

HOW THE FAMILY  
CAN HELP



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
DIVISION OF ADULT SERVICES

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ACQUISITION

FOREWORD

Most inmates in a correctional institution cherish their family ties.

Frequently an inmate's success on parole or upon discharge is dependent upon the sustaining strength received from close kin.

This booklet is designed to help relatives in their relations with inmates.

Most questions raised from time to time regarding the various institutional activities (education, discipline, work, correspondence, recreation, medical care, and parole) are answered on the succeeding pages.

May we suggest that you study it carefully and keep the booklet for reference.

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## HOW THE FAMILY CAN HELP

### I. General Information

Most people know little about the operations of the prison and the purposes which the prison serves. The object of this booklet is to give you an insight into prison operations and the methods by which you can best help the member of your family who is assigned here.

The Virginia Department of Corrections is made up of about 7,000 men and women who live very similarly to the way people live in a small town. With the exception of family relations (and this is an important exception), the routine life inside prison is not too different from that of free society.

Upon entering prison, the inmate goes through an orientation period lasting two to three weeks which consists of a complete physical examination; various tests, such as education, intelligence, aptitude, and personality; interviews by psychologists, etc. A comprehensive case history is developed. This includes his background prior to coming to prison, which is obtained in the form of statements from school authorities, law-enforcing officials, relatives, employees, etc., who have known the inmate over a long period of time. This case history also includes his previous criminal record. All information secured is compiled and studied carefully by the Classification Committee after which an assignment is made. In making these assignments, consideration is given to age, nature of offense, previous criminal records, maturity, physical capabilities, medical history, etc., to make sure that each inmate is placed in an institution that is most conducive to his welfare as well as that of other inmates.

From the time male inmates enter the Department, and while this data is being assembled, they are quartered in the Receiving Units of Powhatan Correctional Center, the Southampton Correctional Center, or the Powhatan Trailers. During this same period, a correspondence or visiting list of no more than 10 adults requested by the inmate is investigated and approved. Relatives and friends, even though approved for this list, MAY NOT visit until processing at the Centers has been completed and the inmate has been transferred to his initially assigned location.

Because of some variations in unit populations and visiting facilities, the regular visiting hours are not the same at all units. As soon as your relative receives his assignment, he should write you and advise you of the location of his unit and the visiting hours. More detailed information on visiting and correspondence will be found in a latter section of this booklet.

Every inmate begins his assignment in keeping with his proper custody rating or classification. From this point on, his privileges are gained largely through his own efforts and in conjunction with the guidance of the staff. A better assignment comes as the result of a job being well done, combined with proper attitude and participation in the various activities which indicate a desire for self-improvement and responsibility.

Each unit has access to a full-time physician, dentist, optometrist, and psychologist. We recognize our responsibility for the physical and mental well being of every inmate. If care or treatment is indicated which cannot be provided at a particular unit, inmates are transferred to a local hospital. Many neglected medical services are provided there, such as needed operations, plastic surgery, artificial limbs, glasses, false teeth, hearing aids, etc.

The Superintendent of each unit is personally concerned with the well being of every inmate in his charge. The Superintendent of the unit where your relative is assigned is the official who has the most direct contact with him; and as such, is the person best qualified to give you accurate and immediate information on any concern you may have about the inmate. Generally speaking, the men work from 4 - 8 hours, sleep 8 hours, and use the remaining 3 to 5 hours for recreation and self-improvement. There are many worthwhile activities to occupy leisure time whereby an inmate may improve himself such as the school and college program, vocational opportunities, use of library, formal religious activities, games and sports, and musical programs.

Virginia has as good a food program as any prison system in America. You need not worry about the health of the member of your family because all inmates are fed a balanced diet.

## II. Areas of Primary Interest to You

- A. Good Time - The law allows the inmate an automatic 1/3 Time reduction from his sentence if he does not commit a rule or law violation while assigned to the institution. Thus, it is in the inmate's best interest to cooperate with penal authorities.

Extraordinary Good Time - Presently, the law permits the Virginia Department of Corrections to reduce an inmate's sentence because of his extraordinary good behavior. Such a reduction in sentence is called "extraordinary good time" if an inmate's actions are especially noteworthy. The inmate must apply for extraordinary good time credit with his institutional superintendent.

- B. Parole - This is handled entirely by the Virginia Probation and Parole Board. We cannot emphasize too strongly that the prison authorities have nothing to

do with Clemency or Pardon. Generally speaking, a man must serve 1/4 of his sentence before he is eligible for parole consideration. An inmate appears before the Parole Board once each year after his first hearing.

If he is serving a 5-year sentence, he will be eligible for parole consideration when he has accumulated 15 months including credit for time in jail. Similarly, a man serving a 10-year sentence will become eligible for parole consideration when he has served 2-1/2 years. An inmate serving a Life sentence is eligible for parole after having served 15 years.

The Parole Board has given us the following information relating to Parole:

An inmate is automatically evaluated for parole when he has served one-fourth of his sentence. This evaluation involves various factors none of which taken alone is controlling, but all of which must be considered along with the case as a whole.

The first step in considering an inmate for parole is to determine the readiness of the offender for parole, which is determined by such factors as:

1. Developmental and criminal history constituting behavior pattern.
2. Addiction to narcotics or alcohol.
3. Attitude toward the crime committed and the future.
4. Adjustments and improvements while in prison.
5. Sexual deviation.
6. Physical and emotional status.
7. Family background and marital history.
8. Psychological Summary.
9. Personal habits and associates.
10. Work record and parole employment plan.
11. Educational achievements.
12. Military record as it reflects behavior and adjustment.
13. Time served.



The second step is the consideration of the kind of offense and manner in which it was committed.

The third step is the consideration of the readiness of the community to receive the parolee.

The willingness of the offender's family to accept him back into the community is often important. In addition, the attitudes of the sentencing judge, the district attorney and local law-enforcement officers are often reflections of community sentiment, and are weighed in the matter of selection for parole.

A clear conduct record, while one of the essential elements to be considered, is not, in itself, sufficient grounds for parole.

After a complete analysis and study of all available information, the Board makes its decision, guided by the general rules that an inmate should not be released upon parole -

1. If there is a substantial risk that he will not conform to the Conditions of Parole.
2. If release at that time would have a substantial adverse effect on prison discipline.
3. If release at that time would depreciate the seriousness of the offense or promote disrespect for the law or the system of parole.
4. If there is need for continued care (physical or mental) or continued vocational training.

The condition of the inmate's family alone has no bearing on his fitness for parole or Executive Clemency, and will not be considered in itself as grounds for release.

The use of the term "eligibility for parole consideration" should not be construed to mean that the inmate as a matter of right is entitled to, or will be granted, parole nor should the word "consideration" be confused with "final decision". Whenever an inmate is legally eligible to be considered for parole, each member of the Board, acting individually and independently, votes his opinion as the file reaches his desk. One of the following three actions may be taken at this time by each member separately:

- a. The inmate should be required to continue to serve his sentence for at least one year.
- b. Any action should be deferred to a specific future date.
- c. The total situation seems to favor an inmate's release on parole, and his case should be further considered for parole.

Normal procedure requires from four to eight weeks for completion of this consideration before final decision.

Many cases fall within each of the above categories. The decision of the Board is reached by either a majority or unanimous option. When the Board, or a majority thereof, is of the opinion that an inmate is entitled to further consideration for parole, the case is investigated. The trial officials of each county in which the inmate was convicted, and also the prison officials are notified that the inmate's case is being considered. Replies to the notification forms are requested in order that the Board may know, and the Board's recommendation will reflect the attitudes of both trial officials and the prison officials. A prisoner is placed on parole only when arrangements have been made for his proper employment or his maintenance and care, and when the Board believes that he is able and willing to fulfill the obligations of a law-abiding citizen. Every prisoner while on parole remains in the legal custody of the institution from which he was released, but is under the authority of the orders of the Board. If the parolee's employment is out-of-state, the Parole authorities of the state concerned are contacted for acceptance of supervision, through the Interstate Parole Compact Administrator. Appearances before the Board by the inmate's family, friends, or attorney are not required. However, if such appearances are desired, an appointment should be made by telephone or by writing the Virginia Parole Board. Parole Counselors are assigned to all units to answer questions about parole for inmates and for families on visiting days.

- C. Visiting and Correspondence - Inmates are allowed visits every week. Such visits are not to exceed two hours each, and are not to exceed two adults per visit. It is the responsibility of the inmate and his relatives to establish a schedule and maintain communication. Most units have visiting on Saturdays and Sundays.

After the inmate reaches his unit of assignment, he should ascertain the visiting periods and advise you by mail. If he does not do so, you may secure this information by writing to the superintendent of the unit. Without special permission of the superintendent, no one may visit unless he or she is on the inmate's approved correspondence and visiting list. Under no circumstances are visitors to attempt to pass anything to inmates during the visit. This includes cash, cigarettes, chewing gum, or any other articles. Cash is considered contraband. Inmates are issued script from their personal accounts with the Department's cashier to spend in lieu of money in the commissaries.

You are permitted to write as often as you like and packages are permitted, but it is imperative that this and all other prisons inspect both incoming and outgoing packages very carefully.

Letters which contain lewdness or obscenities will not be delivered, but will be turned over to postal authorities.

It should be clearly understood that visiting and correspondence are regarded as PRIVILEGES, and not as RIGHTS. Any violation of the prison regulations or the law herein outlined may result in either temporary or permanent forfeiture of these privileges, and the removal of the violator from the Approved Correspondence and Visiting List.

The rules imposed upon inmates and their relatives are in no way intended to make confinement unpleasant. Each of them has been proved necessary to maintain orderly operation of the institution. If you have any questions regarding the rules, the superintendent or the officer in charge of the visiting room will be glad to explain them to you.

- D. Furlough- Furloughs, or three-day passes are granted by the Department. Generally, an inmate must be in Minimum custody and be within one year of his parole eligibility date, and have an excellent record to be granted a furlough. It must be remembered that a furlough is given to those of the highest trust.

### III. Programs

It is our desire to improve the inmate's attitude, habits, and skills, so that when he or she is released they will have a better chance of adjusting and living in the free society as a useful citizen. The following are available to all inmates on a voluntary basis:

- A. Religious Program - There are devoted Chaplains who hold Church services, teach Bible classes, conduct Sunday Schools, teach courses in Christian ethics, and counsel with inmates. We feel that no real rehabilitation can take place unless religion plays its part in redirecting lives. You should encourage the member of your family to participate in the religious program while he is in the Virginia Department of Corrections. We believe that the spiritual assistance of the Chaplains and the uplifting influence of the religious services will be of much benefit to him.
- B. Education Program - The education program is varied and comprehensive to meet the needs of all inmates. All the education programs are on a voluntary basis leading to completion of high school or general education development equivalency. High school subjects are offered both in classes and by correspondence. Inmates may also take correspondence courses in a variety of different subjects. In addition, the Virginia Department of Corrections offers up to four years of college for interested inmates.

In cooperation with the Rehabilitative School Authority, a General Educational Development testing program is offered whereby inmates may take a series of examinations, and if they pass such examinations are awarded a Certificate of High School Equivalency which qualifies them for admission to most colleges or universities. The inmate who has com-

pleted the 10th grade in public school may earn a high school diploma from his home town high school by requesting that his credits be transferred to said school. It is the option of the high school to cooperate with this program.

- C. Vocational Education Program - There are a number of vocational subjects offered by the Vocational Education Department such as barbering, carpentry, plumbing, masonry trades, machine shop, commercial cooking, drafting, cosmetology, electrical high line, welding, and air-conditioning/refrigeration, and many others. The training is available on both high school and college levels. By participation in these programs, men may gain a skill or become more proficient in a skill.
- D. Work Release - The Virginia Department of Corrections has a Work Release Program which allows inmates to work in nearby communities and return to the institution at night. In order to be considered for the Work Release Program, an inmate must be in 'A' custody.
- E. Recreation Program - The recreation program is designed to provide wholesome use of leisure time, teach cooperation in play, and promote sportsmanship and fair play. There are organized teams in baseball, basketball, and boxing on many units, and these teams play a regular schedule to determine the champions in each event. Other outdoor sports are sponsored such as touch football, shuffleboard, horseshoe pitching, and volleyball. Many units have comprehensive intramural competition. Indoor games are provided for men of sedentary habits or those with physical limitations. Libraries which are part of both the education and recreation programs have books, periodicals, and newspapers for study and recreation. Frequently, a current moving picture is shown on each unit each week for entertainment purposes.
- F. Supportive Agencies - Agencies who cooperate with the Virginia Department of Corrections to provide assistance to eligible inmates are the Veterans Administration, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the State Department of Public Welfare, and the Social Security Administration. Each inmate is encouraged to utilize these services in the manner which may benefit him.
- G. Alcoholics Anonymous Program and Drug Treatment Program - There are Alcoholics Anonymous groups on many units of the Department. These may be used as an aid in controlling other weaknesses or habits such as narcotics. We encourage inmates with a drinking problem to join one of these groups and associate themselves with men who have the same problem. Many men are different when sober and not intoxicated. We believe Alcoholics Anonymous is the finest approach to the problem of alcoholism. Attendance at Alcoholics Anonymous meetings can be very profitable and generally rehabilitative in areas other than alcoholism. May we suggest that

you encourage the member of your family to participate in the Alcoholic Anonymous programs, especially if he has had a problem with alcohol in the past.

#### IV. The Role of the Family

Following are some ways you can help the member of your family while he is in the Department of Corrections:

- A. Correspondence and Visiting - Write regularly and make your letters cheerful and newsy. Unless the inmate is directly involved and can be of some assistance (and the latter is true only in rare instances), refrain from discussing family problems or other problems that will be discouraging to him.  
  
Visit as regularly as you can without working a hardship on yourself. Make your visits cheerful occasions. Relate incidents of events back home, since contact with the outside and a feeling of acceptance and belonging to the family group is the most stabilizing influence which can happen to an inmate.
- B. Encourage inmates to participate in the various self-improvement activities.
- C. Money - Inmates are permitted to spend a certain amount of money in the commissaries. This is to permit inmates to secure a few personal items which the State does not furnish. This amount is in excess of actual needs. Money that you send to the inmate should be in the form of a postal money order, cashier's check, or certified check and should be made payable and mailed with deposit slip to the Inmate Trust Fund of the institution to which assigned. Cash will not be accepted. The Cashier's Office will not acknowledge personal letters.
- D. From time to time, inmates are involved in disciplinary problems which, at times, seem important and sometimes distressing. It is important that you approach this matter objectively as the outcome is all important to the inmate. Before expressing your opinion and forming a judgment, secure all the facts. Some prison official will be available at the time of your visit to discuss the problem with you. The attitude that you take in such cases is all important to the inmate's welfare and his future conduct pattern. The Director and members of his staff will be happy to receive a letter from you concerning the problem involved.
- E. Although the Virginia Department of Corrections spends thousands of dollars per year for books, magazines, and newspapers, one of the finest things you can do for the member of your family is to subscribe for the hometown newspaper along with some good magazines. This is another way of helping him keep in contact with the outside world. Such items must come directly from the publisher.

- F. When serious things happen at home (such as serious illness, death, child custody, divorce proceedings, etc.), prison officials should be advised of these problems immediately, because the inmate often becomes despondent and a disciplinary problem develops. If prison officials are advised of these conditions, a sympathetic approach to the inmate may prevent potential serious trouble. When in doubt about an inmate's personal problem, please request our assistance. We are attempting to help each inmate help himself to be a better citizen than he was before he came to the Virginia Department of Corrections.
- G. We recognize that in many instances the families of men who come to prison are left in serious financial difficulty. The only agency which has funds available to assist in such cases is the State Department of Public Welfare. That agency will have one of its representatives investigate the case to determine eligibility for assistance.
- H. In most instances inquiries regarding an inmate should be addressed to the Superintendent of the unit to which the inmate is assigned. This is the case when you want to know how the inmate is adjusting, the state of his health, why he has not written you, etc. To address your inquiries to others will only cause a delay in your receiving an answer since your letter will have to be forwarded to the appropriate Superintendent.

In short, the Virginia Department of Corrections feels that the key to an inmate's success both while in the institution and upon return to society is the family. We would like to join forces with you in helping your relative adjust to the institution and eventually to society.

Again, if you should have any questions, please address them to the Superintendent of the inmate's assigned unit.

You will find a listing of the units on the following page broken down into major institutions and correctional units.

## LIST OF UNITS IN CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM

Major InstitutionsBland Correctional Center

Route 2  
Bland, Virginia 24315  
Mr. W. D. Blankenship, Superintendent

Powhatan Correctional Center

State Farm, Virginia 23160  
Mr. R. M. Muncy, Superintendent

James River Correctional Center

State Farm, Virginia 23160  
Mr. W. M. Riddle, Superintendent

Powhatan Correctional Center, NORTH

State Farm, Virginia 23160  
Officer in Charge - Rufus Fleming

Mecklenburg Correctional Center

P. O. Box 246  
Boydton, Virginia 23917  
Mr. Gene Johnson, Superintendent

Powhatan Correctional Center, WEST

State Farm, Virginia 23160  
Officer in Charge - Harold G. Spann

Virginia State Penitentiary

500 Spring Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
Mr. R. F. Zahradnick, Warden

Powhatan Correctional Center

ANNEX #1  
State Farm, Virginia 23160  
Mr. James P. Mitchell, Superintendent

Virginia Correctional Center  
for Women

P. O. Box 1  
Goochland, Virginia 23063  
Mrs. Ann F. Downes, Superintendent

Southampton Correctional Center

Capron, Virginia 23829  
Mr. K. R. Purvis, Superintendent

St. Brides Correctional Center

701 Sanderson Road  
Chesapeake, Virginia 23322  
Mr. T. C. Richtmyer, Superintendent

Southampton Correctional Center

ANNEX #1  
Capron, Virginia 23829  
Mr. David Bass, Project Director

Staunton Correctional Center

P. O. Box 870  
Staunton, Virginia 24401  
Mr. E. W. Murray, Superintendent

Below is a listing of the Regional Superintendents for the Bureau of Correctional Units with the units they are responsible for.

Southern Correctional Units

Pocahontas Correctional Unit  
Chesterfield, Virginia 23832  
Mr. W. E. Woodroof, Superintendent  
Units-3,4,13,16,17,20,22,23,27.

Northern Correctional Units

White Post Correctional Unit  
White Post, Virginia 22663  
Mr. R. A. Young, Superintendent  
Units-2,7,8,10,11,12,21,26,30.

Western Correctional Units

Troutville, Virginia 24175  
Mr. E. L. Paderick, Superintendent  
Units-5,9,15,18,24,25,28,29,31.

## CLASSIFICATION AND TREATMENT SERVICES' STAFF

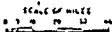
Mr. Rudy F. Guillen, Jr.	Assistant Director for Classification and Treatment
Mr. Thomas L. Parlett	Executive Officer
Mr. A. W. Rice	Corrections' Planner B
Ms. Janet Corson	Administrative Assistant
Mr. C. Daniel Larsen	Supervisor of State Institutional Classification
Dr. Louis B. Cei	Coordinator of State Institutional Services
Mr. William H. Doub	Coordinator of Treatment Services
Mr. Malcolm L. Woodson	Supervisor of Local Jail Classification
Mr. J. B. Ruark	Work Release Program Supervisor
Mr. L. G. Wright	Supervisor of Offender Records
Mr. L. A. Hicks	Coordinator of Inmate Transportation
Mr. Ned S. Skinner	Chief Extradition Officer - Transportation

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Mr. W. A. Crenshaw	Treatment Program Supervisor Receiving Unit (Powhatan Correctional Center)
Vacant	Treatment Program Supervisor Receiving Unit (Southampton Correctional Center)
Mr. Albert Shank, II	Treatment Program Supervisor Powhatan Correctional Center Annex 1

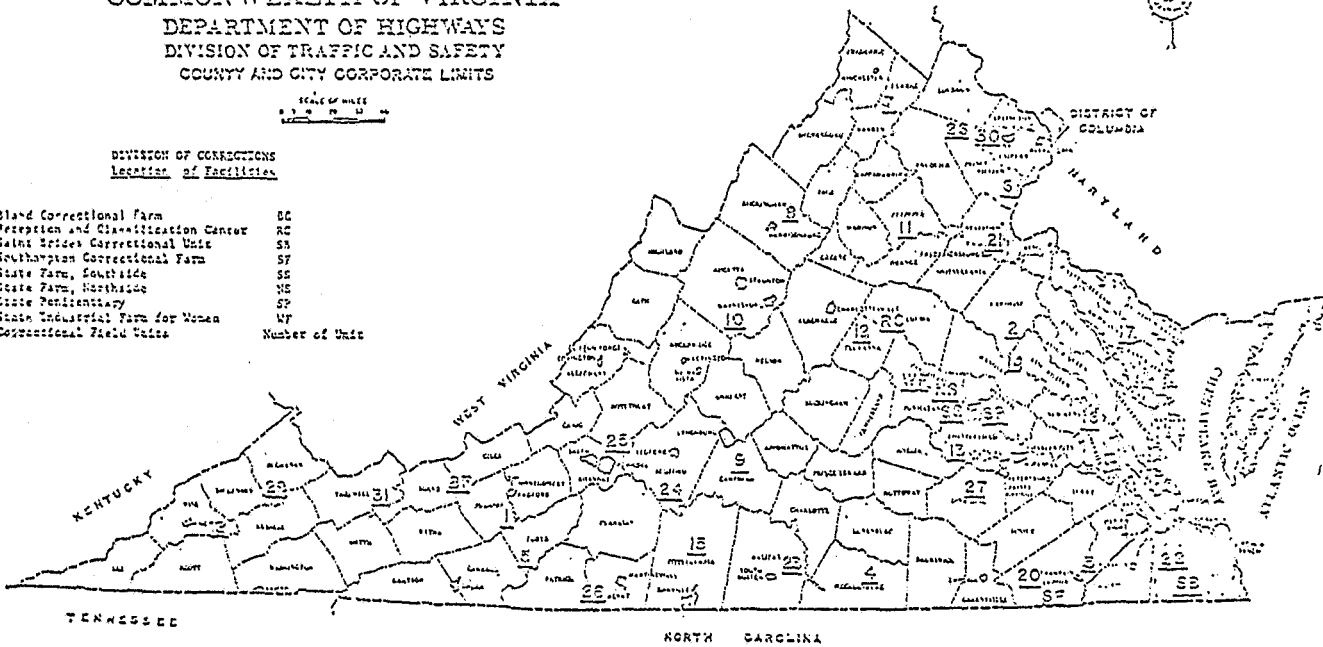


# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS DIVISION OF TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COUNTY AND CITY CORPORATE LIMITS



DIVISION OF CORRECTIONS  
Location of Facilities

Bland Correctional Farm	BC
Reception and Classification Center	RC
Saint Brigid's Correctional Unit	SB
Southampton Correctional Farm	ST
State Farm, Southside	SS
State Farm, Northside	NS
State Penitentiary	SP
State Industrial Farm for Women	WI
Correctional Field Units	Number of Units





**END**