

ABCs TO BOP

AWARENESS BEFORE CONFINEMENT

U. S. Probation

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This newsletter will provide useful information to defendants and their families preparing for a commitment to a federal prison facility. It is hoped that this information will reduce anxiety defendants feel, and create a positive transition for defendants and their families. This information is a summary of information obtained from the Bureau of Prisons [BOP]. For more information, visit the BOP's website, www.bop.gov.

CONVICTION

Upon conviction, either by plea or jury trial, the Court will decide if the defendant will be remanded to the custody of the U. S. Marshals Service or be continued on bond. If remanded, the defendant will be placed in a local detention facility pending sentencing. If allowed to remain on bond, the Court may continue the bond as originally ordered, or impose additional conditions of release. Regarding Pretrial Services supervision, it is imperative that the defendant remain compliant with all conditions of release. Compliance with bond is evaluated by the BOP. Defendants in full compliance with pretrial supervision may receive a lower security classification at time of designation.



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CONVICTION CONT.

The Court will also order the U. S. Probation Office to prepare a Presentence Investigation Report. This report contains detailed information about the defendant's personal history, the offense conduct, and applicable statutes and sentencing guidelines. The Presentence Investigation Report will be submitted to the Court, the prosecuting attorney, and defense counsel, prior to sentencing. The U.S. Probation Officer may request the defendant provide certain documents, including marriage and birth certificates, divorce records, military records, financial information, tax return records, educational documents, verification of any medical conditions and medications, and the name and contact information of a person who can verify background information.

SENTENCING

At the sentencing hearing, the Court will determine what type of punitive measures the defendant will receive for committing his/her offense. If the Court sentences the defendant to a term of probation, the defendant will be required to report to the U. S. Probation Office immediately following the hearing. If a term of incarceration is imposed, the Court will again decide if the defendant will be detained pending transfer to the BOP, or be continued on bond pending self-surrender. If continued on bond, the defendant will be required to continue to report to his/her assigned pretrial officer. The U. S. Probation Office will continue to monitor and assist the defendant pending self-surrender.



DESIGNATION AND SELF-SURRENDER

After sentencing, the BOP's Designation and Sentence Computation Center determines to which correctional facility the defendant will report. The BOP attempts to designate defendants to facilities matching their security and program needs within a 500-mile radius of their release residence. If the defendant is placed at an institution that is more than 500 miles from his/her release residence, generally, it is due to specific security, programming or population concerns.



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DESIGNATION AND SELF-SURRENDER, CONT.

Defendants are designated/re-designated to institutions based on:

- ▶ the level of security and staff supervision the inmate requires,
- ▶ the level of security and staff supervision the institution provides,
- ▶ the medical classification care level of the inmate and the care level of the institution,
- ▶ the defendant's program needs (e.g., substance abuse treatment, educational/vocational training, individual and/or group counseling, medical/mental health treatment), and
- ▶ various administrative factors (e.g., institution bed space capacity; the inmate's release residence; judicial recommendations; separation needs; and security measures needed to ensure protection of victims, witnesses, and the general public).

The designation process usually takes approximately two to six weeks after sentencing. The defendant will receive a letter from the BOP via the U. S. Marshals Service with their designation information. The defendant is responsible for securing transportation to the designated facility. The defendant should contact his/her probation officer immediately if an emergency occurs and he/she is unable to self-surrender as designated.

TYPES OF FEDERAL FACILITIES

A defendant's security level is determined by the BOP based upon instant offense, prior record, history of violence, medical issues, and other factors, and based upon the defendant's program needs. There are five different security levels in the BOP: minimum, low, medium, high, and administrative.

Minimum: Also known as Federal Prison Camps [FPCs], have a relatively low staff-to-inmate ratio, and limited or no perimeter fencing. These institutions have dormitory housing, are work and program oriented and may be adjacent to larger institutions or a military base.

Low: Federal Correctional Institutions [FCIs] have double-fenced perimeters, mostly dormitory or cubicle housing, and strong work and program components.

Medium: FCIs (and U.S. Penitentiaries designated to house medium security inmates) have strengthened perimeters (often double fences with electronic detection systems), mostly cell-type housing, a wide variety of work and treatment programs, and greater internal controls.

High: Also known as U.S. Penitentiaries [USPs], have highly secured perimeters (featuring walls or reinforced fences), multiple and single cell housing, highest staff-to-inmate ratio, and close control of inmate movement.

Administrative: Facilities which have special missions, such as detention of non-citizens, medical facilities, or dangerous or violent inmates.



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TYPES OF FEDERAL FACILITIES, CONT.

Upon arrival at a new institution, an inmate is interviewed and screened by staff from the case management, medical, and mental health units. Later, an inmate is assigned to the Admission and Orientation (A&O) Program, where he or she receives a formal orientation to the programs, services, policies and procedures of that facility. This program provides an introduction to all aspects of the institution. Research has conclusively demonstrated that participation in a variety of programs that teach marketable skills helps to reduce recidivism. Additionally, institution misconduct can be significantly reduced through programs that emphasize personal responsibility, respect, and tolerance of others. Accordingly, the BOP offers a wide variety of program opportunities for inmates that teach pro-social values and life skills. These programs include literacy and occupational training, the Life Connections Program, parenting programs and mock job fairs.

VISITATION IN THE BOP

The BOP encourages visiting to help inmates maintain high morale and ties with family members, friends, and others in the community. Inmates are permitted face-to-face visits with approved family and friends, and confidential visits with attorneys. In most cases, handshakes, hugs and kisses are allowed at the beginning and end of a visit. The BOP does not permit conjugal visits. Each institution schedules visiting hours, and inmates receive this information during the orientation process so they can advise family members and others as to how and when they can visit. Institutions may restrict visitation based on security concerns. All institutions have visiting hours on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays; and most have them at other times during the week. Individual prisons can set up evening visiting hours. Institutions try to allow for families' special circumstances, such as the distance you have to travel or health problems. Staff can help with directions, including how to get there by public transportation when available; but there is no government payment or reimbursement for transportation. Visitors are encouraged to call the prison before you travel for a visit. The inmate you plan to visit should provide the visitation hours for their facility. By law, an inmate gets at least four hours of visiting time per month. Usually, the prison can provide more. The warden can decide to restrict the length of visits or the number of people who can visit at once, to avoid overcrowding in the visiting room. Sometimes the prison may have to limit visits per inmate to once per one day on a weekend because it is the most popular time to visit. A background check may be conducted on each visitor, and the inmate will be provided a Visitor Information Form to send each proposed visitor. Inmates are informed if someone will not be allowed to visit.



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ELECTRONIC MESSAGING (E-MAIL)

The BOP allows inmates housed at institutions operating the Trust Fund Limited Inmate Computer System [TRULINCS] access to electronic messaging. Electronic messaging through the use of email allows for text-only correspondence in a secured manner between inmates and the general public. In order to maintain security and the good order of the institutions, electronic messages are subject to monitoring. It should be noted that inmates do not have access to the internet.

WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

The BOP encourages inmates to write to family, friends, and other community contacts to maintain ties during incarceration. Inmate correspondence is classified as either "general" or "special" mail. "General mail" is opened and inspected by staff for both contraband and content that might threaten the security or good order of the institution. Incoming "special mail" is opened only in the presence of the inmate and is inspected for physical contraband and the qualification of any enclosures as special mail. The Program Statement on Correspondence should be consulted for a detailed discussion of "general" and "special" mail procedures. The BOP permits an inmate to subscribe to or receive publications (magazines, newspapers) directly from a retail source without prior approval as long as the incoming publication is not detrimental to the security, discipline, or good order of the institution, or does not facilitate criminal activity.

TELEPHONES

The BOP extends telephone privileges to inmates to help maintain ties with their families and other community contacts. Ordinarily, the inmate pays for the calls; but in some cases the receiving party pays. Limitations and conditions may be imposed upon an inmate's telephone privileges to ensure they are consistent with BOP correctional movement responsibilities. A notice is posted next to each telephone advising inmates that calls are monitored. Unmonitored calls to attorneys are permitted in certain circumstances. Third-party or other alternative calling arrangements are not permitted; this ensures inmates do not have the opportunity to use phones for criminal or other inappropriate purposes.



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PERSONAL PROPERTY

For security, safety, and sanitation reasons, the BOP limits the amount of property (jewelry, photographs, books, magazines, etc.) inmates may have and the types of publications inmates can receive. The institution issues clothing, hygiene items, bedding, and provides laundry services. Inmates may purchase other personal care items, shoes, some recreational clothing, and some food items through the commissary. The commissary is a facility store where approved items can be purchased. Civilian clothing (i.e. clothing not issued to the inmate or purchased by the inmate from the commissary) ordinarily is not authorized for the inmate. The only packages an inmate may receive from home are those containing release clothing. Release clothing packages may only be received with prior approval by the inmate's unit team or authorized staff member within the last 30 days of confinement. Inmates may only possess those items they are authorized to retain upon admission to the institution, items issued by authorized staff, items purchased by the inmate from the commissary, or items purchased or received through approved channels (to include that approved for receipt by an authorized staff member or authorized by institution guidelines). All other items are considered contraband and will be seized and disposed of (destroyed, mailed out of the institution at the inmate's expense, etc.) in accordance with BOP regulations. Contraband that threatens the security of the institution may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution for the inmate.

INMATE MONEY

Funds for inmates may be mailed via the U.S. Postal Service, or electronically via the Western Union Quick Collect Program or the Money Gram Express Payment Program. Inmates' families and friends choosing to send funds through the mail must send those funds to the following address: ***Federal Bureau of Prisons, Inmate Name, Inmate Eight Digit Register Number, Post Office Box 474701, Des Moines, Iowa 50947-0001***. The deposit must be in the form of a money order made out to the inmate's full committed name (court name) and complete eight-digit register number. The BOP will return funds that do not have valid inmate information to the sender provided the envelope has an adequate return address. Personal checks and cash cannot be accepted for deposit. The sender's name and return address must appear on the upper left-hand corner of the envelope to ensure that the funds can be returned to the sender in the event they cannot be posted to the inmate's account. The deposit envelope must not contain any items intended for delivery to the inmate. The BOP shall dispose of all items included with the funds. In the event funds have been mailed but have not been received in the inmate's account and adequate time has passed for mail service to Des Moines, Iowa, the sender must initiate a tracer with the entity who sold them the money order to resolve any issues.

Refer to the BOP website (www.bop.gov) for instructions regarding sending funds via the Western Union Quick Collect Program or the Money Gram Express Payment Program.



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EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The BOP offers a variety of programs for inmates to acquire literacy and marketable skills to help them obtain employment after release. All institutions offer literacy classes, English as a Second Language, parenting classes, wellness education, adult continuing education, library services, and instruction in leisure-time activities. In most cases, inmates who do not have a high school diploma or a General Educational Development [GED] certificate must participate in the literacy program for a minimum of 240 hours or until they obtain the GED. Non-English-speaking inmates must take English as a Second Language. Occupational and vocational training programs are based on the needs of the inmates, general labor market conditions, and institution labor force needs. An important component is on-the-job training, which inmates receive through institution job assignments and work in Federal Prison Industries. The BOP also facilitates post-secondary education in vocational and occupationally-oriented areas. Some traditional college courses are available, but inmates are responsible for funding this course work. Parenting classes help inmates develop appropriate skills during incarceration. Recreation and wellness activities encourage healthy lifestyles and habits. Institution libraries carry a variety of fiction and nonfiction books, magazines, newspapers, and reference materials. Inmates also have access to legal materials to conduct legal research and prepare legal documents. Through the Inmate Skills Development System [ISDS] initiative, the BOP is focusing on building the kinds of skills essential to successful reintegration - ranging from activities of daily living (such as budgeting) to cognitive skills (such as the ability to maintain self-control). Once fully implemented, the process will involve identifying inmate

strengths and weaknesses using a standardized assessment tool, linking programs used to specific deficit areas, and tracking the inmate's progress on his/her individualized plan throughout incarceration. Developed in collaboration with other agencies, including the courts and probation, the Inmate Skills Development System [ISDS] -- the automated, web-based, assessment and tracking tool that supports this initiative -- was created to help staff identify an inmate's strengths and weaknesses, as these relate to release readiness. Once fully integrated with the BOP legacy information system, the ISDS is expected to:

- help link inmates with the most appropriate programs given their specific needs,
- ensure all parties are focused on the same measurable outcomes,
- assist in program resource allocation, and
- improve information flow to partners with a stake in the outcome (the Courts, supervision agencies, etc.).



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EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, CONT.

Dynamic in nature, the ISDS, which is being implemented at all BOP institutions, incorporates information from a variety of sources, including court documents and behavioral observations. It is administered at the beginning of an inmate's sentence, with subsequent updates to the assessment information over the course of the inmate's incarceration, and can be shared with supervision agencies. By providing inmates with programs most appropriate to their identified deficit areas, the BOP anticipates that inmates will be better-prepared and more likely to succeed. Upon release, this is expected to be particularly useful for those offenders with the greatest needs. Close inter- and intra-agency collaboration is essential to achieving optimal reentry outcomes. A number of interagency initiatives are underway, the most comprehensive being the National Workforce Development Partnership, which also includes representatives from the U. S. Departments of Education, Labor, Veterans

Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, and Health and Human Services; the Administrative Office of the U. S. Courts; the Office of Probation and Pretrial Services; the National Institute of Corrections; the Legal Action Center - National Hire Network; and others. For offenders, the definition of viable employment is being able to support themselves and succeed as law-abiding citizens; and this partnership is designed to enhance reentry success by increasing opportunities for career-oriented employment of ex-offenders and addressing barriers to offender employment. The BOP is committed to the goal of creating a seamless transition between incarceration and the community that ensures continuity of support and care. This coordinated, competency-based model for reentry is expected to help increase the likelihood of a successful community transition upon release.

RELIGIOUS INFORMATION

Institutions schedule religious services and meeting times for inmates of many faiths. Religious programs are led or supervised by staff chaplains, contract spiritual leaders, and community volunteers. Inmates can observe religious holy days and wear and use religious items consistent with their faith as long as this is consistent with policy and with the security, safety, and good order of the institution.

FEMALE OFFENDERS

Of the 27 facilities that currently house female inmates, all have mixed populations except for Alderson, Bryan, Carswell, Danbury, Dublin, Tallahassee, and Waseca. Dublin and Tallahassee have a small male detention unit. For more information on women's facilities, see the BOP website (www.bop.gov).



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SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Over the last 20 years, the BOP has maintained a basic philosophy of cognitive behavioral treatment, but adapts when effective advances emerge, including: moving programs to an interactive format, and implementing a well-designed, evidence-based, modified therapeutic community. The BOP has incorporated numerous positive changes in how treatment is conducted, ongoing legal adjustments and challenges, drug abuse treatment program expansion, and the beginning of psychology treatment programs that provide treatment opportunities to the mentally ill and those with behavior problems.

The drug abuse strategy used by the BOP, which is a treatment continuum, includes drug abuse education classes, non-residential drug abuse treatment, residential drug treatment [RDAP], institutional transitional aftercare, and community transitional drug abuse treatment. Drug abuse education programs are offered at every BOP institution. Non-residential drug abuse treatment is offered at every BOP institution for offenders with low-level drug problems, those waiting to enter RDAP, or those who do not have the time to enter and complete RDAP. RDAP is designed for those individuals who volunteer for treatment and have documented drug abuse problems. This program is available at more than half of the BOP institutions. Institutional transition aftercare is offered at every BOP institution for inmates who have completed RDAP. Community transitional drug abuse treatment is available to inmates who have completed RDAP and transferred to a residential reentry center [RRC] in preparation for their release from BOP custody and transfer to U.S. Probation for continued supervision.

Many individuals have questions regarding RDAP. To qualify for RDAP, an inmate must have a documented pattern of substance abuse in the 12 months prior to arrest for which he/she is serving his/her current sentence, be able to complete all three phases of RDAP (including community transition drug abuse treatment), and be diagnosed by the drug abuse program psychologist as having a drug use disorder. The Director of the BOP, at his or her discretion, can provide up to one year early release for non-violent inmates who complete the entire RDAP if they meet various criteria.

HEALTH CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The BOP provides essential medical, dental, and mental health (psychiatric) services by professional staff in a manner consistent with accepted community standards for a correctional environment. The BOP uses licensed and credentialed health care providers in its ambulatory care units, which are supported by community consultants and specialists. For inmates with chronic or acute medical conditions, the BOP operates several medical referral centers providing advanced care. The BOP provides a full range of mental health treatment through staff psychologists and psychiatrists. Psychologists are available for formal counseling and treatment on an individual and group basis.



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TEMPORARY RELEASE FROM CUSTODY

Under special, limited circumstances, inmates who meet strict requirements may be allowed temporary releases from the institution through furloughs and staff-escorted trips.

Furloughs allow inmates to be in the community without a staff escort. There are several purposes for furloughs; for example:

- ✓ enabling inmates to be present during a family crisis,
- ✓ facilitating re-establishment of family and community ties, and
- ✓ allowing an inmate to participate in certain activities to help his/her release transition.

Staff-escorted trips may be authorized by the BOP for purposes such as:

- ✓ visiting a critically-ill family member,
- ✓ attending a funeral,
- ✓ receiving medical treatment, or
- ✓ participating in educational, religious, or work-related functions.

RELEASE PREPARATION

The prospect of having to search for meaningful work upon release from prison can be a daunting one, particularly for inmates who have been out of the labor market for a number of years. Many inmates acquire valuable work experience and skills through programs like Federal Prison Industries [FPI], vocational training opportunities, and/or other occupational education courses offered at BOP facilities. But inmates nearing release in today's society need to re-learn -- or perhaps for the first time -- learn how to effectively "search for a job." Although it is the philosophy of the BOP that release preparation begins the first day of incarceration, focus on release preparation intensifies at least 18 months prior to release. The Release Preparation Program includes classes in areas such as resume writing, job search, and job retention. The program also includes presentations by community-based organizations that help ex-inmates find jobs and training opportunities after release. The BOP places appropriate inmates in halfway houses prior to release to help them adjust to life in the community and find employment. Some inmates will be eligible for a release gratuity, clothing, or money for transportation to their release destination. The Inmate Transition Branch provides additional pre-release employment assistance. Many institutions hold mock job fairs to provide inmates an opportunity to practice job interview skills and to expose community recruiters to the skills available among releasing inmates. Qualified inmates may apply for jobs with companies that have posted job openings. This branch also helps inmates prepare release folders that include a resume; education certificates, diplomas, and transcripts; and other significant documents needed for a successful job interview.



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MID-ATLANTIC REGION LOCATIONS

