



New Employee Orientation

Inmate/Staff Interaction

Section I



Introduction

Overview of Lesson

This lesson covers:

- How to interact with inmates and staff members in a positive and professional manner
- Proper communication techniques
- How to identify and react to overly familiar and inappropriate behavior
- Inmate rights and the consequences that arise when these rights are violated
- How to identify and respond to inmates who may attempt to manipulate staff

Importance

The way you interact and communicate with staff and inmates is a reflection on you as a professional and of the Department.

The knowledge and skills provided in this lesson are the foundation for success and are some of the most important skills you will learn.

Section II



Correctional Professionalism

Employee Conduct

Good communication skills are the foundation for successful professional interactions. You will make decisions based on the application of departmental policies and procedures.

Positive and professional conduct:

- Fosters a better understanding of the roles of staff and inmates inside the institution
- Leads to mutual respect of both staff and inmates

Professionalism

Adhering to the rules, regulations, and ethical standards of CDCR and being a competent, reasonable, dependable, and well-trained employee.

CDCR staff shall exhibit a courteous, objective, conscientious, and business-like demeanor.



Professional traits:

- Neat and well-groomed appearance
- Demonstrated expertise in their field
- Practiced excellent communication skills
- Displayed ethical behaviors
- Demonstrated politeness and courtesy
- Remained calm, even when facing a difficult situation
- Provided their professional opinion

Professionals that possess these traits can weave in and out of a “position of authority” and “personal power.”

Unprofessional traits:

- Appeared poorly groomed
- Was impolite or rude
- Made others feel uncomfortable or unwelcome



The first impression can set the tone for an inmate's behavior.

Inmates often have expectations of our:

- Performance
- Conduct
- Appearance



Professionalism should be adhered to at all times.

- If an imminent danger or emergency arises (i.e., alarm response, assaults, and medical emergencies)
 - Maintaining professionalism is instrumental because your actions will be scrutinized and, in many instances, called into question by both inmates and the public
- When inmates do not respect authority

Learning Objective 1:

You will identify habits staff should follow to promote positive and professional interactions with other staff and inmates.

Positive Interactions

Attaining many of the following habits will assist you in promoting positive interactions with inmates and other staff.

- Think before you speak or act
- Be alert and pay attention
- Be knowledgeable and objective
- Grant reasonable requests
- Be firm, fair, and consistent
- Be impartial and do not show favoritism
- Be patient and flexible
- Be a role model and have pride in yourself

- Be courteous and professional
- Lead by example
- Acknowledge and reinforce good or improved behavior
- Discipline in private and praise in public, without overdoing it
- Respect the rights and dignity of others
- Be empathetic without forming an emotional connection
- Follow the chain of command

Section III



Communication Techniques



Learning Objective 2:

You will identify techniques used to communicate with an inmate.

Communicating with Inmates

Below are some ways to help alleviate barriers and establish open lines of communication:

- Speak clearly using appropriate language
- Give clear expectations and follow up
- Listen to what is being said
- Repeat back what you think they said and wait for their response
- Ask open-ended questions (e.g., why are you upset?)
- Portray an empathetic attitude
- Keep your word

- Learn to say “no” in a tactful manner
- Set limits and know when to be firm
- Project an attitude of self-confidence and professionalism
- Adopt a calm, natural stance (position of interview), and be mindful of tactical advantage; speak in a clear tone
- Never use inappropriate gestures

When speaking with an inmate:

- Do not lose your temper or make idle threats
- Remain professional in your conduct
- Avoid profanity or abusive language
- Try to slow the conversation down
- Always treat inmates respectfully



Developing Rapport

The following methods will assist you in developing rapport with inmates:

- If you recognize a change in behavior, attempt to find out what is causing the change
- Assist the inmate in resolving any problems by referring them to the chaplain, counselor, or medical department
- When appropriate, resolve the problem at the lowest level (informal, verbal counseling)
- Be fair, firm, consistent, and objective

- Complete appropriate documentation
- Be consistent in the treatment of all inmates, but take into consideration inmates are individuals who act and react differently
- Clearly state expectations, repeat expectations if necessary, and always follow up
- Try to follow through with what you say; if you cannot, take the time and advise the inmate why you could not
- Do not make a promise that you cannot deliver

- If you do not know something, admit it and make an effort to find the answer
- Lead by example, be aware of your role as an authority figure
- Do not make small issues into large ones or large issues into small ones
- Keeping the lines of communication open to build a good rapport does not mean you become a member of, or are associated with, a specific group of inmates

- Always maintain your professional demeanor
- Inmates will respect you when you are professional and fair in the performance of your duties
- Communicate your approval of a job well done, but do so in a professional manner
- Do not become a product of the institutional subculture (i.e., using inmate jargon)



Learning Objective 3:

You will identify possible communication barriers with inmates.

Communication Barriers

Possible communication barriers include:

- Mental health issues
- Developmental disabilities
- Physical disabilities (hearing, vision, and speech)
- Language barriers
- Learning disabilities
- Low Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores (4.0 and below)

- Cultural diversity issues—differences in race, gender, and sexual orientation
- Religion, customs, and values
- Profanity, slang, or name-calling
- Not accepting responsibility for your actions
- Not listening to what is being said
- Being closed-minded
- Body language
- Personal prejudices and discrimination
- Difference in personalities
- Misconceptions due to past experiences

Section IV



Inmates' Rights

Rights of the Confined

Federal and state laws govern the establishment and administration of institutions and the rights of the inmates.

Denial of basic human rights has resulted in serious consequences. Basic human rights for inmates include food, clothes, shower, a toilet, exercise, etc.

Inmates have rights and privileges that cannot be denied without due process.

Caselaw and legislation such as the Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA) of 1996 have expanded and refined inmate rights.

In addition to requirements for a minimum standard of living, inmates are protected from discriminatory treatment.



Learning Objective 4:

You will identify consequences that may arise if inmate rights are violated.

Consequences of Violating Inmate Rights

Consequences of violating inmate rights include:

- Compromising institutional security
- An unsafe and unstable work environment
- Increased tension between staff and inmates
- Inmate unrest and the potential for violence
- Loss of life and property

- Discrediting the Department
- Negative media attention
- Exposure of the Department to inmate appeals and lawsuits
- Fines and possible termination of staff who violate inmate rights

Section V



Inmate Manipulation



Learning Objective 5:

You will identify staff actions which inmates observe and use to manipulate staff.

Staff Actions

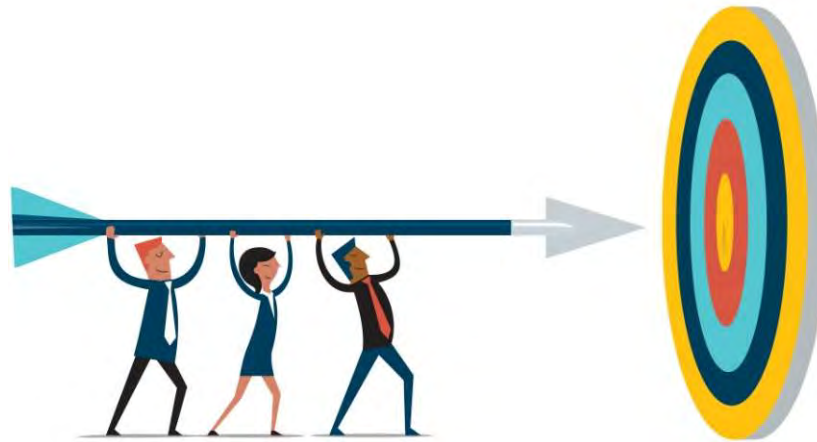
Below are examples of staff actions inmates may observe and use to manipulate staff:

- Appearing nervous or easily intimidated
- Acting immature
- Unwilling to ask their peers for assistance
- Interacting negatively with other staff or appearing to be a loner
- Gossiping about other staff or inmates
- Talking with inmates and not making eye contact

- Wearing inappropriate work attire (wrinkled or not clean clothes)
- Maintaining poor grooming standards and not looking professional
- Neglecting to follow the rules
- Bending the rules for certain inmates
- Failing to conduct security checks or performing inconsistent security checks
- Being overly familiar with inmates

Complimenting is another tactic inmates use to manipulate staff.

It is important to set boundaries with inmates who use excessive or inappropriate compliments by telling the inmate when their comments are inappropriate.



Empathy vs. Sympathy

Empathy is the ability to put yourself in someone else's shoes and understand the situation from their perspective.

Empathy does not necessarily require you to care, but you can understand where they are coming from without being emotionally invested.

Sympathy is caring or feeling sorry for someone else's situation. Sympathy usually involves having an emotional attachment.

When an inmate can get you to feel sympathy, this is a perfect setup to then attempt to manipulate you.

You can understand an inmate's problem without allowing the inmate to pull you into their feelings and possibly set you up for later manipulation.

Section VI



Overly Familiar Behavior

Inappropriate Relationships or Sexual Misconduct

The following clarifies the difference between an inappropriate relationship and sexual misconduct.

- Inappropriate relationship: A person in a position of trust or authority engaging in behavior of a personal nature, beyond the scope of the professional role, with an inmate/parolee or family and friends of the inmate/parolee
- Sexual misconduct: Any sexual behavior by an employee that involves or is directed toward an inmate (the legal concept of 'consent' does not exist between employees and inmates)

Video: Inmate Staff Relations



Learning Objective 6:

You will identify strategies that protect you from inmate manipulation.

Manipulation Prevention Strategies

There are strategies that you can use to maintain appropriate interactions with inmates.

Specific things you can do to protect yourself from manipulation are:

- Be professional
- Make your expectations of conduct clear
- Remain firm, fair, and consistent

- Immediately confront conduct that is inappropriate and is considered overly familiar
- Know the Department rules and regulations regarding staff professional conduct
- Maintain professional interactions with inmates, not personal relationships
- Be aware that inmates will try to manipulate you
- Know your surroundings and observe inmates

- Keep your personal life at home
- Confront rule violations, even minor ones
- If you believe you are being manipulated, contact your supervisor
- If you make a mistake, admit it



Staff-to-Staff Assistance

If you notice staff becoming overly familiar with an inmate(s), it is important to discuss the issue with the person in a non-threatening manner.

The following steps or methods should be used:

1. Observe

- For your safety, as well as that of others, we are obligated to be aware of the actions of those around us

- Be aware of your coworkers' whereabouts and inmate(s) who tend to be near staff frequently

2. Confirm

- Carefully verify your observations
- Do not engage in gossip, but discreetly discuss your observations with other coworkers who may be affected by the situation to confirm; do not involve inmates in staff conflicts

3. Confront

- The seriousness of the situation
- The culture of the work-site
- The relationship between the two employees will dictate how a staff member would confront another staff member
- Assuming that it is safe and appropriate to confront the coworker, bring your observations to the coworker's attention privately in a non-accusatory manner

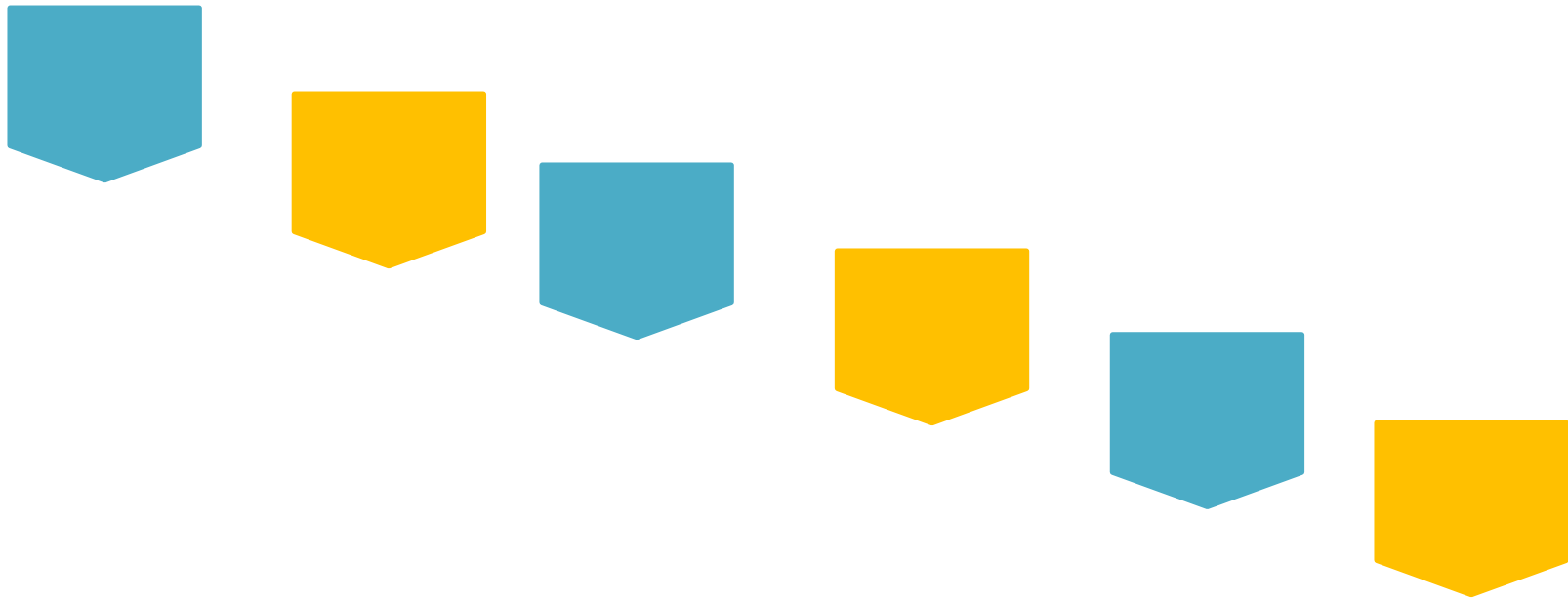
- Let the person know how their actions and those of the inmate are being perceived

4. Document

- Document all observations and any conversations concerning the situation
- Documentation helps clarify facts if an investigation follows

5. Report

- Report all observations to a supervisor
- In the case of an actual security violation or breach, report the matter to a security supervisor



Learning Objective 7:

You will identify the process to follow when a relative or friend is committed or transferred to the jurisdiction of the Department.

Relative or Friend Committed to the Department

“If an employee becomes aware that any relative or person with whom the employee has or has had either a personal or business relationship, has been committed to or transferred to the jurisdiction of the Department, the employee shall notify in writing, the employee’s institution head or appropriate Director/Assistant Secretary of that fact.”

CCR, Title 15 Section 3406

The employee must complete CDCR Form 2189, Incarcerated Relative/Associate Notification, and submit the form to their institution head or appropriate Director/Assistant Secretary.

CONFIDENTIAL

INCARCERATED RELATIVE/ASSOCIATE NOTIFICATION

In accordance with California Code of Regulations Title 15 § 3406, this form must be completed each time an employee becomes aware of a relative, or a person with whom the employee has/had an association or personal relationship, that has been committed to or transferred to the jurisdiction of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).

TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEE		
EMPLOYEE INFORMATION		
EMPLOYEE NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)	CLASSIFICATION	INSTITUTION/ PROGRAM AREA
WORK PHONE NUMBER (include area code)		WORK ADDRESS
INMATE INFORMATION		
INMATE NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)	DATE OF BIRTH	IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (can be retrieved at http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Visitors/Inmate_Locator.html)
INSTITUTION/ PROGRAM AREA		RELATIONSHIP TO EMPLOYEE
If the inmate is currently housed here, do you view his/her presence as conflicting with your employment responsibilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
Explain:		
Employee Signature		Date
(Please submit this completed form to your institution head, Superintendent, or Deputy/Assistant Director for signature and distribution.)		

TO BE COMPLETED BY INSTITUTION HEAD, SUPERINTENDENT, OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTOR.	
Do you recommend this inmate be referred for transfer? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
Special Instructions:	
Institution Head, Superintendent, or Deputy/Assistant Director Signature	
Date	

Distribution:

- Original CDCR Form 2189 must be delivered in a confidential envelope to the Personnel Office by the institution head, Superintendent, Deputy/Assistant Director or designee.
- The Personnel Office must insert the original CDCR Form 2189 in the employees' Official Personnel File (to be maintained in the back of the file in an envelope marked "confidential").
- Personnel Office must forward a copy of the CDCR Form 2189 (in a confidential envelope) to the Case Record Unit (to be inserted in the confidential section of the inmate's Central File).

Section VII



Conclusion

Conclusion

This lesson provided:

- Awareness of Department policies surrounding the issues of inappropriate conduct with inmates or parolees
- The legal, ethical, and professional implications of violations involving inappropriate behavior
- Warning signs that can lead to inappropriate relations, prevention strategies, and the rights and reporting responsibilities of all employees

Section VIII



Knowledge Review

Knowledge Review

1. Disciplining inmates in public will promote a positive working relationship.

☐ True

☒ False

Discipline in private and praise in public without overdoing; promotes a positive working relationship.

2. Each of the following is a technique to effectively communicate with an inmate EXCEPT:

☐ Keep your word

☐ Speak clearly

☒ Portray a sympathetic attitude

☐ Project an attitude of self-confidence

3. Decreased inmate appeals is a consequence that arises if an inmate's rights are violated.

☐ True

☒ False

Increased inmate appeals is a consequence that arises if an inmate's rights are violated.

4. The following are staff actions that inmates observe and use to manipulate staff
EXCEPT:

- ☐ Bending the rules for certain inmates
- ☐ Performing inconsistent security checks
- ☐ Easily intimidated
- ☒ Maintaining professional interactions

5. Differences in religion, customs, values, and personalities can all be potential barriers to communicating with inmates.

☒ True

☐ False

6. If you believe you are being manipulated, try and resolve it prior to contacting your supervisor.

☐ True

☒ False

If you believe you are being manipulated, contact your supervisor.

7. You do not need to notify anyone when you have a relative or friend that is committed to the jurisdiction of the Department.

☐ True

☒ False

Per CCR, Title 15 Section 3406, you shall notify in writing your institution head or appropriate Director/Assistant Secretary when you become aware a relative or friend is committed to the jurisdiction of the Department.



CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL
HEALTH CARE SERVICES



CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

This certificate acknowledges that

has successfully completed

Inmate/Staff Relations - NEO

Employee PERNR

.50

Credits/Hours



Date of Completion

One year from the date of completion

Certificate Expiration Date