# GUIDELINES FOR ALL VISITORS IN CORRECTIONS

The following guidelines are written to assist any Visitor coming into this facility to work with inmates, either individually or with groups. Both the Staff and the Visitor must strictly adhere to these guidelines or rules in order to provide for an efficient and well functioning program.

The Administration and Staff at Chester County Prison wish to thank you for demonstrating your concern and contributing your time and energy. We hope that the time you spend with us will be rewarding and productive.

## A. GENERAL RULES

1. All visitors will be required to have an Identification Document (e.g. Drivers License) with them when they visit the prison.

2. Vehicles must be locked at all times. Do not leave any contraband such as implements for escape, medications, or weapons in your vehicle. Do not bring cellular phones cameras or tape recorders into the building.

3. Do not bring anything into the facility for an inmate no matter how innocent or trivial it seems.

It is advisable for you to adopt a policy of saying “no” to <u>any</u> request such as this. Even items such as cigarettes, money, magazines, books, photos, chewing gum, lighters, matches, personal hygiene items, colored paper, highlighters, markers, pens, pencils, etc., are not permitted to be brought in by you to give to the inmates. Inmates can purchase everything they need through the institution commissary (canteen). Contact the Program Coordinator for clearance of any items.

4. Do not take anything out of the facility for any inmate no matter how innocent or trivial it seems at the time. This includes letters to be mailed outside. Too often, by attempting to be a nice person, everyone involved, including the inmate, gets into trouble.

5. Avoid personal involvement with an inmate’s life and /or legal case by not making personal contact with their family or friends. This very frequently does more harm than good to you, the inmate, and their family.

6. Respect and treat inmates as human beings, inmates are people like yourself. Treat inmates the way you would like to be treated.

a. Avoid flaunting your stature in the community or any personal matters with the inmates.
b. Don’t look down on inmates. Remember, they have feelings like you.
c. Avoid trying to be “one of the boys”. Be yourself.

7. Do not make promises or “favors”. Never promise an inmate something just to get him “off your back” or to sound like a “nice guy”.

8. Avoid being naive or gullible. Occasionally, inmates will attempt to dazzle you with “footwork”. In other words, they will do anything to lure you into a compromising situation.

9. Be firm and fair in any decisions on your part. Do not favor any particular inmate(s). Do not show partiality in any situation. Be consistent.

10. All correspondence and telephone calls relative to business of the facility must be cleared through the staff.

Inmates are not permitted to make calls on staff telephones at anytime. If an inmate requests a telephone call, refer them to the Program Coordinator. Inmates are permitted telephone privileges to take care of personal affairs. Do not make phone calls on their behalf.

11. No individual will strike or lay hands on an inmate unless in self-defense. Only the least amount of force necessary to control a situation is to be used for self-defense. If at anytime you feel unsafe with an inmate alert any staff member immediately.

12. Any unusual situations or information received, which could threaten person, property, or security, must be relayed immediately by alerting the prison staff.

13. An office is never to be left unlocked, nor is an inmate to be permitted in an office unsupervised by staff.

14. When answering a telephone, always give your name and location. When calling another party, always make sure that they identify themselves and their location. Know to whom you are speaking.

15. Should you be issued keys or an ID card, always keep them on you and displayed at all times. Never remove keys or ID cards from the facility. They must be returned to the proper authority before leaving the facility. NEVER GIVE KEYS TO AN INMATE.

16. Volunteers are not permitted to be by themselves in areas other than assigned.

17. The ranking official on duty is responsible for the institution. It is their responsibility to conduct the affairs of the facility, as they deem necessary for proper operation. Should any controversy arise, you are expected to abide by the decisions of the ranking official at the time. You may discuss any issues with higher authorities at a later time.

18. Individuals may be subject to search upon entering or leaving the institution.

19. All individuals working with inmates may be subjected to legal implications. Two examples of this are
a. penalties for bringing contraband into a correctional facility, and
b. potential law suits by inmates.

20. Avoid feeling sorry for inmates. Know the difference between sympathy and empathy.

21. Remember that all information concerning inmate is confidential. Do not discuss this information outside the institution.

22. The use of video equipment or tape recorders must be pre-approved through the Program Coordinator and the prison administrators.

23. Finally, do not lie to inmates. Be honest and be yourself.

**B. DRESS CODE**

1. In accordance with the County of Chester's governmental operating policy, all Professional Visitors and Community Volunteers are expected to maintain good grooming and dress practices so that their appearance:
a. promotes a business-like image while inside the facility,
b. will not violate generally accepted standards within the business community, and c. will not violate safety rules.
2. Your attire should complement an environment that reflects an efficient, orderly and professionally operated organization.

3. Maintain a neat appearance at all times. Dress professionally. Your physical appearance will help establish a well working relationship with the inmate.

4. Males - clothing should be neat and clean. A coat and tie not required, but long trousers, shoes, and a shirt with long or short sleeves are required. Avoid t-shirts with screen prints.

5. Females - slacks, skirts, or dresses with an appropriate top are required. Shorts and extremely short skirts (above mid-thigh) are not permitted.

6. Shoes must be worn.

7. If an individual's attire is questionable, the Duty Officer or his designee will determine if the individual is in violation of above and admittance is to be denied.

8. **The following is considered unacceptable at any time in the Prison and may prohibit your ability to enter the facility:**

a. torn or ripped clothing,
b. spandex and/or skin-tight outfits of any type or material,
c. sweat or warm up suits,
d. shorts,
e. excessively baggy pants or clothing that can conceal items or cause a safety hazard,
f. exposed undergarments,
g. tops that are low cut or exposing,
h. cleavage, bare midriffs and bare backs,
i. spaghetti strap top, strapless top, halter neck top, mesh top, tank top
j. see-through blouses or shirts,
k. tube tops, crop tops, half shirts,
l. low riding or sag style pants,
m. boxer shorts worn as outerwear,
n. shirts that have sexually suggestive writing and/or pictures or advocate violence or promote or advertise the use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs or have double meaning wording or obscene language or are disrespectful or offensive to others,
o. bedroom slippers,
p. flip flops,
q. spiked jewelry or chains or any jewelry that could cause injury or constitute a hazard,
r. hats, caps, bandanas, hoods, visors, sweatbands, sunglasses,

…and/or any apparel that is judged to be unhealthy or unsanitary (e.g., clothing that is dirty and/or gives off a foul odor).

## C. SITUATIONS

1. What to do if:

a. You are surrounded: remain calm and do not appear frightened.
b. You are threatened:
do not exhibit alarm or fear; report it at once to a staff member.
c. An Inmate asks for a favor:
inform the inmate you must request permission and report it to officer and Program Coordinator, or tell the inmate you are not permitted to do this and report the request to the Program Coordinator. d. You feel the staff is wrong on an issue:
do not discuss a situation such as this with inmates. Discuss with a staff member professionally.
e. You are asked about institution procedure:
refer the inmate to Security staff or the Program Coordinator. Do not discuss any procedures with inmates; do not offer your own opinions.

## D. RESPONSIBILITY OF VISITOR / VOLUNTEER

1. To staff

a. Abide by all facility rules and regulations.
b. Report any suspicious situations, no matter how seemingly trivial, to the Program Coordinator.
c. Report periodically (orally or in writing) on progress of inmate.

d. Do no hesitate to inform staff of positive aspects of your work as volunteer.
e. Inform staff of any changes in inmate's attitudes or radical changes in their daily routine.

2. To Inmates
a. Keep in mind that this is a job in which you are working to assist Inmates in preparation for their return to society.
b. Treat them as you would someone whom you are trying to help.
c. Talk to them as adults, not children.

## E. STAFF RESPONSIBILITY TO VISITOR / VOLUNTEER

a. Staff will assist you with any problems that arise, providing you inform them of such situations.
b. Staff will keep in informed about any changes in the facility policy or procedures.
c. Staff will attempt to accommodate all program scheduling needs however, when certain institutional situations arise, institutional matters take precedence.

## F. PROHIBITED ITEMS

The following items are prohibited from being introduced by employees, contractors, and visitors inside the secure perimeter of the Prison and Correctional Center: Firearms, knives, metal utensils, or any other item that could commonly be used as a weapon.

1. Intoxicants such as alcoholic beverages, illegal and prescribed narcotics.
2. Personal handcuffs, handcuff keys, and other related equipment not issued.
3. Caustics/flammable materials not purchased by the Prison for official use (nail polish remover, colognes/ perfumes, gasoline, thinners, contact cement, alcohol, any item labeled "Harmful or Fatal if Swallowed").
4. Aerosols (cologne/perfume sprays, hairspray, deodorants, air fresheners, furniture polish, bug sprays) unless Prison issued.
5. P-38 can openers-military style with a fold out blade.
6. Audio and video recording devices except as authorized by the Warden.
7. VCR tapes, televisions, portable radios, cassette tapes, compact discs, cassette/C.D.
8. unless approved by the Warden.
9. Video games, scanners, computer games.
10. Personal computers/laptops, computer storage devices (CDs, floppy disks, external hard drives, USB flash drives, etc.), any computer-related peripheral or accessory devices, any electronic device that is intended or designed to store, capture, or record audio, video, photographic, or electronic data of any sort (to include MP-3 players), and software; (Exceptions may be authorized in writing by the Warden in those cases where these items are required for an essential task that can otherwise not be accomplished [e.g., x-ray technologists, copier repair technicians, etc.] and where the device has no wifi/internet/cellular service capabilities; Under no circumstances are privately owned computer storage devices approved for use in Department computer equipment or systems).
11. Cellular telephones and smart watches with Wi-Fi/internet/ cellular service capabilities.
12. 12. Personal protection equipment (e.g., mace, kubiton, etc.)
13. Glass containers.
14. Metal hair picks, brushes, combs, or nail files.
15. Lighters.
16. Matches.
17. Personal scissors (office or medical), letter openers, etc.
18. Recreational reading material (non-work related) such as books, magazines, newspapers, etc.
19. Briefcases and Laptop bags for security and treatment staff.
20. Zip-lock or other clear plastic bags larger than one-gallon size.
21. Thermal beverage containers.
22. Backpacks, tote bags, book bags, and gym bags for employees and contractors without lockers inside the secure portion of the Prison and Correctional Center.
23. Personal tools such as screwdrivers, pliers, multi-tools (i.e. Leatherman type, etc.) except inventoried tools in the possession of approved maintenance and approved contractors/venders.

24.Refillable lighters.
25.Electronic cigarettes.
26.Tobacco and nicotine products.
27.Battery operated personal fans.
28.Chewing gum.

Exceptions may apply for job performance specific items with approved gate clearance.

## G. ALLOWABLE ITEMS

The following items are **allowable** for employees, contractors, and visitors inside the secure perimeter of the Prison and Correctional Center:

1. One day worth of non-narcotic prescription medication.
2. Over the counter medications in an amount sufficient for a sixteen (16) hour period.
3. Lunch box.
4. Plastic eating utensils.
5. Small, non-transparent pouch for personal items.
6. Clear container not to exceed 5” x 8”.
7. One personal size non-alcoholic, non-flammable hand sanitizer.
8. Food in a factory sealed single-serve packaging.
9. Single serve food in clear plastic containers or clear plastic zip lock style bags not to exceed one gallon.
10.One clear reusable container such as a Trevis style tumbler
11.One clear reusable water bottle not to exceed 32 ounces.
12.Factory sealed bottles of water, sports drink, soda, etc. not to exceed 32 ounces.
13.Feminine hygiene products.
14.One tube of chap stick or lip balm.
15.Plastic comb or brush.
16.Briefcases/Laptop bags for official visitors when necessary for the performance of assigned duties.
17.Prescription eyeglasses.