



DEPARTMENT OF  
**CORRECTIONS**  
ARA POUTAMA AOTEAROA

# THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING WITH CORRECTIONS

## **We appreciate what you do and value your time and effort!**

About 3,000 of you give your time to help prisoners or offenders on a community sentence or order. You bring the community with you into prison and you help prisoners stay connected.

You also give offenders on a community sentence or order the chance to reconnect in a positive way with their community.

This helps us greatly to reach our goal of reducing re-offending by 25% by 2017.

In these pages you can find important information to make volunteering with Corrections a safe and pleasant experience.

Please contact your volunteer coordinator if you have any questions.

**CONTACT US** E. [volunteering@corrections.govt.nz](mailto:volunteering@corrections.govt.nz)



## Volunteer Agreement

Before you start volunteering you will have signed a Volunteer Agreement. A copy will be retained by the Department and you will be provided with a copy.

## Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct describes the principles of the Department and the standard of behaviour expected of all staff, contactors, consultants and volunteers. This will be provided to you and you are required to sign the Code of Conduct to acknowledge that you have received, read and understood it.

## Confidentiality and media contact

You are required to keep all information confidential and not to communicate any offender details or make statements to the media.

You should refer media enquiries to the Department's Communications Team on (04) 460 3365 or [commdesk@corrections.govt.nz](mailto:commdesk@corrections.govt.nz).

The Communications Team would like to hear your good news stories as well!

## For prison volunteers – entering the prison

You need to ensure that you:

- > **pre-arrange your visit:** The volunteer coordinator or prison chaplain can help you with this. In the secure environment of a prison, it may take some time to move around the site, allow plenty of time. Our staff will be pleased to assist you, but they may have other urgent things to do.
- > **have the correct documentation:** You will be issued with an Authorised Provider Prison Entry (APPE) ID card. You must bring this to gain entry every time that you come to the prison.
- > **are free of prohibited items.**

## Crimestoppers 0800 555 111

Know something about a crime but want to remain anonymous?

Call CRIMESTOPPERS on 0800 555 111. This number is free of charge to confidentially pass information to Corrections on any crime or prison-related matter, including the trafficking of drugs.



## Recognising volunteers

Volunteer recognition awards and morning teas are held periodically to thank volunteers for their great work. Such events are also a valuable opportunity for volunteers and Corrections staff to get together to make new connections and cement long-standing ones.

Volunteers could be eligible to make a one-off claim for petrol vouchers during each financial year (1 July – 30 June).

## Concerns

Please speak up if you have any issues or complaints. In the first instance you should talk to your volunteer coordinator or the prison chaplain.

If anyone has a complaint about your behaviour, a Corrections staff member will let you know and explain why. Further training might be an option or switching to other tasks.

If the matter cannot be resolved, the Department may decide to deny you access into prison and/or end the volunteer agreement with you. In this case you will be advised in writing with the reasons for this (in accordance with relevant legislation).

## Conflict of interest

Because of a possible conflict of interest, you must tell your volunteer coordinator if you are thinking of:

- > attending a Parole Board hearing with or for a prisoner
- > writing to the Parole Board about a prisoner
- > corresponding with a prisoner or ex-prisoner
- > giving your personal contact details to a prisoner
- > becoming a specified visitor for a prisoner
- > visiting a prisoner as a casual day visitor
- > employing a prisoner on Release to Work
- > giving a prisoner a job on release
- > giving accommodation to an ex-prisoner (whether in your own home or in somebody else's).

You should declare if your circumstances change as there might be a conflict of interest in your new situation.



# 10 TOP TIPS *for staying safe*

## **1 NOTHING IN AND NOTHING OUT**

Take nothing in and bring nothing out of the prison. Alcohol, drugs, weapons, anything that can be used as a weapon, cards, cell phones, cameras and portable digital devices are expressly forbidden. Don't bring in keys, purses or wallets. Prison volunteers may be able to leave items with the gate staff but, if you can, leave your possessions at home or in your car.

You will need the written permission of prison management to take in any specific equipment or materials required for your volunteering. This can be arranged by the volunteer coordinator.

Prisons are also smokefree so do not bring any cigarettes or lighters into the prison.

## **2 ALWAYS COMPLY WITH THE INSTRUCTIONS OF CORRECTIONS STAFF**

It is vitally important for everyone's safety to comply when a Corrections staff member asks you to do something. Even though it might not be immediately obvious why. For example, don't linger when you have been told it is time to leave and stay with your group if you are part of a volunteering team. And always make sure prison staff know where you are.

## **3 DRESS CONSERVATIVELY**

Do not wear tight or revealing clothing.

## **4 NEVER TRADE OR ACCEPT/GIVE A GIFT**

You must never enter any business transactions with a prisoner or offender (eg agree to sell his/her artwork) nor accept or give a gift to a prisoner, including their friends and families.

## **5 PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION AND THAT OF OTHERS**

You should never disclose your home address or personal telephone number to a prisoner, or that of other volunteers and staff.

If a prisoner asks you for support when they leave prison, you must pass their request on to the volunteer coordinator or prison chaplain who will find the best person to help them. If a prisoner asks for your support when they leave prison, you must talk with the volunteer coordinator or prison chaplain before you agree. It is important that you continue to protect your personal information and that of others if you decide to keep on supporting the prisoner on release.

## **6 AVOID GOSSIP**

Never discuss information or pass on gossip about other prisoners, volunteers or Corrections staff.

## **7 BE CAREFUL ABOUT PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Restrict any physical contact with prisoners to that which is necessary to carry out your role appropriately. Know what the boundaries are. A handshake is usually appreciated.

## **8 BE AWARE OF CON GAMES**

Some prisoners have spent their lives deceiving others or being deceived. Some may work on your sympathy or guilt feelings to get what they want. Prisoners may tell you some very convincing stories, especially when trying to get something from you.

## **9 LEARN TO SAY NO**

Always trust your instincts and say 'No' to unreasonable or manipulative requests from prisoners. If for any reason you don't feel you can say 'No' when you want to, say that you will check the request with a Corrections staff member.

## **10 ALWAYS REPORT YOUR CONCERNS**

If you have concerns, feel uncertain or worried, or believe a prisoner is targeting you, stop what you are doing and talk to a staff member. If you feel unsafe at any time speak to a member of staff immediately.