



**Management of Women in Custody – Procedures**

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## 1. Introduction

The Department of Corrective Services is committed to providing programs, interventions, activities and services targeted to the unique needs of women in custody. Informing this position is the knowledge that the lives of many women offenders are characterised by a wide range of exclusionary deprivations such as poverty, poor education, lack of employment skills, histories of abuse both as a child and as an adult, unemployment, poor housing, extensive health problems, especially mental health, inability to access services and low life expectancy. This is particularly relevant to Aboriginal women, whose experience of life in society is fraught with danger from violence, social marginalisation and economic disadvantage.

## 2. Purpose

This document provides clear intent statements governing the expected standard and practice associated with various elements of women's lives in custody.

The management of women within the Western Australia prison system should be read in the context of [Strategic Plan for Women 2009 - 2012: Women's Way Forward](#) and [Policy Directive 74 – Management of Women in Custody](#).

Further useful background information about the philosophy underpinning the management of women in custody can be viewed at [Women's Corrective Services Strategic Plan 2009-2012 – Women's Way Forward – Background Paper](#).

## 3. Scope

These procedures provide minimum standards on certain matters and apply to all Adult Custodial facilities that accommodate women. They are to be applied with reference to all relevant Adult Custodial Rules, Policy Directives, Operational Instructions, Standing and Local Orders.

## 4. Definitions

In these procedures:

<b>Standards</b>	refers to a level of quality that is accepted as the norm
<b>Mother</b>	refers to a biological mother or primary carer
<b>Primary Carer</b>	is defined as an individual who is the main person responsible for the custody or care of a child or children
<b>Superintendent</b>	means the designated Superintendent for that facility
<b>Senior Family Links Officer</b>	refers to the Senior Department of Child Protection Field Worker based at Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women
<b>Therapeutic</b>	refers to a particular treatment which is judged to be desirable and beneficial
<b>Self Development</b>	refers to self-guided improvement (economically, intellectually, spiritually or emotionally)

## 5. Standards

### 5.1 Clothing Standards

#### 5.1.1 Underwear

Women are to be issued new briefs upon reception to prison (see 5.1.7 and 5.1.8). Briefs are not to be recycled and the woman is encouraged to take prison issued briefs with her when she leaves. Briefs are to be sourced from Bandyup Women's Prison to ensure high quality and consistency across the state.

#### 5.1.2 Bra's

Women are to be issued 3 pairs of bra's upon reception or a combination of bra's and sports crop tops. Bra's can be reissued when a prisoner exits the prison. The prison should ensure that there is an adequate supply of various sized bra's in good condition in stock.

5.1.3 Pyjamas are to be issued to prisoners with regard to seasonal changes. Summer pyjamas are to be sourced from Bandyup Women's Prison. Winter flannelette pyjamas can be purchased from external sources if Bandyup are not making them.

#### 5.1.4 Seasonal changes

Summer clothing issue and winter clothing issue is to be provided. There is to be an adequate supply and issue of warm clothing including beanies, gloves, jackets, skivvies, socks etc according to climatic need.

5.1.5 Processes need to be in place to ensure that clothing is in good condition, that unserviceable clothing is disposed of, and new stocks are sourced in ample time for any seasonal change.

5.1.6 All articles of clothing should be clearly labelled with the prisoner's name. This includes items that are to be laundered in the Women's Unit itself.

5.1.7 Reception Kits of seasonally appropriate clothing must be created and given to women upon their arrival at prison. The Kit is to contain as a minimum:

1 x towel	1 x jumper
2 x track pants	3 x briefs
2 x singlets/tank tops	1 x thongs
2 x T-shirts	1 x Bra
1 x long sleeve T-shirt	1 x Toiletries Kit (see 5.5.4)
1 x pair pyjamas	1 x Sanitary Items Kit

Where the woman is to remain in prison, the balance is to be provided the next day (see 5.1.8)

### 5.1.8 Minimum standard clothing issue:

<b>Summer Issue</b>	<b>Winter Issue</b>
2 x Tracksuit Pants	3 x Tracksuit Pants
3 x short sleeve shirts	3 x short sleeve shirts
2 x ¾ length cotton pants	1 x ¾ length cotton pants
1 x summer Long pants	1 x summer long pants
1 x shorts	1 x shorts
2 x tank tops	2 x tank tops
1 x jumper/windcheater	2 x jumper/windcheater
6 x pairs of new briefs	6 x pairs of new briefs
3 x bras	3 x bras
3 x pairs of socks	3 x pairs of socks
1 x dressing gown (summer weight)	1 x dressing gown (winter weight)
2 x pairs pyjamas (summer weight)	2 x pairs pyjamas (winter weight)
2 x towels	2 x towels
1 x Prison issued hat	1 x Prison issued hat
1 x pair rubber thongs	1 x pair rubber thongs
1 x pair joggers	1 x pair joggers
1 x clear plastic bag	1 x jacket (winter weight)
	1 x clear plastic bag
	1 x gloves, beanie, scarf, skivvy, as required

## 5.2 Bedding standards

- 5.2.1 Seasonal changes are to be reflected in Unit Plans with additional blankets/duonas being available if women express that they are cold through the night.
- 5.2.2 Prisoners are to be issued a top sheet, bottom sheet and pillow case. Staff should ensure they are being used this way when conducting cell inspections.
- 5.2.3 There should be a weekly schedule for the laundering of sheets and pillowcases.
- 5.2.4 Blankets are to be laundered when a prisoner is released and before re-issue.

## 5.3 Strip search standards

- 5.3.1 Women should not be strip searched as a random exercise. Women should only be strip searched upon their first receipt into prison, when it is intelligence driven and consistent with PD 26. Women being transferred to another facility will be strip searched by the originating prison. If they are in a secured vehicle for the journey, or under supervision, there is no need to strip

search at the receiving facility unless there is intelligence to suggest otherwise. Receiving prisons may undertake a pat down search.

5.3.2 Strip searches are to be conducted in the two stage method. This entails:

- Removal of the top half of clothing off, tilting head/hair forward and exposing backs of ears before replacing top clothing.
- Removal of the bottom half of clothing and lifting the feet to expose soles of feet before replacing bottom clothing.

Women prisoners are never to be asked to squat.

Women are to be strip searched by female staff only.

Staff retain the discretion to conduct a full removal of clothing strip search when there is intelligence that suggests the prisoner is secreting contraband using the two stage method.

#### **5.4 Visits standards**

5.4.1 Visits with male family members in mixed gender prisons are to be supervised as an intra prison visit or a special visit where appropriate.

5.4.2 Visits with children are to be encouraged where appropriate; withdrawal of children's visits is not used as punishment. In mixed prisons, the child should be able to visit with parents/caregivers together.

5.4.3 Attire worn to visits should be clean and modest.

#### **5.5 Ablution/Laundry standards**

5.5.1 Staff are to ensure that there are adequate supplies of toilet rolls, toiletries, and sanitary products in ablution blocks at all times. Storage facilities should offer a degree of privacy and women should not have to ask staff for these products.

5.5.2 Staff are to ensure that ablution blocks are well maintained and that there are toilet seats on toilets, and at a minimum, shower curtains on showers.

5.5.3 Private laundry facilities should be made available for women to wash their own underwear and pyjamas.

5.5.4 Reception Kits should be given to prisoners upon their intake to prison. The Toiletries Kit should contain as a minimum:

Toothbrush	Shampoo and conditioner sachets
Toothpaste	Sanitary Kit (sanitary towels and tampons although there should be ample supply in the bathrooms)
Deodorant	
Comb (women's, not a man's)	
Soap	

## **5.6 Urine testing standards**

- 5.6.1 If women are to be strip searched before providing a sample then it is to be done consistent with item 5.3
- 5.6.2 Women are to be given a dressing gown to wear for modesty whilst providing the sample.
- 5.6.3 Women are to use a commode with a polystyrene bowl in the bottom to collect the sample for distribution to sterile sample jars.

## **5.7 Structured Day and gratuity standards**

- 5.7.1 Prisons are to implement a structured day for women that encompass constructive activity throughout the working day. This constructive activity can include employment, therapeutic programs, life skills, education and vocational training, and personal development. This is to be done in a way consistent with the Women's Intervention Model as prisons are responsible for skill development, personal development and Employment. OMPD are responsible for Clinical Interventions and Education Vocational Training.
- 5.7.2 Employment should be linked to accredited training wherever possible.
- 5.7.3 Women should not drop in gratuities if they attend programs, education, or self development interventions.
- 5.7.4 Gratuities for women prisoners should be viewed as a separate entity and one that is not contingent upon what is relevant to the male prisoner population within the facility.

## **5.8 Mother/baby Units**

- 5.8.1 Prisons are to consider the residency of a child with its mother consistent with Policy Directive 10.
- 5.8.2 Prisons are to involve the Senior Family Links Officer (Senior Dept of Child Protection Field Worker) in the consideration of residency applications and nominated parties to whom the child is to be released for prisoner mother respite. This Officer is based at Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women.
- 5.8.3 Prisons are to have a current Mother/baby Unit Plan that outlines the operation of that Unit and what processes and entitlements the woman can expect.
- 5.8.4 Mothers with resident children will be paid at Level 3 gratuities, unless determined otherwise by the Superintendent.
- 5.8.5 Mothers with resident child are entitled to receive the Family Tax Benefit, fortnightly. Funds from the family benefit are to be held in a separate account from the prisoner's private cash account and are only to be spent on matters/items relating to the child.
- 5.8.6 The Prison will supply cloth nappies, bedding, cot and a stroller. All prisoners on standard supervision are allowed up to Level 1 gratuity in their private cash account.
- 5.8.7 All resident children, and children who have overnight visits, shall have a 'care plan' developed that incorporates issues related to their developmental needs and approved alternative carers.

## **5.9 Pregnant women**

- 5.9.1 Pregnant women should be provided services and support commensurate with community standards.
- 5.9.2 If a pregnant woman is locked in cell overnight then she is to be provided a nutritious snack (sandwich, fruit, etc) in their cell overnight to alleviate the impact of morning sickness.
- 5.9.3 In all ordinary circumstances, arrangements should be made for women to give birth to their baby in the hospital nearest their home.
- 5.9.4 In the event that a pregnant woman is unable to continue her work due to the condition of her pregnancy, then the default gratuity level should be the same as a mother with resident child, that being level 3.

## **5.10 Management of women in punishment, multi-purpose and crisis care cells**

- 5.10.1 Women who are accommodated in isolation cells for punishment, behavioural management, or in crisis care are to have access to the briefs and bras they normally wear and their normal clothing. Only women assessed as 'high risk' should wear alternative clothing consistent with the ARMS guidelines. Disposable briefs are available in these instances but often only available in smaller sizes.
- 5.10.2 Staff are to ensure there is ample warm bedding and clothing, including socks, available to women being accommodated in these cells where appropriate.

## **5.11 Canteen standards**

- 5.11.1 Prisons are to ensure that the prisoner canteen is stocked with gender appropriate products such as perfume oils, nail polish, non-acetone nail polish remover, hair dye, and doona covers other than football teams. There should be a reasonable degree of choice amongst the product range (see Bandyup Women's Prison Canteen List)
- 5.11.2 Women should have equitable physical access to the canteen to make selections.

## **5.12 Case Management standards**

Programs (therapeutic and self development), interventions, skill development, and services women engage in to satisfy their Individual Management Plan (IMP), invest in skills and personal development, or to enhance their reintegration potential, should be recorded on the AIPR/ACM Offender Notes to provide full information to Case Conference members and for use by managing and /or releasing authorities.

## **5.13 Section 95 Activity Standards**

- 5.13.1 Prisons that accommodate minimum security women should have a suite of s 95 placements for the women to attend. It is preferred that they are for women only and if mixed, women should not be in direct contact with male prisoners.

5.13.2 Section 95 work placements should be gender and culturally appropriate for the women attending. The programs/activities should be focussed on skills development and aimed at reintegration and addressing the individuals needs in relation to their skills and abilities.

5.13.3 Women should be given the choice of wearing prison uniform or community clothing when attending a s 95 workplace.

#### **5.14 Transport**

5.14.1 Women should be isolated from male prisoners whilst being transported. It is acknowledged that they may have to share the same vehicle.

5.14.2 Every effort must be made to ensure women's physical, emotional, mental and cultural safety whilst being transported.

5.14.3 Women must be able to take their own supply of sanitary products with them, particularly on long haul journeys. Sanitary Kits must be freely available as a woman leaves Reception.

### **6. Review**

This document and the associated Policy Directive 74 should be reviewed two years after its registration.

### **7. Approval**

Assistant Commissioner Custodial Operations:

Signature:



Date:

**10 December 2010**

These procedures are approved pursuant to Policy Directive 74 – Management of Women in Custody – and take effect on the day that Policy takes effect.

### **8. Contact Person**

Superintendent Bandyup Women's Prison  
Assistant Superintendent Custodial Operation