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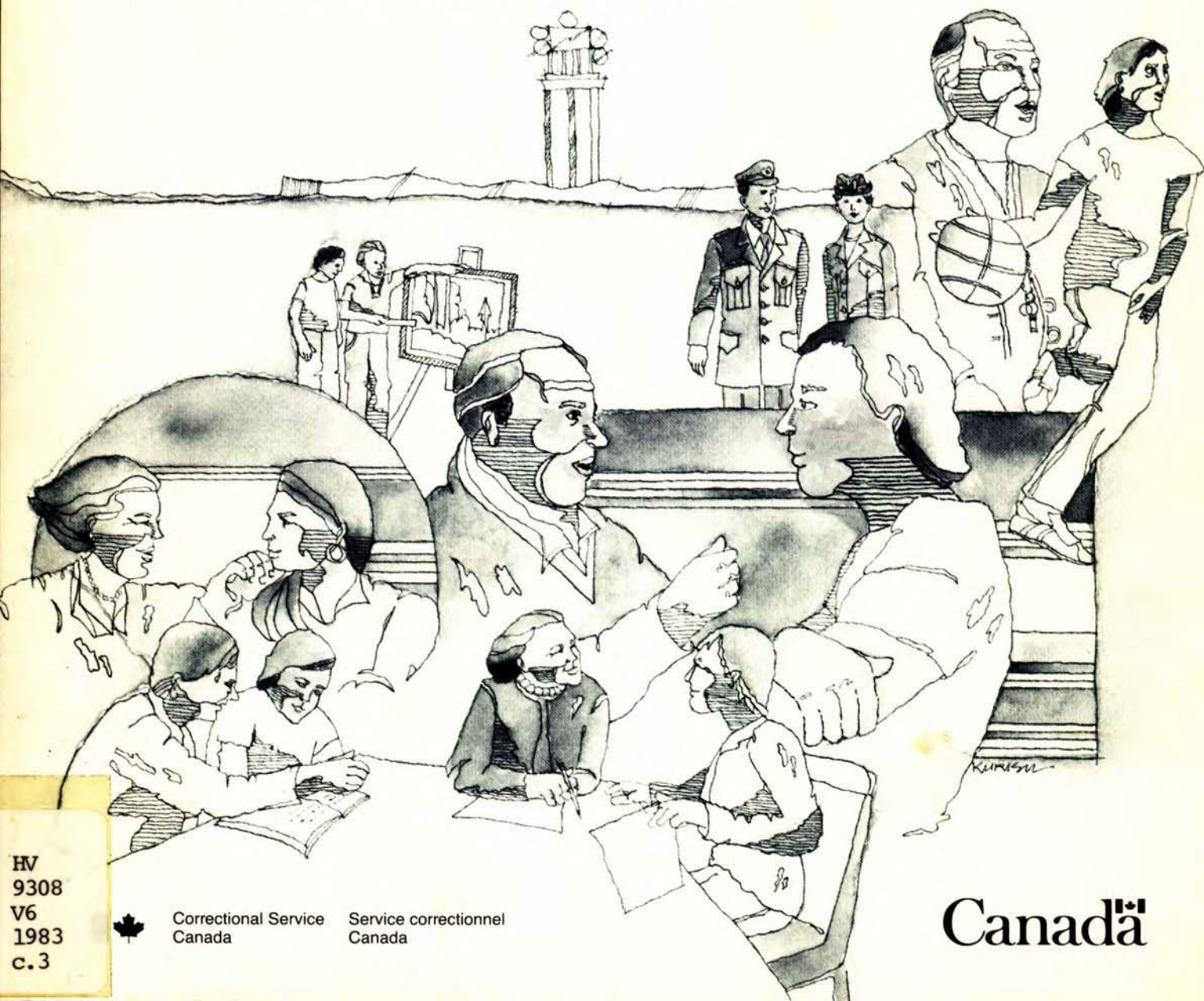
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VOLUNTEERING

in The Correctional Service of Canada



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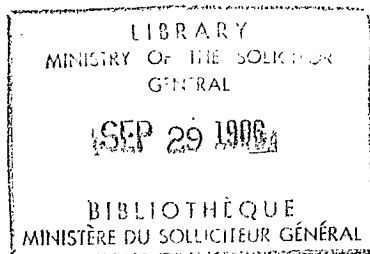


Correctional Service
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VOLUNTEERING

in The Correctional Service of Canada :

A guide for volunteers

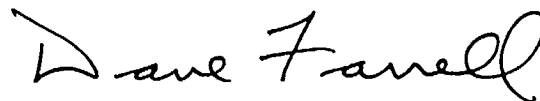
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Why Should I ?

As a volunteer in federal corrections, there was a time when I asked myself — why should I ? I began to find the answer soon after my first step in volunteering — satisfaction and a challenge in reaching out to people who need help. But, there were other questions I needed answered; answers I had to seek for myself. One important question was — How to be an effective volunteer? I had a lot to learn and needed information to help me. I welcome the information in this booklet. It certainly answers my questions and others you might pose. I expect it will deal with your concerns on volunteering in federal corrections, and help those who may wish to volunteer their services.

You are one of thousands of volunteers who daily give increasingly to countless community organizations and services throughout Canada. Each one is important to the well-being of our communities. As a volunteer, or one-to-be, I wish you well in your work with offenders in federal corrections — and I hope this booklet helps open a door for you to enter into this worthwhile endeavor. Your help is valued and needed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Farrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D" and a stylized "F".

Dave Farrell

A volunteer with you

CSC Welcomes You

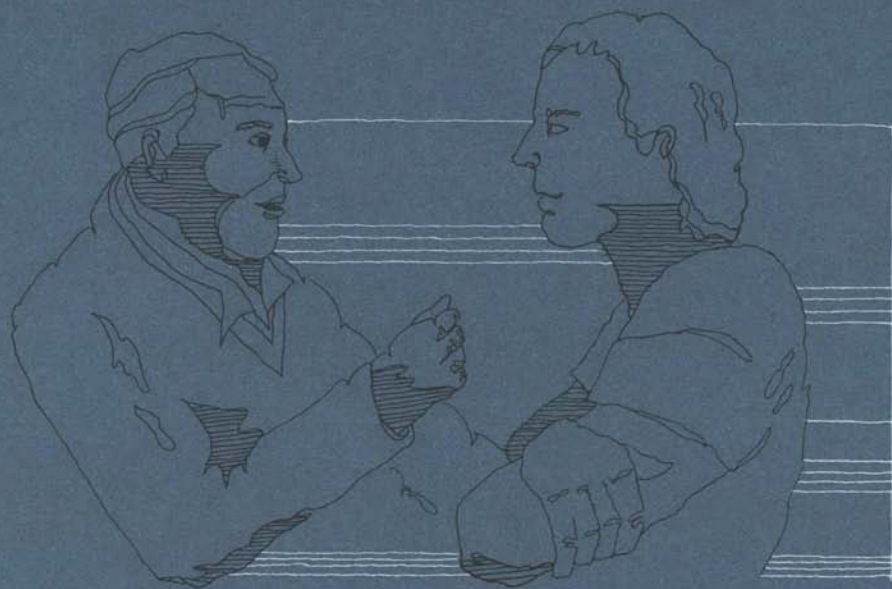
As the Commissioner of federal corrections, I welcome you as a volunteer worker — and encourage those who are contemplating becoming a volunteer in The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). Our Service needs the positive influence from the community — and relies on you to assist the Service in striving to help offenders return to and stay in the community, without further conflict with the law. This booklet gives you an introduction to the many services you can offer offenders, and what the Service offers you.

I assure you the Service will do all possible to assist your work. Staff in the institutions and parole offices are aware of how they can support volunteers, and will encourage your involvement. The future of corrections will depend very much on the community's participation and you are a vital part of that participation. I am sure you will gain satisfaction from your work, and thank you for offering your services as a volunteer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. R. Yeomans', with a stylized, cursive script.

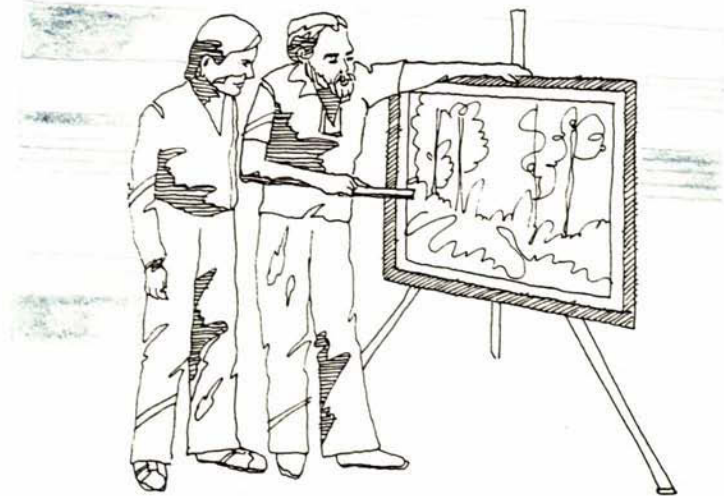
Donald R. Yeomans

Commissioner of Corrections



Why There Are Volunteers

Volunteers have been involved in Canadian corrections for many years. Their services have become an integral part of an offender's life while in prison or on parole — sharing skills and interests. They contribute to a variety of institution programs; chaplaincy, recreation, classroom and workshop instruction, social and cultural activities, and friendship. In the community, volunteers are a support for families of incarcerated offenders, and help released offenders readjust to community life. As an agency of the government, The Correctional Service of Canada involves volunteers to complement and share in its programs. They also help to close the gap between an isolated prison community and a free society, to which most offenders return — that is why volunteers are essential in corrections. Volunteers have readily responded to this enormous responsibility, and for many years.



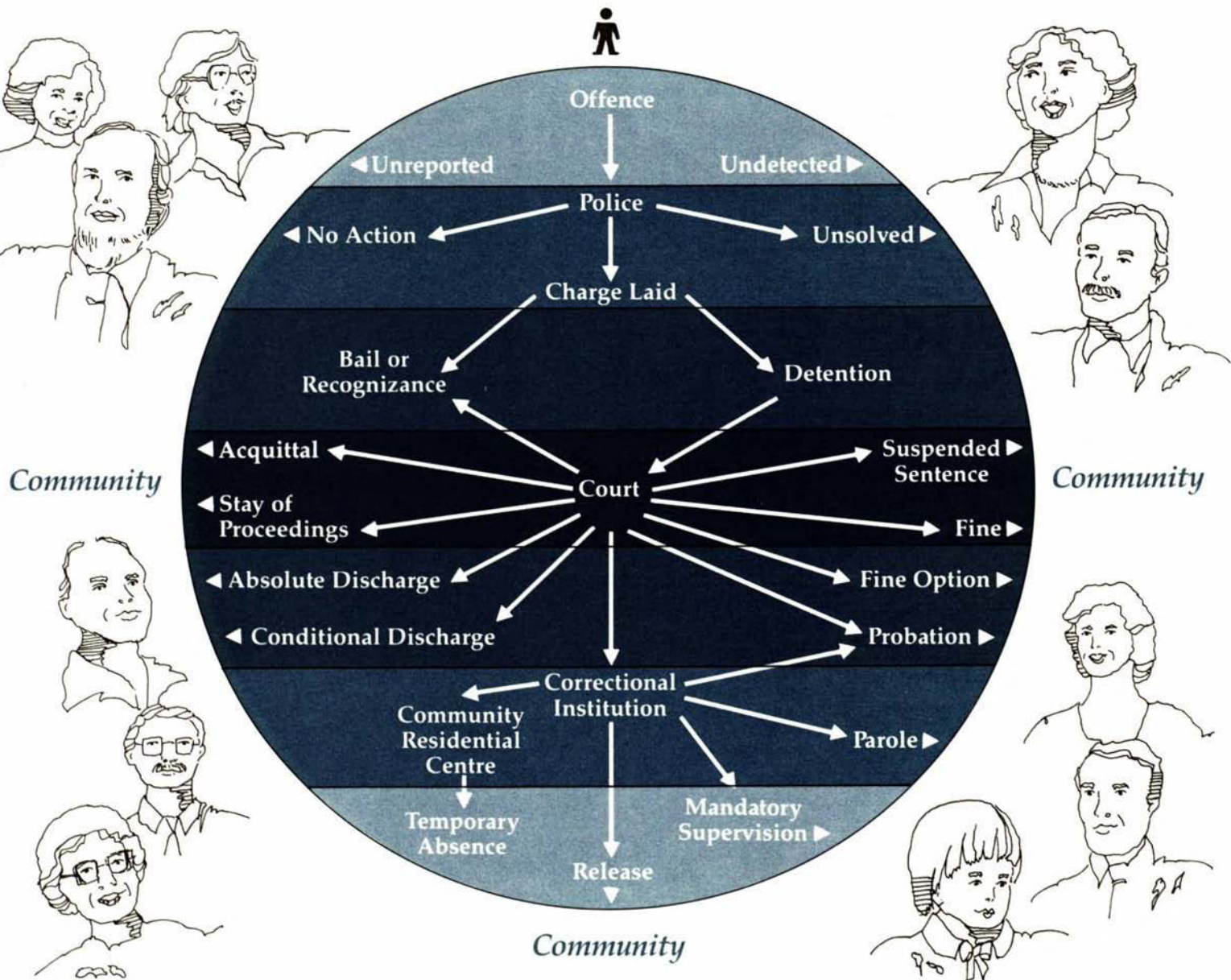
Where Do You Fit In ?

The criminal justice system of Canada provides many opportunities for volunteers. The process which an offender goes through, from arrest and charge, until incarceration and release into the community, opens many volunteering options. In this booklet you will find a descriptive chart, relating the criminal justice process to the community. Perhaps you will be surprised how strongly the community affects the criminal justice process, and how much you, as a volunteer, can help in this process.

As part of the criminal justice system, The Correctional Service of Canada is responsible for offenders sentenced to two or more years, and the provinces for less than two years. Under the federal Parole Act, inmates who meet certain criteria may be released from institutions by The National Parole Board, to serve the remainder of their sentence in the community under set conditions. If the conditions are broken, parole could be revoked. CSC provides supervision and support for paroled offenders, through parole officers, volunteers, or voluntary community organizations. In the institutions volunteers are the responsibility of the assistant warden, socialization. Volunteers working with offenders on parole are the responsibility of the local parole director.

No doubt there is much more you need to know about corrections. You will find helpful information in the booklet, *Basic Facts About Corrections in Canada*, and *Beyond the Walls*, available in the institutions and parole offices. You may wish to know even more about CSC, to help you decide what you can offer as a volunteer, or if this is the kind of work in which you would be happy. Contact Communications Branch, The Correctional Service of Canada, 340 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0P9, (613) 995-3031, and explain what you want to know.

The Criminal Justice Process



What Can You Offer ?

Before you offer your services to a voluntary organization in your community, or directly to The Correctional Service of Canada, it would be wise to assess what is already being done by volunteers, and how you can become part of these services. You will probably be surprised how much work volunteers already do.

Check with local organizations: The Elizabeth Fry Society, The St. Leonard's Societies, The Salvation Army, The John Howard Society, ARCAD of Quebec (Association for Recreational and Cultural Activities with people in Detention), a church, lodge or service club. Any of these may be looking for volunteers to go into the institutions and work with offenders. Or, contact CSC regional offices in your area, found in the telephone book under federal government; you could also speak to the volunteer supervisor. These initial contacts can help you decide whether or not you are suited to the demands of volunteering — and whether there is a need for what you wish to share.

Volunteers in CSC have become involved in numerous projects, in the institutions and community. New areas emerge as correctional policies change, opening more opportunities for volunteer services. Here are examples of what your services can help achieve:

- o closing the social gap between prisons and the community by bringing the community into prisons, which can lessen inmate isolation
- o helping inmates plan positively for their return to the community

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- helping inmates integrate into the community when released from prison
 - assisting families of inmates
 - helping to establish beneficial relationships between CSC and the community
 - helping CSC look at and start new programs
 - contributing to reforms in CSC, which can also affect your work as a volunteer
 - helping to inform the community about corrections
 - offering advice to CSC on issues affecting policy and programs
 - assisting parole officers with community assessments of inmates, as required for parole; and supervising or sponsoring released inmates.

An essential service, to which volunteers have given many hours, is the Citizens' Advisory Committee. Members are chosen from localities surrounding the institutions and parole offices. CACs have become an important part of institution and parole office administration, offering advice and assistance in resolving problems, helping to develop new community resources for offenders, and assisting the community to understand federal government responsibilities in corrections.

What Can You Expect From CSC ?

Because the contribution of volunteer assistance is important to corrections, especially in maintaining a reasonable life behind walls, CSC has explained what volunteers can expect from the Service in a document known as *Commissioner's Directive 600-4-08.2*, available from the Service. This Directive states policy and purpose, with definitions of the responsibilities of both volunteers and CSC. There are three key players in the correctional drama — offender, staff, and volunteer. All three are placed on stage in such a way that their roles can be clearly seen.

Here are the main principles . . .

- responsibility for offenders is shared by the community and CSC, and CSC will make it possible for volunteers to work with offenders
- volunteers complement resources available to offenders and CSC
- consultation between CSC and volunteers is essential to their shared responsibilities
- individual volunteers, and those associated with community organizations, are welcomed
- the role to which volunteer organizations are committed is understood and recognized by CSC
- CSC will preserve the independence of volunteers, recognizing their rights as private citizens to express their views freely
- recruiting volunteers is a responsibility shared by voluntary organizations, individual volunteers, and CSC.

Here is what the Commissioner of Corrections, Deputy Commissioners of the five regions, and officers in charge of an institution or parole office are committed to . . .

- providing conditions and opportunities to encourage development of volunteer services
- determining, with volunteers, which volunteer services are required
- authorizing the use of these services
- encouraging recruitment and managing of volunteer services by voluntary organizations or individual volunteers — and,
- making sure volunteer services complement, not duplicate CSC services.

Recruitment of volunteers is usually the responsibility of voluntary organizations, and individual volunteers. They are also recruited directly by CSC. Volunteers with a criminal record are not precluded. Orientation and training will be offered to you, and you will also receive information about policies, directives, and other information on CSC rules and regulations.

What is Expected of You ?

Security dominates most of life inside a prison. Offenders are subject to various restrictions which can affect how volunteers contribute to and share in programs. Working with staff, volunteers soon learn what these regulations are, and feel the effect on what they do. Early in their work volunteers need to develop the ability to adjust to security, by working within its confines. To help you as you start your duties, and as a reference at all times, here is a guide to what the Service expects of you.

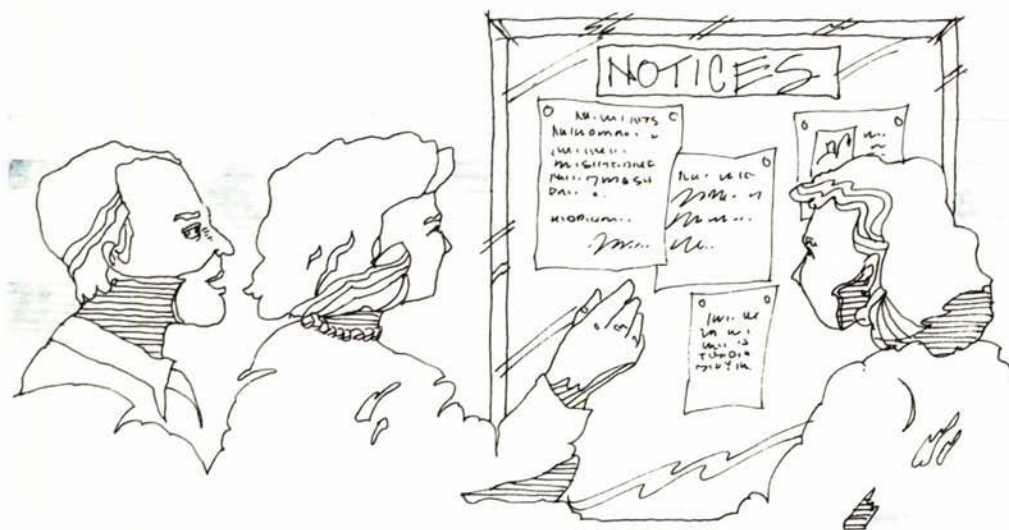
- Familiarize yourself with rules and routines of the institution or parole office; these govern offender activity inside and outside an institution. Check with your volunteer supervisor if your agency has not given them to you
- Once you have made a commitment — stick with it, be regular and punctual. If unable to attend or if you terminate your services, let your supervisor know, early. Programs may have to be adjusted and offenders advised. Also, if your services are to be irregular let the voluntary agency or institution parole staff know
- Sign in and out at the institution. Carry proper (acceptable) identification. Make sure staff know what you are doing, and where you will be. Staff have a serious responsibility, and need to know where offenders are and what they are doing, and with whom
- Do not take *anything* into, or out of an institution unless approved by staff, including a message or letter



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- Know areas which are out of bounds to offenders. Do not take offenders away from where they should be
 - Don't encourage temptation. Leave valuables at home. Ask staff where to leave your purse or wallet, and other valuables if you must carry them into the institution. Lock your car
 - Report personal injury or accident *immediately*
 - Respect confidentiality regarding offenders and staff. This cannot be overstressed. Do not reveal the identity of an offender when you leave the institution, or when inside. Violation of this trust can create harm to the offender
 - You *must* report to your institution volunteer supervisor anything you discover which may be a threat to the safety of volunteers, staff, or offenders
 - Be sure you understand your volunteer role before beginning your duties. Know the responsibilities — and limitations. Your volunteer initiative will be appreciated, but do not expand your role before consulting your supervisor
 - If conflict occurs between offender and staff — *do not take sides*. You risk alienating yourself from one or the other, and your credibility is at stake
 - Don't be afraid to ask staff for assistance. Consult your supervisor on problems. Get to know staff — at all levels
 - Show reasonable decorum — in behavior and dress
 - Be prepared for unexpected delays and changes, even last minute cancellation of your program. Emergencies can occur at any time in an institution
 - Follow directives from staff. If you have cause for concern, seek clarification from senior staff, or call your volunteer coordinator.

Helpful Hints

- **Remember** — offenders are people, who have retained many basic rights, even though incarcerated. They have the right to their own identity, and their own way of problem-solving and functioning in society. The volunteer should *not* tell an offender what to do when confronted with a problem — the volunteer *should* concentrate on helping the offender to make a choice of reasonable alternatives.
- **Accept them as they are** — without necessarily accepting their behavior, attitudes, or values. Accept them as people with dignity and the right to be respected and understood. Their lives may be radically different from anything you have known — it is *their* life. Don't try to mold them into people you would like them to be. They need someone to accept them — as they are.



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- **Do not pass judgement** — your lifestyle may not be the same as that of offenders. Don't draw conclusions about them, the way they dress, talk, or act. Try to understand their behavior and background. Don't judge.
 - **Let them decide** — offenders have the right to determine what they do. Offer constructive alternatives, and ask questions, but do not make the decision, even though you are asked to do so.
 - **Keep their confidence** — at the beginning of your relationship with an offender decide what is personal and what is public information *together*. It is critical you stand by this decision or your reliability will be shattered. The offender should be aware of your responsibility to report to your supervisor, and remember — honoring the offender's confidence also means protection of that person's identity. You should not discuss the offender's life and problems in public places.
 - **Watch your emotions** — build a supportive relationship but do not become so involved with the offender's problem that you take over his/her role in problem solving. The offender must work out the problem. Help by offering suggestions and guidance on *how to make* decisions, but *do not make* decisions for him/her — you might cause dependency. And, never become so involved you neglect your own personal life.

Terms You Need To Know

As a volunteer in an institution or parole office, you will hear words, expressions with which you might not be familiar. Here are some, with explanations.

Bail — cash, property or written guarantee of appearance in court, to answer a charge when formally accused of an offence.

Classification — the process of placing an individual in the appropriate institution to meet his/her needs and to adjust his/her placement accordingly. Prior to arrival at an institution, each inmate is interviewed and tested by professional staff to determine a rehabilitative plan for the inmate.

Community Assessment — a report prepared usually by a parole officer regarding the viability of the offender's parole release plans. It includes an evaluation of the employment prospects, accommodation, relationship with family and friends, and other significant information in the community. The report is submitted to the National Parole Board to assist in making a decision about the offender's release on parole.

Community-based Residential Centre (CRC) — a halfway house in the community, used as a temporary residence, where an offender on release, or about to be, may reside while preparing for independence in the community. Some are privately operated, others operated by the federal government as Community Correctional Centres.

Community Service Order — an alternative sentence, assigned by the court, which determines an offender works in the community for a number of hours without pay.

Concurrent Sentence — two or more sentences served at the same time; the length of time to be served determined by the longest sentence.

Conditional or Absolute Discharge — a court, instead of convicting the accused, directs that he/she be discharged absolutely or upon the conditions prescribed in a probation order.

Contraband — anything an inmate is not permitted to have in his possession. This varies from one institution to another, and should be checked with the institution visited.

Correctional Investigator — a person, independent of CSC, who investigates complaints which inmates believe are not dealt with fairly in the institution.

Indictable Offence — offences which are so labelled by the Criminal Code or other federal statute. These are subject to greater penalties than *summary conviction* offences.

Grievances — a procedure for inmate complaints about treatment in the institutions. Refer to the handbook on inmate rights and responsibilities obtainable from CSC.

Mandatory Supervision — is a conditional release of inmates who were not granted parole by the National Parole Board. The law entitles them to serve, under supervision in the community, the time accumulated by statutory or earned remission, commonly known as *time off for good behavior*. It can be as much as one third of a sentence. Mandatory supervision may be revoked by the National Parole Board if imposed conditions are not respected. The person is then returned to an institution to complete his or her sentence.

Parole — a conditional release from prison:

Day Parole — conditional release granted to an inmate at the discretion of the National Parole Board, to assist an inmate to prepare for full parole. Usually granted for a specific purpose, and limited period of time, day parole requires an inmate continue to live in an institution, community correctional or residential centre.

Full Parole — the conditional release of an inmate granted at the discretion of the National Parole Board, which allows inmates to complete their sentences in the community under supervision. While on full parole, inmates report to a parole officer, and usually to police. Parole may be revoked by the parole board if parole conditions are not respected.

Parole Board — a government appointed body of people (independent of CSC) which makes decisions concerning release of inmates on conditional release programs (full parole, day parole, and unescorted temporary absence).

Parole Officer — a person, employed by CSC, who investigates a parole applicant's community resources, and provides supervision and assistance to parolees and those on mandatory supervision.

Penitentiary — the traditional and legal name for a CSC institution, also known as prison. Provincial institutions, used for shorter sentences, have other names such as reformatory and correctional centre.

Preliminary Hearing — for an indictable offence (*see above*) a provincial court must hear the evidence and judge whether to send the case for trial to a higher court, or end the prosecution for lack of evidence.

Probation — a court order imposing conditions on individuals convicted of offences. They remain in the community, usually under supervision of probation officers who work for provincial corrections.

Recidivist — an ex-offender who commits another offence.

Recognizance — formal bail, when the accused promises to appear for trial without posting cash or property bail (*see above*).

Remand — process to postpone court proceedings until a future date.

Restitution — compensation by the offender for injury, loss or damage to a victim of crime. Frequently prescribed as a condition of probation.

Segregation — an inmate, separated from the institution population as a disciplinary measure, or for protection from other inmates, either at the discretion of the warden or inmate's request.

Security — institutions are classified maximum, medium or minimum security, according to the amount of freedom and privileges inmates are permitted within institution confines. Inmates are classified according to their perceived security risk.

Subpoena — legal document compelling attendance at court of a person named. Usually used to compel attendance of witnesses.

Summary Offence — offences described by the Criminal Code and other federal statutes, and offences under provincial statutes, and municipal by-laws. These offences are subject to fines not exceeding \$500. or imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both.

Summons — a legal document commanding a person to attend before a court.

Temporary Absence — a brief leave, escorted or unescorted, from an institution for medical or humanitarian reasons, which include obtaining medical care not available in the institution, or attending the funeral of a close family member.

Warrant — legal document permitting police to arrest and take into custody the person named in the warrant.

Ready to Start ?

Becoming a volunteer in a correctional environment may seem to require a lot of knowledge and special skills. Don't let this concern deter you. All that is really needed is the will to act, and openness to share what you already have — and to learn what more you can do to make your sharing even more effective. Corrections is the responsibility of us all, not only staff and specialists who work in The Correctional Service of Canada. Volunteers take the community *into* corrections, so that inmates may come *out* better able, and more willing to belong in the community with us. As a volunteer you will be giving and receiving, while responding to a need, which has its own reward. We hope this booklet has given you helpful information about being a volunteer in CSC. If you have questions which have not been answered here, CSC will try to help you.



*No one goes his way alone, all
that we give to the lives of others,
comes back into our own.*

