

## CORRECTIONS PROTOCOL

### Procedural Guidelines

**Intent:**

The Ministry of Housing and Social Development (MHSD), the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG - Corrections), and Federal Corrections have amended the enhanced pre-release service delivery model that supports and streamlines planning for our mutual clients. The amended service delivery model includes:

- Procedures to effectively process applicants (pre-release offenders) pending release from Federal or Provincial corrections facilities
- Procedures to enhance pre-release planning and assist releasees in becoming independent, prevent the negative impact of recidivism on communities, and minimize health and safety issues in MHSD offices
- Services that acknowledge the value of pre-release planning

**Strategies to Support Intent:**

1. Orientation material is provided to applicants at Correctional Centres prior to applications for Income Assistance (IA).
2. Income Assistance and Persons with Disabilities application interviews are conducted by telephone prior to the offender's release.
3. Consistent procedures apply to all correctional releases from the province's Corrections Centres.
4. Pre-release applicants meet the conditions of having an immediate need and proceed to Stage Two of the application process.
5. The three-week pre-application work search is waived. After eligibility has been established, work search requirements will be clearly outlined in the employment plan in their home community.
6. The two-year financial independence requirement is met if the applicant has been incarcerated in a lawful place of confinement for at least 6 months of the two years immediately preceding the date of application.
7. Corrections staff will calculate all provincial incarcerated time served to establish the two-year financial independence requirement is met.
8. Time limits apply to all employment-obligated clients.
9. If eligible, Income Assistance support is provided by cheque and is issued to the releasee at the Correctional Centres upon release. Cheques may be sent by MHSD through house mail, by courier, or may be picked up by locally arranged protocols.

10. Regions may establish protocols that reflect local demographics while ensuring that there is continued compliance with the agreed MHSD /Corrections strategies addressed in the amended provincial protocol.
11. Liaisons or contact points are established for both Correctional Centres and MHSD.

**Procedures:**

Note: Corrections personnel will ensure offenders are informed of their release dates.

**Sentenced Offenders**

1. Offenders at the Correctional Centre that are considered pre-release and who indicate they will be applying for Employment and Income Assistance will complete an application form (HSD0080A). A release of information is also signed at that point to allow interaction between MHSD and Corrections on behalf of the applicant.
2. Corrections will send the offender's name and HSD0080A to the appropriate designated MHSD Office/Service Centre. A telephone application interview is requested.
3. A telephone application time and date is scheduled 7 to 10 days prior to release date. Pre-arranged appointment scheduling may vary as per agreed upon practices by office and Correctional Centre. Time and date are relayed to the identified Correctional Centre liaison.
4. Corrections completes a Letter of Identification (see attached [sample letter](#)) and forwards the letter and any other documentation (including the MHSD application and release of information) to MHSD prior to the telephone application appointment. The Letter of ID will include the balance in the offender's trust fund that will be paid out upon release, a digital picture of the offender and any "Also Know As (AKA)"/alias names used. If the ID letter indicates the offender has sufficient funds (see Assets Policy) and the offender does not meet other exemption criteria (see Immediate Needs), an expedited application will not be taken.
5. Corrections will advise MHSD if the applicant will be conditionally released or discharged to a Treatment Centre or Supportive Recover House. (They may be eligible for comforts)
6. At application, Corrections medical staff will advise if the Applicant has an existing serious health issue requiring assistance to re-integrate into the community (e.g. requires medications, hospice accommodation or is possibly PWD)
7. The orientation material supplied by MHSD will be reviewed by the offender prior to the telephone application.

8. The HSD0080A is reviewed with the applicant at first contact with MHSD and verbal consent is taken. A PA file is registered and then the application (HSD0080) is completed. Both Information Gathering and Eligibility Interview are completed in one contact.
9. The completed application and HSD0080A are sent to the designated Correctional Centre liaison.
10. The applications (part 1 and 2) are signed by the applicant and Corrections acts as the trusted third party for the purpose of signing the Employment and Income Assistance application.
11. Corrections will fax the signed applications and will mail or deliver the original signed copy to MHSD.
12. If the applicant is found not eligible, they are notified by phone, letter, or e-mail, or by the trusted third party at Corrections. The applicant will be advised of the ineligibility reason and will be advised of their right to a reconsideration of the decision.
13. If the applicant is eligible for assistance, a pro-rated support cheque is mailed, couriered, or picked up by the Correctional Centre prior to the client's release. An Information Notification (see attached [notification](#)) is included with the cheque and will provide information regarding:
  - Establishing residency in the community the applicant will reside in
  - Making an appointment to contact the appropriate EAO to bring in rental Information
  - Explanation of Employment Obligations
  - Explanation of Time Limits implications
14. For offenders who are released and relocate to another community, requests for assistance or services are to be processed as soon as possible. Depending on the time of the month, a second month of support may be necessary before residence can be established.
15. Once residency is established, the "home" or receiving EAO provides the shelter portion.
16. An Employment Plan is completed by the "home" EAO that clearly outlines expectations and work search requirements.
17. The "home" or receiving office conducts the third party checks.

**Remand Offenders**

1. The remand offender is released at court or from a Remand Centre or Correctional Centre.
2. The applicant (offender) may attend any Ministry of Housing and Social Development Office for an emergency appointment and will be considered to have met the conditions of having an immediate need.
3. The worker or the applicant contacts the Correctional Centre if Corrections information is required for the Letter of Identification. All other normal expedited application processes are followed.
4. If eligible, pro-rated support is issued.
5. Depending on the time of the month, a second month of support may be necessary before residence can be established.
6. Once residency is established, the "home" or receiving EAO provides the shelter portion.
7. An Employment Plan is completed that clearly outlines expectations and work search requirements.
8. The "home" or receiving office conducts the third party checks.

In addition to these procedures, MHSD has implemented a service to assist with obtaining a signature from incarcerated parents for CIHR applications. (See Appendix A for details)

## APPENDIX A

### Incarcerated Parent: Obtaining Signature For CIHR Applications

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It can be difficult for relatives caring for children of incarcerated parents to obtain parental signatures on the CIHR Application or in a letter noting that the parent has placed the children with them. As a result, some relatives are unable to meet the eligibility requirements for CIHR. If relatives are unable to care for the child, or children, due to financial hardship, the child(ren) can be apprehended or placed into care by agreement. On the parent's release from prison, there is an additional burden in having the children returned from care before the parent can integrate back into the community. Having the child(ren) placed with unknown foster parents creates mental and emotional stress for parents and children.

In late 2007, a new protocol was implemented to assist in obtaining parental signatures in support of relatives caring for CIHR children of incarcerated parents within British Columbia. This streamlined service delivery initiative involves a ministry liaison, a Provincial Corrections liaison, and a Federal Corrections liaison.

The Fraser Region and in particular, the Maple Ridge Employment and Assistance office, has agreed to be the liaison between Employment and Assistance offices, relatives and the Correctional facilities in order to assist the relatives in obtaining the necessary financial supports for the children in their care.

#### Procedures:

##### **Relative Contacts the Local Employment and Assistance Office:**

- Employment and Assistance Worker (EAW) completes CIHR application (HSD0080B) with the relative and faxes it to the MHSD Liaison at 604 463-8946. EAW is to note the name of the Correctional Facility on the HSD0080B if known to the relative.
- MHSD Liaison faxes the application to the Corrections Liaison to obtain signature of parent.
- Corrections Liaison faxes signed CIHR application back to MHSD Liaison within 2–5 business days. MHSD Liaison will attach the application to the original document set and transfer back to the active documents of the sending office for action.
- If there are any questions the MHSD Liaison can be reached at 604 466-4469.
- Local office sets up the file with CIHR assistance.

**Corrections Liaison Contacts MHSD Liaison on Behalf of the Parent:**

- Information about CIHR assistance will be made available in the Correctional Centre.
- Corrections Liaison has parent complete form letter which has been developed by the Elizabeth Fry Society. The form letter will be faxed to the MHSD Liaison.
- MHSD Liaison will contact the relative noted on the form letter and advise them which office to contact in order to have CIHR assistance set up.
- MHSD Liaison will e-mail the faxed letter to the generic office mailbox of the appropriate Employment and Assistance office so that parental consent will be available when the relative makes contact.
- The local office will meet with the relative in person or by phone to have the CIHR application completed and signed by the relative. Local office sets up the file with CIHR assistance.

**Notes:**

1. MHSD Liaison may need to fax a birth certificate application to the Corrections Liaison in order to have the parent complete it and mail it to the Vital Statistics office so that proper identification can be placed on the CIHR file.
2. Relatives caring for a child on reserve are to approach the local band office for CIHR assistance.
3. CIHR assistance is to be issued while establishing the child's identification. If the parent has an income assistance file the EAW should be contacting the office where the file is to obtain a copy of the child(ren)'s identification from the parent's file.