



Policy Directive 74

Management of Women in Custody

1. Introduction

The Department of Corrective Services is committed to providing programs, services and interventions targeted to the unique needs of women in custody. To this end, the [Strategic Plan for Women 2009 - 2012: Women's Way Forward](#) provides a guide to all staff working in Adult Custodial prisons that accommodate women. Informing Women's Way Forward is the [Women's Corrective Services Strategic Plan 2009-2012 - Women's Way Forward - Background Paper](#) that captures what we know about managing women in custody drawn from our experiences as well as international and national research and findings from three of the Department's own profile of women offender surveys conducted over the last six years.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure both an acknowledgment of the unique needs of women in custody, particularly Aboriginal women and an operational responsiveness to those needs in line with a professional, proactive and consistent management of women's issues across the state.

3. Scope

Prison superintendents are responsible for implementing this policy consistent with the Women's Way Forward Strategic Plan 2009 - 2012. This policy applies to the management of women prisoners in all Adult Custodial facilities that accommodate women.

4. Policy Intent

The policy is designed to further the achievement of the Department's strategic goals through four broad strategies:

- Informing staff and decision makers in the new ways of managing women offenders, in particular Aboriginal women.
- Forming partnerships with internal and external service providers to assist women.
- Adopting an integrated case management model which will improve services to women.
- Provide a framework for management to report on outcomes for women.

It is intended that these strategies be effected through the implementation of the standards and practices outlined in the [Management of Women in Custody – Procedures](#), as well as the Service Strategies outlined in the [Strategic Plan for Women 2009 - 2012: Women's Way Forward](#).

5. Policy

5.1 The Department of Corrective Services supports a holistic approach to the management of women in prison and accepts that our programs, interventions and services should address the unique needs of women through targeted interventions and offender management services that are woman centred. Prisons should refer to the Women's Intervention Model contained within the [Women's Way Forward strategic plan](#) and ensure that programs, interventions, activities, and services are provided in a way that is consistent with that model of service provision.

5.2 Principles

The Department's committed position with regard to our work with and delivery of services to women in custody is contained in the women-centred principals outlined in the [Women's Way Forward strategic plan](#).

Adherence to women-centred principles means that policies, programs, services and interventions must:

- reflect the cultural and social realities for women and respond to the unique needs of each woman
- respect and value each woman as an expert on her own life and, for aboriginal women, their membership of a community
- ensure the environment or program is supportive, encouraging, empathic, accepting, challenging and non confrontational
- encourage women to learn from one another
- view women as survivors as opposed to victims and foster their strength and creativity to help them effect change in their lives.

5.3 The Department of Corrective Services acknowledges the special relationship women have with their children and make all efforts, wherever possible, to support that relationship. We understand that the attachment an infant/child has with its mother informs its emotional, physical and psychological development and wellbeing. Decisions related to residency of a child or ongoing contact with its mother/carer is based on what is in the best interests of the child.

5.4 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.

- 5.5 Prisons that accommodate women are to make specific reference, in their annual business plans, to the service strategies drawn from the [Women's Way Forward strategic plan](#) that are to be implemented that year. In addition, business plans are to include any local initiatives that are being undertaken to address the needs of women prisoners and improve their outcomes.
- 5.6 The Assistant Commissioner Custodial Operations shall approve [Management of Women in Custody – Procedures](#) consistent with this policy outlining the expected standard and practice associated with various elements of women's lives in custody.

6. Related Key legislation / Policies

- [Management of Women in Custody – Procedures](#)
- [Strategic Plan for Women 2009 - 2012: Women's Way Forward](#)
- [Prisons Act 1981](#)
- [Prison Regulations 1982](#)
- [Policy Directive 10](#) – Prisoner Mothers/Primary Carers and their Children
- [Policy Directive 44](#) – Escorting and Supervision of Pregnant or Post-natal Prisoners
- [Policy Directive 5](#) – Use of Force
- [Policy Directive 51](#) – Case Management

Review

This policy is to be reviewed within two years of approval.

Approval:

Deputy Commissioner Adult Custodial



Date:

7 January 2011

Contact Person:

The following person/s may be approached on a routine basis in relation to this policy:

Superintendent Bandyup Women's Prison
Assistant Commissioner Adult Custodial

Version History

Version	Approved	Effective from
First published	7 January 2011	11 February 2011