

Example of life for a correctional officer research paper

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Life for a Correctional Officer

Correctional officers are responsible for the custody, care and control of inmates awaiting trial and those who have already been convicted for offences they committed. The daily schedule of a correctional comprise of delivering the following services; maintaining order and discipline, to transport inmates to federal courts, enforcing prison rules and regulations, to search inmates for contraband and lastly, to provide first-response in case of riot, assault, fire, and medical emergency.

Prisons today are small societies that reflect the challenges and problems existing in the larger society. HIV-infected inmates, women, mentally ill, psychologically disturbed and geriatric offenders comprise special groups within prisons' population requiring additional attention. This makes correctional officers today to have much more responsibilities than before. With the different categories of inmates, correctional officers have a difficult time in maintaining order in correctional facilities.

Conflict of interests between prisoners and correctional officers is common place in prisons. As a consequence there are numerous riots, lawsuits, frequent formal grievances and violence. The large inmate population in prisons today compounds these problems. Inmates who cannot get along with other inmates are placed in a close management unit where they are accorded close supervision. Most inmates who end up in close management units are inmates with long sentences of 15 to 20 years or life sentences. They therefore do not care because they know they will be behind bars for a very long time. This group posse the greatest threat to correctional officers, they can easily stab or try to kill someone. Inmates in close management

unit only come out of their cells three times a week to shower or a haircut in accordance with the hygiene code of the institution. Inmates can be placed under close management unit for up to three years depending on their behavior.

Prison life has its own subculture, social roles, inmate values, lifestyles and language referred to as prison argot. Prisonization is the process by which new inmates are socialized by other inmates into the prison subculture. Both inmates and correctional officers must be conversant with prison subculture is very influential in prisons. Prison authorities have little control over the prison subculture. Correctional officers have a difficult time keeping up with prison subculture and language since it is dynamic.

Correctional officer's job is dangerous because of inmate confrontations that result in many injuries. Inmates use razors and toothbrush as weapons. Toothbrushes are sharpened by rubbing them against the cell's concrete floor. Alternatively, if an inmate has access to matches, they can melt a toothbrush and stick a razor in it. In one instance, an inmate sliced the hand of a nurse as she was handing the inmate his medication. In another instance, an inmate was planning to cut the first correctional officer to enter his cell. He had a razor in his hand and two other razors in his mouth. He had also filled Styrofoam cups with urine and feces to throw to the officers. Fortunately, he was successfully dissuaded by an assistant superintendent. Correctional officers constantly suffer verbal abuse from inmates and there is little correctional officers can do about it. Correctional officers also have to bear with the frequent hollering and screaming among inmates as they sell tickets to each other. Some correctional officers even came up with a “

thunder dome” to avoid screaming and hollering among inmates. However, it came to a stop when someone reported to the regional office.

References

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