

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

MISSION STATEMENT

Keep New York City communities safe by securely and safely detaining inmates and preparing them for successful community reentry after their release from jail.

07/18/2014



MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

The New York City Department of Correction aims to work in conjunction with the community to pool resources together in order to render a variety of services to the inmate population. Through these services we hope to supply a positive foundation for these individuals that will give them the tools needed to successfully reenter society and in turn reduce recidivism. Volunteers are an integral component in these efforts. We welcome and appreciate the contributions of all those who are willing to give of themselves and their time to assist in the delivery of these services.

Joseph Ponte

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

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CONTACTING VOLUNTEER SERVICES

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION OFFICE OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES

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AM I QUALIFIED TO BE A VOLUNTEER?

Eligibility for volunteer service with NYC DOC is considered without regard to race, color, religion, gender, nationality, age, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, disability or any other legally protected status. NYC DOC reserves the right to deny applications based on security concerns.

All applications will be considered with the exception of those applicants who:

- Have a conviction for a violation, misdemeanor or felony in the past three years
- Have been under probation, parole, or post release supervision within the last three years
- Have served any jail or prison time within the last three years
- Have any criminal charges pending
- Fail to disclose previous or current criminal justice involvement
- Have been dismissed from a DOC facility or had their DOC Volunteer Identification Card revoked

HOW DO I BECOME A VOLUNTEER?

- Complete and submit a volunteer application via mail, fax or email to the DOC Staff Sponsor of your volunteer program or the Director of Volunteer Services. *(Applications can be found on the DOC home page or can be sent to you by fax or mail.)*
- Attend an orientation scheduled by volunteer services and be fingerprinted
- Clear a background check
- Receive a Volunteer Identification Card which will provide you with clearance to enter specified DOC facilities on designated days and times listed on the Volunteer Identification Card

Note: In order to be provided with a Volunteer Identification Card, you must produce state/government issued non-expired photo identification. The following is a list of acceptable forms of identification:

- DMV Driver's license/Non-Driver's identification card
- Resident alien or permanent resident card issued by the U.S. Department of Justice
- Passport *(from any country)*
- NYS benefits identification card *(Medicaid/food stamp photo ID)*
- US Armed Services identification
- Consulate-issued or diplomatic identification

APPROPRIATE USE AND SAFEGUARDING OF YOUR VOLUNTEER IDENTIFICATION CARD

1. A Volunteer Identification Card is provided to all authorized volunteers working with the NYC DOC. Once you receive your Volunteer Identification Card, you must carry it on your person any time you travel to any DOC facility that you are authorized to visit. Any volunteer who forgets his/her Volunteer Identification Card will not be allowed to enter the facility. Volunteer Identification Cards are valid for one year from the date issued.
2. You are required to show your Volunteer Identification Card at the Samuel M. Perry Control Building with an additional authorized piece of identification (see pg. 4) , which must also have your recent photo. Additionally, you must show your Volunteer Identification Card at every checkpoint and/or when you are required to do so by any member of the Department requesting to see it.
3. You must surrender your Volunteer Identification Card at the Control Room or Front Gate of the DOC facility you are entering. Then you will receive an institutional ID card, which you will wear on your outermost garment. This ID card is limited to only those areas where you are authorized to work. Upon leaving the facility, you will exchange the institutional ID for your Volunteer Identification Card. Any unauthorized use of the institutional ID and/or the Volunteer Identification Card will be cause for dismissal as a volunteer with the NYC DOC.
4. If your Volunteer Identification Card is lost or stolen you must first report the loss to the Office of Volunteer Services. Then you must report it to the police precinct nearest the location where you believe that it was lost or stolen. A copy of this report must be submitted to the Office of Volunteer Services before a replacement ID card is issued.

Note: If for any reason your services are terminated, or you are no longer affiliated with the organization from which you received the Volunteer Identification Card, you must surrender your Identification Card to Volunteer Services.

AT THE FACILITY

1. You are required to print and sign your name and the exact time of arrival and departure in the logbook located at the front entrance of the facility upon entering and leaving the facility.
2. Identify yourself to the front gate officer and tell him/her your reason for being there.
3. Expect your person and your bags to be searched and scanned through a magnetometer and/or with a transfrisker.
4. After you are escorted to your program area, conduct your program in a professional manner.
5. At the conclusion of the program, notify the area officer so that you can be escorted to the front gate to exit the facility.
6. Upon leaving the facility, you will exchange the institutional ID for your Volunteer Identification Card.

SECURITY EXPECTATIONS

As a volunteer, the New York City Department of Correction is concerned about your safety and maintaining security in all DOC facilities. The following list is a quick reference to facility procedures. They are designed to assist you in conducting your program services in a safe manner while you are in the confines of any facility.

Secure your personal items such as wallets, money and jewelry in your vehicle or lockers located at the facility.

Expect tight security.

Clothing must always be professional. Dress to avoid attention. Avoid dressing in spandex type clothing; avoid wearing clothing that may be identified as gang colors. Do not wear see through clothing.

Understand and follow all Departmental and facility policies and procedures. Ask questions if you need clarity on any of the policies and procedures.

Recognize manipulative behavior by inmates and always use common sense and good judgment when working with them.

Inmates may try to influence the decisions you will make while you are performing your assigned duties. Do not allow them to USE YOU to obtain THEIR objectives.

Take **nothing** from inmates, give **nothing** to inmates!

Your safety depends on YOUR alertness to any situation, which may occur while you work in a correctional setting.

SECURITY GUIDELINES

- Do not share your address or telephone numbers with inmates. Give them the name and telephone number of your organization instead.
- Do not accept letters or packages from family or friends to deliver to an inmate. Likewise, do not accept letters from inmates for mailing.
- Do not give (*lend*) inmates your pens or pencils because they can be used as weapons.
- Do not bring clothes to inmates.
- Do not take messages back and forth. You may be inadvertently carrying coded messages.
- Do not discuss your personal business with inmates.
- Do not use your Volunteer Identification Card to see family members or friends that are incarcerated.
- Do not bring excessive amounts of money or wear excessive jewelry or heavy makeup while working with the inmates.
- Do not use vulgar language or inmate slang. You could defeat your purpose by doing this.
- Do not share information or divulge stories with an inmate that you would be embarrassed to share with co-workers.
- Do not be taken in by inmates. Some inmates will act how they think you want them to act to get their desired result.
- If you believe that you or someone else (e.g.: staff, inmates, etc.) have done something, or said something that is inappropriate, tell the Director of Volunteer Services, your DOC Staff Sponsor, and the facility's

Deputy Warden for Programs so that you can be advised of next steps. The DOC Staff Sponsor is defined as the DOC Staff person who reviewed your application and proposed programming prior to start of your services to the Department.

- Do the right thing. Be respectful, firm, fair, and consistent.
- Promptly report any family or friends you may encounter in a correctional facility to the facility's Security Deputy Warden and to the Office of Volunteer Services.

Note: Familiarize yourself with the staff (*uniformed/non-uniformed*) within the facility and notify them if you have any questions or concerns.

ITEMS NOT PERMITTED IN ANY FACILITY

To ensure the safety and well-being of the inmate population, DOC staff, visitors, and volunteers all are required to be familiar with the following:

Definition: CONTRABAND IS ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
Any article of things...

- (a) the possession of which would constitute an offense under any law applicable to the public.
- (b) which is readily capable of being used to cause death or serious physical injury, including, but not limited to a handgun, shoulder gun, cartridge, knife, explosive, or dangerous drug.
- (c) that is possessed by an inmate and is not specifically authorized to be possessed by an inmate in a City correction institution pursuant to the rules of the Department of Correction's institution wherein the inmate is housed.
- (d) that is introduced into a correctional institution under circumstances indicating an intent to transfer same to an inmate without the permission of the Warden or his/her designee.

The items listed below are considered contraband and are not permitted in any of the DOC facilities:

- Guns, (*including stun guns and zip guns*), bullets, and imitation guns and bullets, illegal drugs, mace or pepper spray
- Syringes
- Knives, imitation knives, box cutters, needles, razors, hobby blades, scalpels, scissors, other sharp objects, brass knuckles and any other weapons
- Tools

- Metal or glass objects
- Nail clippers and fingernail files
- Tobacco products and related paraphernalia including cigarettes, cigars, rolling paper, chewing tobacco, and pipes
- Electronic devices including cellular telephones, cellular telephone accessories, personal digital assistants, portable media players, pagers, beepers, laptops, cameras, recording devices, iPods, MP3 players, iPads, E-Readers and radios
- Padlocks
- Law enforcement badges, equipment and facsimiles
- Metal hairclips and hairpins
- Non-prescription sunglasses or medications
- Photographs
- Explosive devices, matches or lighters
- Gum
- Tape and other adhesives of any kind
- Handcuff keys
- Pencil sharpeners

The possession of contraband or the introduction of contraband into a jail may subject you to criminal prosecution. Any visitor or any person who tries to introduce contraband into a facility may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Note: All materials needed for programming must be approved by the DOC Staff Sponsor of your volunteer program and the respective facility's Deputy Warden for Programs prior to the commencement of the program.

PROMOTING PRISON CONTRABAND IN THE FIRST DEGREE PENAL LAW SECTION 205.25

A person is guilty of promoting prison contraband in the first degree when:

- (a) He knowingly and unlawfully introduces any dangerous contraband into a detention facility; or
- (b) Being a person confined in a detention facility, he knowingly and unlawfully makes, obtains or possesses any dangerous contraband.

Promoting prison contraband in the first degree is a class D felony.

PROMOTING PRISON CONTRABAND IN THE SECOND DEGREE PENAL LAW SECTION 205.20

A person is guilty of promoting prison contraband in the second degree when:

- (a) He/She knowingly and unlawfully introduces any contraband into a detention facility; or
- (b) Being a person confined to a detention facility, he knowingly and unlawfully makes, obtains or possesses any contraband.

Promoting prison contraband in the second degree is a class A misdemeanor.

GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL/SUSPENSION

Volunteers may be dismissed or suspended if they are deemed to be in violation of Departmental rules and regulations. If the appropriate processes of registration, screening, orientation, and training are fully adhered to, the dismissal of volunteers should be a rare incident.

A volunteer who commits a violation shall be immediately/ temporarily suspended while an investigation is conducted in accordance with Departmental procedure. If the investigation produces negative findings or if criminal charges are founded the volunteer will be dismissed.

When a volunteer commits a violation, the Deputy Warden for Security or a designee for the facility will determine the severity of the event. The Deputy Warden or a designee assigned to investigate the incident will retrieve the necessary information in writing from those who observed the incident. All of the facts will then be documented and reported to the Associate Commissioner of Programs and Discharge Planning and the Deputy Chief of the Department.

The volunteer should report any and all incidents to his/her supervisor (*if one is available*), group leader, and DOC staff sponsor.

A volunteer may opt to resign from his/her volunteer status at any time by returning the Volunteer Identification Card to the Office of Volunteer Services.

Note: A person may be subject to criminal prosecution for promoting prison contraband, accepting/offering bribes, intimidating of witnesses, or any other illegal acts.

For over 20 years volunteers have entered the Department of Corrections providing a variety of services such as religious, legal, educational tutoring, employment assistance, art courses, musical and dramatic entertainment. In recent years, individual volunteers and representatives of community service groups have contributed to the development and implementation of programs designed to provide motivation, self-awareness and individual growth. Others serve as specialized consultants to facility staff or expend boundless energy in the mobilization of local community resources, both in financial and human services, in support of the correction facility and its inmates.

This type of cooperation between the public, private and voluntary sectors has helped to promote growth and development within the Department of Correction. In addition it continues to help dispel negative stigmas, focus on reality and create new, meaningful programs and services for the inmates.



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