

How to Navigate the Jail System

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE JAIL SYSTEM: INFORMATION FOR THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

CULTURE: HEALTH DEPARTMENT *Priority: Health & Well-Being*

- The WHO (World Health Organization) defines health as: "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." This is the Health Department's main priority when attempting to treat patients who reside inside of correctional facilities.
- Health Department workers are willing to help in any way that they can, and follow a specific set of rules when it comes to research and/or treatment.
- The culture of the Health Department is not as strict as the culture in most jails. However, there are rules to follow.
- Public health does not usually provide patient care, but there are exceptions, such as the treatment of tuberculosis in jails.



Handout for Jail to Give Health Department

CULTURE: JAIL SYSTEM *Priority: SECURITY & SAFETY*

- The correctional system prioritizes order to maintain security and safety. Facilities are very rule-centered.
- Correctional facilities have a strict dress code for outsiders. It is uniform and conservative.
- Security concerns make it difficult for correctional facilities to partner with outside entities.



TWO MISSIONS, ALIGNED *Public Health IS Public Safety*

- The goal is to get the partnering correctional facilities to understand that public health is another form of public safety.
- Health efforts such as health education, preventative screening, and treatment helps to contribute to the facility's mission of safety.

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RULES FOR VISITORS *Being a Guest in a Correctional Facility*

- Individual facilities may vary in terms of specific rules, but generally remembering to behave like a guest is a good first rule.
- No contraband. For example, cell phones or medications that have not been approved prior to the visit.
- Get permission for everything. If it is something that has not specifically been stated or requested, ask permission to be sure.
- Dress conservatively – as though you were going to church or to visit your grandparents.
- Be respectful to both employees and inmates.



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WHAT TO DO *Navigating Behavior & Relationships*

- Understand the facility's hierarchy. Know who the warden is, the person at the front desk, the medical staff, etc.
- Establish relationships with the authorities. Make an effort to be friendly with employees and authority figures.
- Ask very specific questions. For example: "What are types of screenings and treatment is your facility lacking? Is there anything specific you'd like us to provide?"
- Be as flexible as possible, but also be deliberate. Be sure and keep both the goals of the Health Department and the correctional facility in mind.



CONTACT INFORMATION
[FACILITY NAME]
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP
PHONE #
CONTACT NAME