lawyer
- a member of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia
- a member of the Parliament of Canada
- the Deputy Minister of the Department of Justice or the Executive Director or a director of the Correctional Services Division
- a representative of the Office of the Ombudsman
- a representative of the Human Rights Commission
- the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner
- the Office of the Director of the Serious Incident response Team

- an inspector designated under the Correctional Services Act
- College of Physicians and Surgeons

## Incoming Mail

Correctional Services has the right to seize or return to the sender mail that breaks any of the rules set out in this section. For safety and security, you may receive a photocopy of the letters or pictures and the original will be placed in your personals for when you are released.

**Mailing Address:** Mail sent to you must be addressed to the facility where you are located. The correct mailing address for this facility is posted in your unit, and on the website. If you are transferred to another facility any mail received after your transfer will be forwarded to the facility you are in or returned to sender if you are released.

**Hand-Delivered Mail:** Staff will not accept hand-delivered mail for you. Visitors, such as your family or friends, or volunteers, may not bring mail or written materials into the facility for you. Your lawyer may deliver disclosure materials related to your court case.

**Case Planning:** Staff may accept hand-delivered mail and other written documents for case-planning purposes, if the mail is addressed to your correctional case worker or other designated facility staff. An example would be a letter confirming a job offer when you are released.

**Prohibited Items:** You are not allowed to receive items that may be offensive. This includes posters, publications, video or audio material, films, and computer programs. An item is not allowed if the facility's senior manager

believes, on reasonable grounds, that it:

- constitutes child pornography or is obscene in that its main characteristic is the undue exploitation of sex, or sex together with crime, horror, cruelty, or violence
- is offensive or discriminatory
- promotes gang culture or a gang lifestyle
- creates or could create a hostile environment in the correctional facility or is otherwise exploitative or discriminatory

**Other Items Not Allowed in Mail:** Other prohibited items include (but are not limited to) the following:

- stickers, labels, return address labels
- perfume-saturated or lipstick-covered letters
- anything glued on (including cards)
- musical greeting cards
- envelopes, stamps, writing paper
- pens, pencils, markers, highlighters, crayons
- paper clips, staples, pins
- sharp objects
- nude/semi-nude photos
- Polaroid®-style photos
- jewelry
- telephone calling cards and other plastic or laminated cards, including credit cards
- dried flowers or seeds
- condiments from meals, such as packages of jam, butter, and peanut butter
- unknown substances

**Return to Sender:** If one or more of the above items are found in mail sent to you, the entire contents of the mail may be returned to the sender. In cases where there is no return address, staff may place it in your personal property.

## Outgoing Mail

You must address outgoing mail properly. Write your name and return address on the outside of the envelope. Do not seal your outgoing mail. Staff will seal it after they have inspected it.

- If it falls into the category of privileged correspondence, it will not be read by correctional services staff however it will need to be sealed in their presence.

Personal or professional visitors, such as your family or friends, your lawyers, or volunteers, may not take mail or written materials out of the facility for you.

**Letter-Writing Materials:** You can buy writing materials and stamps from the canteen. If you do not have money to buy materials, you may submit a request for paper and 1 free pre-stamped envelope per week.

## Additional Restrictions

- Incoming or outgoing mail that is threatening or offensive is not permitted.
- Outgoing mail must not contain information about staff, others in custody, or the facility.
- You may not receive magazines and books mailed from the publisher unless you first get the Superintendent's approval.
- You may not send mail to or receive mail from

individuals with whom you are restricted from having contact, for example: court ordered prohibited contact, or a person who has asked for no contact from you.

- You are not permitted to correspond with individuals in custody in other provincial, territorial, and federal correctional facilities unless you have received the prior permission of the facility senior manager.

## 30 Visits



Each facility sets their own visiting schedule and request process. This will be reviewed with you during your orientation. The visiting schedule is posted in your living unit. This includes the days and general hours for visits.

**Requesting a Visit:** To have visitors, you will be required to complete a visit request form for the type of visit you are requesting (video or in person).

Visitors are not able to book or schedule visits. Visitors will be notified by the facility that a visit request was made and when the visit is scheduled for.

**Approved Visitors:** Only people who are approved will be allowed to visit you. Court-prohibited contacts, or a person who has asked for no contact with you will not be approved as visitors.

You will be told if any of your potential visitors are not approved and will be given the reason(s).

**Age Limit for Visitors:** The facility's senior manager must approve any visitors under 19 years of age, unless the visitor is:

- accompanied by an adult
- over the age of 15 years and is your child, or sibling

**Visit Frequency:** You are permitted visits according to the facility schedule.

**Identification:** Approved visitors must show a current government issued picture ID to be allowed into the facility. Visitors will be signed in and asked to provide information for the visitors' logbook.

**Arrival:** Your visitors should arrive 15 minutes prior to your visit so they can complete the sign in process prior to the start of your visit.

**Special Visit:** With approval from the facility's senior manager the following special visits may take place

- in person or video visits with an immediate family member such as a parent, child, partner by marriage, or common law partner who are also located in a provincial correctional facility
- contact visits with children and other family members

To request a special visit, you must fill out a request form addressed to the facility's senior manager. Approval for your request will depend on the reason for the request, your behavior while you have been in custody, and your agreement to any additional security measures required before, during, and after the visit. These visits will be supervised.

**Behavior during Visits:** You and your visitors must follow all visiting rules. A visit will be ended if you or your visitors behave inappropriately. Visitors may be denied future visits for inappropriate behavior.

**Professional Visits:** Your lawyer, spiritual advisor, and other professional visitors must make an appointment with the facility to visit you.



**Video Visits:** Video visits follow the same requirements of in person visits. Only the people on the approved visit request form may participate in the visit.

## 31 Meals



You will be provided with three meals a day from Monday to Friday and two meals a day on Saturdays and Sundays.

A variety of meals are provided on a rotational menu. This menu is posted in the living unit.

## 32 Outdoor Exercise



You are entitled to 30 minutes of outdoor exercise each day. If you are not going to be offered outdoor exercise, you will be told why.

Other recreation and programs may be available. A schedule will be made available to you.

## 33 Canteen

Each facility has a canteen. You may buy items from the canteen if you have money in your trust account to cover the full cost of the items. You may not buy items on credit.

There are limits on the number of items and the dollar amounts you may purchase.

A current canteen price list and the canteen schedule are posted in the unit.

A schedule will be made available to you.

## 34 Library



You are permitted to choose and exchange reading material from the correctional facility library or library cart.

## 35 Transfers

**Transfers to Other Correctional Facilities:** You may be transferred to any facility, including a penitentiary, without your consent. We may transfer you for security reasons, program reasons, or because of overcrowding.

**Transfer Requests:** You may request a transfer to another facility for humanitarian (e.g., closer to home community), medical, or rehabilitative reasons.

**Appealing Transfer Requests:** If your request to be transferred to another facility is denied, you may appeal the decision to the Executive Director, Correctional Services.

## 36 Transfer to and from Penitentiary

If you are sentenced to a federal penitentiary, you will usually be housed in a provincial facility for up to 15 days, not counting the day you are sentenced or the day you are transferred.

You may give up this waiting period by signing a waiver. If you want to sign a waiver, submit a request form. If you do not sign the waiver, you will be transferred on the first possible day after the waiting period is over.

If you are being transferred to a federal penitentiary, a parole officer will interview you before your transfer. The purpose of the interview is to gather information to place you in a penitentiary for you to serve your sentence.

## 37 Remission

Remission is a reduction of the time you must spend in the facility if your sentence is less than two years. Remission is tracked by sentence administration staff at the facility.

**Remission Credited:** If you were sentenced to a provincial sentence, you will receive remission for up to one-third of your sentence. For example, if you were sentenced to 90 days, you would normally serve 60 days.

**Loss of Remission:** If you break a facility rule, you may lose earned remission.

## 38 Conditional Releases and Temporary Absences

Conditional releases & temporary absences are only available for provincially sentenced persons in custody. You may apply in writing for a conditional release at any time during your sentence.

A conditional release or temporary absence may be approved for:

- humanitarian reasons (to attend a funeral, for example)
- medical purposes
- reintegration (employment, treatment, education, work on the grounds of the correctional facility, for example)

If you are on remand, you may complete a request to attend a funeral through your lawyer.

## 39 Complaint Procedure

If you have a complaint, you must first discuss the complaint with the staff member and attempt to resolve it. If you are unable to resolve the complaint, you may fill out a complaint form. Complaint forms are not used to appeal decisions on conditional releases or on penalties, that are the result of a disciplinary report, including remission loss.

**In Writing:** If you have a complaint, you should make it in writing using a complaint form. A correctional staff will give you the receipt portion of the complaint form. Keep that as a record you have submitted a complaint.

If you need help to write your complaint, you may ask for assistance from a correctional services staff member. Your complaint must include the details of the complaint, dates, names of staff and other persons involved, information about your how you tried to resolve the conflict, and what you are asking for.

You will give your completed complaint form to a correctional officer.

**Review:** The facility's senior manager or their designate, will review your complaint within five business days and must take steps to resolve it or give it to another person, including an outside agency, for review. The facility's senior manager will let you know in writing what action is being taken as soon as possible.

## 40 Breach of Rules

At minimum, the rules of the facility state you must not do any of the following while in custody:

- have contraband in your possession
- smuggle any article either into or out of the

- correctional facility or conspire or attempt to smuggle
- destroy or deface private or public property
  - attack or threaten to attack another person within the correctional facility conspire, cause, or attempt to cause a disturbance, breach of the peace, or riot
  - be in an unauthorized place
  - leave or attempt to leave the limits of the correctional facility unless you are with an employee or without the permission of the facility's senior manager or Deputy Superintendent
  - give or offer a bribe or reward to an employee
  - commit or attempt to commit an indecent act in language, act, or gesture
  - give counsel to or aid and abet another person in custody to do anything against the facility rules
  - engage in behavior that is intended to intimidate or provoke fear in others
  - gamble
  - neglect performing your assigned work and duties
  - make an insult to any person, by gesture, use of abusive language, or other act
  - disobey any lawful order given by an employee
  - conduct yourself in a manner that is detrimental to the welfare of other persons in custody or to a program
  - make a racial or harassing remark or gesture to any person
  - destroy food
  - refuse to stand in your cell or room as required during daily inspection

- leave a cell, place of work, or other appointed work without proper authority
- refuse to provide a sample for standardized screening for intoxicants as required by regulations
- transfer, give, or exchange any personal or government property, whether for personal gain or not, without authorization
- obstruct a review conducted or authorized by the Correctional Services Act or the regulations made under the act
- willfully break or try to break any provision of the *Correctional Services Act*, regulations made under the act, or the rules
- willfully break or attempt to break any term or condition of a conditional release
- tattoo or pierce yourself or anyone else while in custody
- change your cell, bed, dorm, or living unit assignment except as directed by staff
- enter another's cell or bed area
- remove, alter, or damage your identification wristband or card at any time
- misuse the telephone system, for example, by making three-way calls or using someone else's access
- waste facility property
- attach signs, posters, pictures, decals, and other similar items to doors, walls, bed frames, storage units, and other similar items
- use bedding, clothing, signs, posters, pictures, decals, or any other item to

- block the view of staff
- create makeshift clotheslines, tables, chairs, shelves, storage boxes, and other similar items
- block vents, light fixtures, windows, cameras

## 41 Body Scanner Information

The body scanner used at correctional facilities is similar to what is used in airports, secure buildings, and factories. The technology uses a very low dose x-ray to create a picture that will show if a person is concealing something in their body. This technology is used to lessen the likelihood of contraband entering or exiting the facility.

Individuals who are pregnant or have health issues can safely be scanned and are required to do so.

The picture(s) from the body scanner is reviewed by trained staff and managers.

Pictures are temporarily saved on the device and can only be accessed by authorized operators. Pictures that contain confirmed or suspected contraband may be saved and secured on an external resource.

## 42 Conclusion



This handbook has been prepared for you through consultation with other divisions, and staff within the Department of Justice. The language used is intended to be inclusive and all attempts were made to use the most current terms at the time of printing.

Additionally, a group of your peers reviewed the information and contributed to the final edits. The goal of this handbook is to outline, and best represent the experience of being in custody.

Keep in mind that changes are inevitable, and there will be some differences in what is available to you between facilities.

If you have concerns with something at your facility, please let the staff know.

Amendments to the information in the handbook will be communicated to you at the facility.

