



State of Minnesota
Department of Corrections
Office Memorandum
Facility Services Division

DATE: July 7, 2011
TO: All Offenders
FROM: Terry Carlson, Assistant Commissioner
RE: **Government Shutdown – Offender Services Update**

On June 30, 2011, you received a memo outlining services and activities that will be managed within the facilities during a shutdown. Facility operations have been evaluated and the services and activities have been revised to provide clarification. Facility operations will continue to be evaluated on a daily basis and modifications will be considered to best address safety and security issues. You will be notified by the institution head about further changes.

- **Cable TV/Movies**-The cable/Direct TV contract is suspended as of July 1. The vendor may choose to continue cable/direct TV service past July 1. If cable/Direct TV is not available for offender viewing, facilities have made arrangements for digital TV reception (antenna). The Public Performance licensing agreement with Swank, Inc. is not a critical contract, so it is not funded as of July 1. This restricts facilities from showing movies in a public setting.
- **Canteen/Vending**-Canteen will remain operational. However, services may be delayed. Phone time may continue to be purchased through canteen. Vending machine services will remain operational. Vending machine refunds will be processed but delayed.
- **Finance**-Receipt of money orders, offender payroll and money for offender releases will be processed as normal. Responding to kites, processing vouchers and money transfers, issuing daily receipts for money orders, processing payments for restitution, etc. will be performed as time allows.
- **Health Services**-Medical, dental and mental health services will remain operational.
- **Kite and Grievance Response Deadlines**-Response deadlines to kites and grievances will be suspended. We will make timely responses as staffing levels permit.
- **Library (general and law library)**-Library services will be suspended until further notice. The core collection of law library materials presently housed at facility libraries will be inaccessible due to the library closing. Offender law library access will be continued through the US mail system or telephone. The court will accept handwritten documents as long as they are neat and legible.

Law library services will be provided by LLSP through phone and mail. LLSP staff will provide all law library materials, including the core collection that was previously only available through the facility library. LLSP will attempt to accommodate all requests within the existing page limitations provided in DOC Policy 204.045 (Library), however, offenders with court deadlines will be given priority for responses.

Law Library Services to Prisoners
Minnesota Judicial Center, Room G25
25 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155-6102
(651) 297-4969

Mail services to court staff, attorneys and the public defender's office will remain operational as usual.

- **Mail**-General and legal mail will remain operational.
- **Notary**-Services will be offered.
- **Offender Visiting**-Offender visiting is being suspended until further notice. The DOC will reinstate visiting as soon as funding allows. A notice has been placed on the DOC website for your visitors. If your family, friends or significant others have questions regarding visiting refer them to <http://www.doc.state.mn.us/offenders/visiting.htm>. Let them know that visiting is being suspended so they don't make an unnecessary trip to the facility. Professional visits will continue to be coordinated through case management.

A process has been developed for offenders to request an exception to the suspension of visiting for extenuating circumstances. The requests for consideration will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Exceptions to the suspension of visiting will be very limited and may not be granted due to staffing levels, security concerns or other issues. Existing visiting policy, instructions and rules will apply.

An example of extenuating circumstances may be that an offender's visitors are from out of the state of Minnesota and have or will travel to the facility for the purpose of visiting the offender. Offenders are directed to only submit a request if there is extenuating circumstances. Routine visits will not be considered.

The offender requesting the visit should send a kite to the Associate Warden of Operations at their respective facility and include the suggested date and time of the visit, the name of the visitors and the extenuating circumstances surrounding the request. The facility will review each request and response to the offender with a decision on whether the visit will be granted or denied.

- **Programming**-Programming may be offered, modified or cancelled. The facility will announce programming adjustments.
- **Property and Linen**-Property and linen activities will remain operational; however, services may be delayed. Special orders will be suspended.
- **Recreation**-Indoor recreation (gyms) and organized recreation activities have been suspended. Facility main yard and unit courtyards will remain operational. Consideration for indoor recreation will be made if weather prohibits outdoor recreation. Facilities will post information about the modified schedules.
- **Religious Activity**-All group religious activities led by volunteers or offenders will be temporarily suspended. Individual religious activity such as prayer, meditation or reflection is allowed. Special order requests for religious property is temporality suspended.
- **State Work Release, Institution Community Work Crew (ICWC), Sentence to Service (STS), Halfway House and Emergency Housing.** - State Work Release and ICWC programs continue to operate reducing inmate idle time. Statewide STS program continues to operate providing a sentencing alternative to the courts reducing inmate idle time in local jails. Offenders meeting the criteria for halfway house placement upon release and emergency housing requests continue to be processed as directed by department policy.
- **Volunteer programming**-Volunteer services will be suspended at all DOC facilities. This includes all activities that outside volunteers conduct, for example, religious services, NA, AA, education, transitions, etc.

Thank you for your patience until we resume normal programming.