

**Texas**  
**Department of**  
**Criminal Justice**



**General**  
**Information Guide**  
**for Families of**  
**Offenders**

Executive Services  
April 2016

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) operates the state's system of facilities for the confinement of adult felony offenders.

The mission of the TDCJ is to provide public safety, promote positive change in offender behavior, reintegrate offenders into society, and assist victims of crime.

This information guide is intended to provide the public with a brief description of principal program areas.

The agency encourages offenders to participate in activities and programs to facilitate rehabilitation and reentry. TDCJ looks forward to friends and family members also providing support for their loved-ones.



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## INTAKE

When admitted to a designated TDCJ intake center, offenders are photographed, iris scanned and fingerprinted as part of the identification process. Physical, dental and eye examinations are conducted. Various tests are administered to detect medical or mental health problems and to determine educational and intelligence levels. Interviews with offenders gather information relevant to family structure, criminal and social behavior, drug and alcohol involvement, military and institutional experience, as well as education and employment history.

The results of the tests and interviews are the basis for classification decisions that determine the unit of assignment, the level of security supervision, housing and job assignments. Screening and assessments during intake may be conducted to identify any treatment or special needs.

More information about custody designations and time-earning status is available in the *TDCJ Offender Orientation Handbook* located on the agency web site at [https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/publications/pubs\\_cid\\_offender\\_orientation\\_handbook.html](https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/publications/pubs_cid_offender_orientation_handbook.html).

## MAIL

Families and friends of offenders are encouraged to write often. Letters sent to offenders should include the **offender's name**, **TDCJ number**, and **unit address** ([https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/unit\\_directory/index.html](https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/unit_directory/index.html)) on the envelope. All mail for offenders must be received through authorized channels. Letters for different offenders should not be included in the same envelope. Offenders are not allowed to correspond with other offenders without meeting specific criteria stated in Board Policy 03.91- Uniform Offender Correspondence Rules (Section I.B.1).

Mail is forwarded to offenders who transfer from one unit to another within TDCJ. Letters will be forwarded to offenders who are released from prison, if the offender provides a forwarding address at his last unit of assignment.

Offenders may not write to minors whose parents disapprove, with the exception of an offender's own children or stepchildren (unless the child or stepchild is the offender's victim). The courts may also prohibit an offender from contacting, during the term of confinement, the victim of the offense for which the defendant is convicted or a member of the victim's family.

Unauthorized materials or contraband found in mail addressed to offenders will be rejected. Individuals who carry out serious violations of the correspondence rules may not be allowed to write to an offender.

Newspapers, magazines, and books may be mailed directly to offenders *only* by the publisher, publication supplier, or bookstore; subject to review and rejection in accordance with the correspondence rules. Offenders may receive reference books and other educational materials from volunteer organizations that operate the following types of programs: literacy and education, life skills, job skills, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, support groups, arts and crafts and any other programs designed to aid offenders in the transition between confinement and society.

Offenders are prohibited from maintaining active social media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and similar social media, for the purposes of soliciting, updating, or engaging others, through a third party or otherwise. Do not assist offenders in circumventing agency policy by operating social media accounts on behalf of offenders.

Social media accounts maintained by third parties that are about an inmate or discuss an inmate are not prohibited if they do not claim to be personally maintained by the inmate. For example, information about an offender on your Facebook page or another person's Facebook page does not violate agency policy. However, a Facebook page personally maintained by the offender, or which appears to be personally maintained by the offender, is a violation of agency policy. Websites and blogs are not affected by this policy.

Stationery is writing paper and envelopes, to include carbon paper. Stationery may be provided through the indigent correspondence supply program or purchased through the unit commissary by the offender and offender families or friends through the eCommDirect program. Items such as food, clothing, jewelry, toiletries, or any item other than books, magazines, and newspapers may not be mailed to offenders. Individuals may not mail packages to offenders. Additional information is available in Board Policy 03.91, located on the agency website:

<http://www.tdcj.texas.gov/policy/index.html>.



### **E-MESSAGING**

Offenders can receive incoming eMessages. To register, please contact JPAY at 1-866-333-5729 or [www.jpays.com](http://www.jpays.com) on the web.

Only incoming mail is available. The offender is not allowed to return the eMessage. Friends and family members must purchase electronic stamps on-line from [www.jpays.com](http://www.jpays.com) (the price of a US postage stamp). The message to the offender is completed on-line and sent to the JPAY facility interface. TDCJ unit mailroom staff download and review incoming messages, and upon approval, the messages are printed and delivered to the offender.



### **OFFENDER TELEPHONE SYSTEM**

The Offender Telephone System (OTS) allows eligible offenders to make telephone calls to individuals listed on the offender's approved calling list. Offenders with major disciplinary problems, gang affiliations or on death row do not have access to the pay telephone system, but are afforded access to telephones as described on page four.

Before you can receive calls from a TDCJ offender, you must first register your telephone number. To register, contact the telephone vendor at 1-866-806-7804 or through the vendor's website at <http://texasprisonphone.com>.

To register you will be required to confirm that you are the registered owner of the telephone number and will not forward or make three-way calls received from the offender. You must also be at least 18 years old and agree to allow the offender to call.

The following rules apply to the OTS:

- ◆ Calls are limited in length;
- ◆ All calls, except to the Attorney of Record, are recorded and subject to monitoring;
- ◆ Calls may only be made to landline telephone numbers and post-paid cell phones; no calls are allowed to pre-paid cell or Internet telephone service or international numbers; and
- ◆ To receive calls, the telephone number owner's name must match the name on the registrant's driver's license or state identification card and the telephone bill listing.

For more information, including complaints, pertaining to the e-Messaging Service or the Offender Telephone System, please contact the following, in writing:

TDCJ - Information Technology Division  
Offender Telephone System Contract Manager  
P.O. Box 4016  
Huntsville, TX 77342-4016  
Email: [offenderphones@tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:offenderphones@tdcj.texas.gov)

Offenders who are not eligible for the OTS due to custody level shall be authorized access to state-owned telephones designated by the warden, if the offenders have not been found guilty of any major disciplinary violations within the last 90 days (30 days for state jail offenders). Offenders whose medical condition precludes work and who meet all other requirements shall be eligible to participate. To request a telephone call, offenders shall submit an I-60, "Inmate Request to an Official" form for approval by the warden.

 **VISITATION**

Visitation plays an important role in maintaining the association between offenders and their families and friends. However, offenders are not assigned to specific TDCJ units solely for the convenience of visitation. Copies of the I-218, *Offender Rules and Regulations for Visitation* Booklet are to be prominently displayed in areas accessible to visitors. This booklet is also available in English and Spanish on the TDCJ website under "Publications"

([https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/documents/cid/Offender\\_Rulesand\\_Regulations\\_for\\_Visitation\\_English.pdf](https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/documents/cid/Offender_Rulesand_Regulations_for_Visitation_English.pdf)).

*Visitation Hours:* Visits are normally conducted on Saturdays and Sundays between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The names of all visitors, 18 years old and older (except the offender's attorney), must be on the approved Visitors List, which is limited to 10 individuals.

*Visits Requiring Advance Scheduling:* Visits may occur on agency-closed holidays (except Christmas Day) that fall on Mondays or Fridays, if scheduled in advance. Arrangements to schedule these visits may not be made on any state holiday. All arrangements to schedule visits must be made through the Warden's office between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at least one day, but not more than seven days, prior to the visit. Visitors arriving late, that is more than 15 minutes past the beginning scheduled visit time, may not be allowed to visit during any of the scheduled time. Unit administration shall make every effort to accommodate late arrivals, if time and space is available

*Number of Visitors:* All offenders, except those who are being processed through intake, in solitary confinement, G5, lockdown status or administrative segregation, are allowed one visit every weekend, normally two adults for two hours. Children under the age of 18 are not counted in this number, and must be accompanied by an approved adult visitor (18 years or older). The number of children allowed per visit will be based on the amount of space available for visitation and on the visitor's ability to manage and control the children. Additional adult visitors may be allowed at the warden's discretion if special circumstances arise and space permits.

*Visitor Identification:* For visitors 18 years of age and older, a pictured government identification (ID) of one of the following is required: 1) valid state driver's license; 2) valid state Department of Public Safety (DPS) ID card; 3) valid Armed Forces ID card; 4) passport; or 5) ID card issued by the United States Department of Homeland Security, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), such as, Visa Border Crossing ID Card (USA B1/B2 Visa BCC). If an identification document other than a passport is used, the identification document must contain a current physical address.

*Victims of Family Violence:* The victims of family violence may be issued a card that indicates the individual has been certified as a crime victim and entitled to protection. These individuals may visit using a post office box in lieu of a physical address, when presenting the certification card and a government ID. The attorney general is authorized under the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure § 56.81 to protect the address information of victims of family violence.

If the visitor's ID is questionable or not acceptable, further verification shall be required such as, birth certificate, pictured credit card, or other official ID. Children ages 17 years and younger may be required to provide an ID such as, birth certificate, DPS ID, or student ID, if the child's age is questionable due to the physical maturity of the child. Valid student ID shall be used only for children ages 17 years and younger.

*Contact Visits:* Limited physical contact between eligible offenders and their visitors may be allowed if the visitors are immediate family: spouse (ceremonial, proxy or common-law); natural, adopted mother and stepmother; natural, adopted father and stepfather; natural, adopted children, stepchildren, grandchildren and step-grandchildren; natural adopted siblings and stepsiblings; natural, adopted grandparents and step-grandparents; aunt; uncle; nieces and nephews; and persons related by marriage (in-laws).

With prior approval from unit administration, non-immediate family members may be allowed contact visits if immediate family members are unable to visit the offender. Due to the nature of the offender's offense, some offenders cannot have contact visits with children. In addition, these same offenders will not be allowed a regular visit with children unless the offender is the legally recognized parent of that child and the child is not the victim of the offense.

*Search of Visitors and Vehicles:* All vehicles and visitors are subject to search upon entering TDCJ property. Visitors shall be pat searched and scanned with a metal detector prior to entering the visitation area.

Small children and infants shall be removed from carriers or strollers. The parent, guardian, or accompanying adult shall carry the child through the walk-through metal detector. Under no circumstances shall children and infants be separated from their parent, guardian or accompanying adult. Any visitor refusing the search procedure shall be required to leave TDCJ property.

Cash (except coins), alcoholic beverages, tobacco, cell phones, cameras, drugs, firearms, escape implements, or dangerous weapons are strictly prohibited by statute and TDCJ rules and policies.

*Dress Code:* Visitors must follow the dress code. Shirts and shoes must be worn. Shirts and blouses of fishnet, transparent material are not allowed. Sleeveless shirts and dresses are allowed, but must cover the shoulders. Shorts and skirts no shorter than three inches above the middle of the knee while standing, capri pants, and long pants are allowed.

Exceptions for pre-adolescent boys and girls may be made. If a dress, pants, skirt, or any attire appears to be inappropriate, the duty warden shall be contacted for a decision.

Hats may be worn, but will be searched. Visitors are not permitted to wear all white. Clothing marked by words or pictures considered profane or offensive by current public standards will not be allowed.

*Carry-in Items:* Visitors may bring only specific items into the unit. These items include a small wallet or change purse containing no more than \$25.00 in coins. Visitors may only purchase items from vending machines in the visitation area to be consumed by offenders during the visit. Visitors with infants or small children may bring no more than three diapers, a supply of baby wipes and two baby bottles ("sippy" cups for toddlers). These items shall be stored in a clear plastic bag. Visitors are not permitted to bring items of any kind to offenders.

*Tobacco Policy:* TDCJ units are tobacco free. Visitors are not permitted to bring cigarettes, cigarette lighters, matches or any tobacco products into TDCJ units.

Visits must be orderly to assure that visitors and offenders are not disturbed. Visitors who cannot control their children will be escorted out of the unit. Children shall not be left unattended.

Ex-offenders, unless immediate family, will not be allowed to visit for a period of 24 months following their release date.

Visitors are not allowed to switch from visiting one offender to another. Visitors are prohibited from loitering, walking the perimeter road, or taking photographs. Radios played at a high volume and shouting at offenders will not be allowed.

Visits may be cancelled and future visits may be denied for security reasons or because of improper conduct by the visitor or the offender.

Visits requiring special accommodations must be approved by the warden prior to the visit. Special accommodations or special needs consist of, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Requests for more than two adults to visit;
- ◆ Special needs adults requiring additional oversight;
- ◆ Elderly individuals needing additional oversight; and
- ◆ Extended visits (more than two hours).



The following checklist may be beneficial:

#### VISITOR CHECKLIST

- ✓ Confirm the offender is assigned to the unit you are planning to visit, has visitation privileges and that you are on the Visitors List.
- ✓ Bring valid identification (ID).
- ✓ Call prior to leaving. If you have made special arrangements with the unit, ensure that plans for your visit have been made and are in place.
- ✓ Check clothing for compliance with visiting rules and regulations.
- ✓ If you are bringing a child and you are not the legal guardian or parent, you **MUST** have the notarized statement from the child's legal guardian or parent with you. A copy is located on the TDCJ website, [https://tdcj.texas.gov/announcements/announced\\_notice\\_to\\_offender\\_visitors.html](https://tdcj.texas.gov/announcements/announced_notice_to_offender_visitors.html).
- ✓ Before leaving home, check your vehicle for contraband and/or hazardous items. This includes, but is not limited to, implements of escape, drug paraphernalia, illegal narcotics, intoxicants, poisons, any items that pose a danger to others, weapons, knives, scissors, firearms, and any item used to show a gang affiliation. Remove these items before entering the correctional facility grounds.
- ✓ Arrive on the designated day during proper visiting hours.
- ✓ Do not have any contraband on you when you enter the facility. Leave purses, food items, diaper bags, briefcases, cameras, baby strollers, toys, dolls, photographs, tobacco, lighters, matches, cell phones, pagers, or any other type of electronic/wireless devices in your vehicle. **Be sure to secure (lock) your vehicle.**
- ✓ Do not leave minor children waiting in the car while you visit, or your visit will be terminated.
- ✓ Remember to treat correctional staff with respect.
- ✓ Do not bring anything to the visiting room to give to the offender. Offenders are not permitted to take anything from the visiting area or receive any item from visitors.
- ✓ Ensure that you have NO paper money on you. A maximum of \$25 in coins is allowed.
- ✓

Additional visitation information is available on the agency website at:

<http://www.tdcj.texas.gov/visitation/index.html>

## TRUST FUND

The Inmate Trust Fund, provides a place of safekeeping for funds an offender may have access to, but not physical control of during their confinement.

Several Trust Fund deposit options are now available and include:

- MONEY ORDERS OR CASHIER'S CHECKS
- MONTHLY CHECKING ACCOUNT DEBIT (ACH)
- WESTERN UNION QUICK COLLECT
- WESTERN UNION CONVENIENCE PAY
- AMERICA'S CASH EXPRESS (ACE)
- JPAY
- TOUCHPAY
- TEXAS.GOV

**Note: Sender's name and address is required when making a deposit to an offender's account.**

- ◆ **Money orders or cashier's checks** made payable to "Inmate Trust Fund for *Offender Name and Number*"; obtain deposit slips from offender or by sending an addressed, stamped envelope to Inmate Trust Fund; send deposits and/or requests for deposit slips to Inmate Trust Fund, P.O. Box 60, Huntsville, TX 77342-0060, Phone number: 936-438-8990.
- ◆ **Monthly Checking Account Debit (ACH)**, (free service provided by TDCJ.) complete an ACH authorization form and have a set amount automatically debited from a personal checking account once each month for deposit to a specified offender; attach a voided check from the account to be debited; debit transaction will occur on or around the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month and applied to the offender's account on or around the 10<sup>th</sup>; submit form with voided check to Inmate Trust Fund, P.O. Box 60, Huntsville, TX 77342-0060.

◆ **Western Union Quick Collect** (fees vary) from anywhere in the United States; all three Quick Collect products are subject to different fees, send amounts and other restrictions in certain states. Deposit will post to offender's account within 24 hours. Call Western Union at 1-800-325-6000, or visit [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com) to find the nearest Western Union location; standard fee for over-the-counter Quick Collect (Q/C) transaction at a Western Union location starts at \$3.95; **Western Union Quick Collect by Phone**, for credit card transactions call Western Union at 1-800-634-3422 (press 2 to send Q/C payment); **Western Union Quick Collect Online**, for web transactions visit [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com). For each Quick Collect transaction the following information must be provided:

- **Pay to:** TDCJ - Inmate Trust Fund
- **Code City and State:** TDCJ/TX
- **Account number with facility:** Offender's TDCJ number and offender's last name
- **Attention:** Offender's last name and offender's first name

◆ **Western Union Convenience Pay** (fees vary) offered at select locations within the state of Texas. Send money to an offender's trust fund account for a service fee starting at \$3.95. Call 1-800-354-0005 to find a Convenience Pay agent location.

◆ **America's Cash Express (ACE)** (\$5.00 fee) from anywhere in the United States. Deposit funds to an offender's trust fund account. For the nearest ACE location, call 1-866-734-2306 or visit their website at [www.acecashexpress.com](http://www.acecashexpress.com).

◆ **Jpay** (fees vary) allows you to send money to an offender for service fees starting at \$3.95. Visit their website at [www.jpays.com](http://www.jpays.com) or call 1-800-574-JPAY to send funds using Visa, Discover or MasterCard credit/debit cards.

◆ **Jpay, (continued)**

Senders can make cash deposits at MoneyGram locations nationwide using an Express Payment form. Senders may also make cash deposits from their home after setting up a cash collection account with a Jpay customer service representative.

- ◆ **TOUCHPAY Payment Systems** provides ways to send money to an offender with service fees starting at \$2.95. Call TOUCHPAY at 1-877-868-5358 or visit [www.tdcjpayment.com](http://www.tdcjpayment.com) for additional information. MasterCard and Visa credit and debit cards are accepted, as well as MoneyPak, which is a remote cash option available at retailers nationwide. For details and locations about MoneyPak, visit:

<https://www.moneypak.com/Partner/Payment.aspx/TouchPay>.

- ◆ **Texas.gov** (\$2.50 plus 2%) visit [www.Texas.gov](http://www.Texas.gov) to make a deposit to an offender's account using MasterCard or Visa, or to make direct commissary purchases for an offender (please see Commissary).

Cash and personal checks are not accepted and will be returned to the sender. Single transaction deposits of \$500.00 or more and insurance, company, payroll, estate checks, county jail checks and other like disbursements are held 14 days before offender access is authorized. Do not send trust fund deposits to offender's unit of assignment and do not send offender's personal mail or other items to the Inmate Trust Fund.

The Inmate Trust Fund can respond to inquiries concerning the receipt of a deposit, but cannot release information regarding the offender's account or balance to anyone except the offender. Offenders receive monthly statements listing all trust fund account transactions for that period.

The Inmate Trust Fund does not pay interest; therefore, the account should hold no more than what is required to meet the offender's immediate needs. Offenders with funds in excess of their immediate needs are encouraged to open an account with, and transfer excess funds to a banking facility of their choice. Offenders may use funds in their trust fund accounts to make purchases from the unit commissary, or through approved vendors and to send funds to family or friends. An offender's trust fund balance is refunded upon release.

Deposits as favors from one offender to another, processed through an outside person or bank, are considered a violation of TDCJ Disciplinary Rules and Procedures for Offenders, regardless of whether accepted for deposit or received by the Inmate Trust Fund. Suspected violations will be investigated. Confirmed violations of deposits between offenders may result in disciplinary action against any offenders involved in any unauthorized transaction, whether depositors or recipients. This could also result in the suspension of visitation privileges.

- ◆ Do not send funds to offenders you do not know.
- ◆ Do not send funds to an offender as a favor for offenders you do not know.
- ◆ Report EXTORTION to the unit warden or the Office of Inspector General.

#### **COMMISSARY**

No offender is allowed to possess money while in confinement. Offenders are provided meals, certain personal items, and clothing. Grocery items, specific personal hygiene items and other goods may be purchased by offenders from unit commissaries. Payment for commissary items is completed by transferring funds from the offender's trust fund account to the agency's commissary account.

The offender may spend up to \$95.00 on ordinary merchandise every two weeks. However, this amount may be less as determined by the offender's custody status.

The spend limit does not apply to special items such as typewriters, some clothing items, fans or tennis shoes. These special purchase items are made specifically for an institutional environment. They must be bought directly from the commissary by the offender for the offender's personal use.

The TDCJ has initiated an on-line program ([www.texas.gov/eCommDirect](http://www.texas.gov/eCommDirect)) where friends and family may purchase up to \$60.00 of certain commissary items every calendar quarter for eligible offenders. The items available for purchase include certain snacks, hygiene products, correspondence supplies and newly packaged items. The amount purchased will not affect the amount that offenders may spend on commissary items from funds deposited into their inmate trust fund accounts. In addition to offenders on commissary restriction, offenders in general population and state jail levels four and five, and administrative segregation levels two and three are not eligible to receive commissary purchases through this program.



#### **HARDSHIP TRANSFERS**

A hardship transfer is usually considered when there is a medical condition that impacts the immediate family member's ability to travel to visit the offender. Generally, transfer facility, state jail, intermediate sanction facility, substance abuse, pre-parole and pre-release offenders shall not be eligible for transfer consideration. Requests from the offender family member for an inter-facility transfer should be directed to the assistant director for Classification and Records. Hardship transfer requests may be submitted to the Assistant Director for Classification and Records at P.O. Box 99, Huntsville, TX 77342-0099; Attn: Hardship Transfer.

Requests must come from an immediate family member who is currently listed on the offender's approved visitors list. Immediate family is defined as natural or adoptive mother and stepmother; natural or adoptive father and stepfather; natural or adoptive children or stepchildren; natural or adoptive stepsiblings; spouse (common law or ceremonial); grandparents and grandchildren; persons related by marriage (in-laws); aunt or uncle; or foster parents, the legal guardian of an offender's minor child, to include parent of the child.

Requests for a medical hardship must pertain to a family member and requires documentation from the medical provider of the family member's inability to travel long distances. Such documentation should be on the physician's letterhead and signed by the physician. The assistant director for Classification and Records may grant an inter-facility transfer if the following criterion is met.

- ◆ The offender's current unit of assignment must be greater than 200 miles from the requested area.
- ◆ Prison sentenced offenders should be Line Class I or higher.
- ◆ Offenders who are G4 or a more restrictive custody are ineligible unless the G4 custody is due to a security precaution designator.
- ◆ Prison sentenced offenders should have no major disciplinary convictions for the preceding twelve months.



#### **FAMILY ASSISTANCE**

Offenders are encouraged to attempt problem resolution informally with unit administration. If informal resolution is not reached, the offender has the option of using the Offender Grievance Process. If the offender has exhausted all administrative remedies and there still appears to be questions or concerns, friends and family members may contact the unit directly to inquire about the issue.

Staff at TDCJ units are encouraged to handle questions from offenders' families whenever possible.

Each unit has a Family Liaison Officer, available during visitation hours, who answers questions and concerns of families and friends of offenders. The process above is recommended initially as the easiest and quickest way to obtain resolution for most issues. If no resolution can be reached through interaction with the unit, individuals may then contact a TDCJ Ombudsman.

The TDCJ Ombudsman Program ensures that TDCJ is responsive to the public, elected officials and other state agencies; helps offenders' families understand TDCJ policies and procedures; and attempts facilitating conflict resolution between TDCJ and the public. Ombudsmen gather information from many sources within TDCJ to provide clear, correct responses.

TDCJ Ombudsmen are the contact points for members of the general public. These offices do not answer questions from incarcerated offenders. Such requests are coordinated through the offender grievance system.

#### **HOW TO CONTACT A TDCJ OMBUDSMAN**

(Please submit inquiries in writing)

For expediency, it is best to attempt to resolve issues and obtain information at the unit or parole office level. However, if this is not possible, contact one of the following:

##### **TDCJ Ombudsman's Office**

General issues concerning the agency's operation and policy and procedures, issues from the public relating to secure units (prison units, state jails and substance abuse felony punishment facilities), and any specific concerns regarding offenders confined in these types of facilities.

P.O. Box 99, Huntsville, TX 77342-0099

936-437-4927 phone 936-437-4930 fax

[ombudsman@tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:ombudsman@tdcj.texas.gov)

\*\*Bilingual Staff Available – Se habla Espanol\*\*

General offender status information may be obtained at: [www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov)

Agency Toll-Free Telephone Number:  
1-800-535-0283

### **TDCJ - Parole Division Ombudsman**

Issues relating to the parole or mandatory release process and parole or mandatory supervision concerns. May also respond to concerns from offenders on parole or mandatory supervision.

P.O. Box 13401, Austin, TX 78711  
512-406-5795 phone 512-406-5858 fax

[parole.div@tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:parole.div@tdcj.texas.gov)

\*\*Bilingual Staff Available -Se habla Espanol.\*\*

Parole decision information may be obtained at:  
[www.tdcj.texas.gov/bpp/](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov/bpp/)



### **EDUCATION**

Windham School District (WSD) provides a variety of academic classes, life skills, and career and technology education classes for offenders who are confined in units operated by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Offenders are selected for enrollment in WSD programs based on the Individualized Treatment Plan (ITP) process. The ITP outlines programmatic activities and prioritizes participation in recommended programs based on the offender's needs, program availability, and projected release date.

The *Literacy Program* provides adult basic education for offenders functioning below the sixth grade level, and secondary level adult education for those who are working toward attainment of a high school equivalency (GED) certificate. Based on individual achievement, students are assigned to beginning (Literacy I), intermediate (Literacy II), or advanced (Literacy III) level classes. Students needing help with basic reading skills may be enrolled in Literacy I-Reading. Literacy teachers use an interdisciplinary approach to promote workplace competencies and learning in real-world contexts. Emphasis is placed on the skills employers demand, such as personal qualities, cultural sensitivity/tolerance, teamwork, decision-making, and problem solving.

A supplemental Title I program is provided for under achieving students who are 21 years of age or younger. The Title I teacher works with the regular literacy teacher to reinforce and/or re-teach literacy and math concepts to these younger students.

*Special Education* services are provided for eligible students with disabilities. An *English as a Second Language (ESL)* program is available for students with limited English proficiency.

Windham has expanded academic programming to include a high school diploma program. Windham partners with outside school districts to provide instruction within the TDCJ facility. The high school diploma program is available to custody eligible offenders age 26 and under. The program provides for academic review of the student's transcripts from high school and develops a graduation plan for students who were near graduation prior to incarceration.

The *Career and Technology Education (CTE)* program offers vocational training in approximately 41 occupational areas to prepare offenders for today's workforce. CTE has a strong emphasis on providing Industry Standards Certifications for vocational trades and connections to employer partnerships that increase the opportunities for offenders to get higher wage earning jobs with career building potential upon release.

Additional vocational training opportunities may be available through apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training.

Life skills programs are available to help offenders learn to make better, pro-social decisions. The WSD *Cognitive Intervention* program is available at many units. This program addresses personal accountability and responsibility through instruction and exercises in interpersonal problem solving, anger management, impulse control, overcoming criminal thinking, creating positive attitudes and beliefs, and goal setting.

Likewise, a reintegration program, entitled Changing Habits and Achieving New Goals to Empower Success (CHANGES), offers a life skills curriculum to prepare offenders for release. CHANGES includes lessons targeting personal development, healthy relationships, living responsibly, drug education, health, putting together a new start, and going home.

WSD strives to offer a comprehensive guidance program that assists the offender with vocational assessment and career guidance. WSD is committed to providing a positive environment where offenders can improve their educational achievement. By taking advantage of the academic, life skills and vocational educational opportunities offered by WSD, offenders are better prepared to successfully obtain employment and reintegrate back into society.

### **JOB TRAINING**

In addition to the programs offered through WSD, job training is available to offenders who work in the various operations of TDCJ.

The mission of the **Manufacturing and Logistics Division** is to benefit the state of Texas by maintaining the security of offenders while providing quality service in warehousing operations, freight transportation, management of TDCJ vehicles, and by providing quality manufactured products and services to TDCJ, other state agencies, and political subdivisions, while providing reentry opportunities for incarcerated offenders.

The division's work and training programs are specifically targeted to reduce recidivism by providing eligible offenders opportunities to develop a work ethic while learning marketable job skills in preparation for release.

The **Agribusiness, Land and Minerals Department** operates farms and ranches throughout the state to produce as much of the food and fiber requirements of the TDCJ as possible. Offenders have the opportunity to participate in these programs and learn marketable job skills.

Offenders learn animal husbandry through participation in cattle, swine, poultry, horse, or dog programs. They can gain experience in farming and equipment operation by participating in the field and/or edible crop programs and in mechanical skills in the farm shops. Offenders can also learn warehousing and plant operation skills by working in the food processing plants, cotton gins, feed mills or in the local food bank programs.

The **Facilities Division** utilizes offenders in construction and building maintenance. The most commonly utilized trades are electrician; heating, ventilation and air conditioning mechanic; plumbing; painting; construction equipment operator; concrete finishing; and carpentry.



## **RELIGION**

The religious needs of offenders are addressed by trained clergy who provide ministerial care to the entire criminal justice community. They encourage offenders to stay in touch with their particular faith by offering pastoral counsel and guidance. Jewish, Muslim, Catholic, Christian Non-Roman Catholic, and Native American faiths are represented. Other religions may be served by faith group volunteers.

The schedule of religious programs and events is posted on unit bulletin boards and in the chaplain's office.

Offenders who are unable to attend scheduled religious services because of illness or disciplinary reasons are visited on a regular basis by unit chaplains, certified volunteer chaplain assistants, or approved volunteers.

Family members who experience an emergency crisis (death, hospice care and other such personal matters) can contact the unit chaplain, who in turn will speak to the offender and offer personal pastoral care. Other inquiries should be addressed to the warden.

Faith-based dorms were implemented in January 2003 and are now located in many of the correctional facilities. The faith-based dorms offer support and accountability, along with an intensive faith-based curriculum and mentoring services to participants. The programming is conducted by local faith-based community volunteers whose activities are directed by the unit chaplain and unit administration.



## **PROGRAMS AND TREATMENT**

Through the Rehabilitation Programs Division (RPD), eligible offenders may be provided treatment during incarceration for addiction to or abuse of substances or alcohol. The Substance Abuse Treatment Program (SATP) provides evidence-based treatment programs that are appropriate to the needs of the offender, measured by reliable assessment tools, and are often based on the crime or criminal behaviors that lead to incarceration. The goal of the SATP is to facilitate positive change; to redirect criminal behavior; to improve cognitive skills and offender accountability, all of which leads to reducing recidivism and improving public safety.

Additionally, eligible sex offenders may be assigned to participate in designated sex offender treatment and/or educational programming. The primary goal of programming is to reduce the rate of re-offense and move participants toward a more pro-social lifestyle. It is the policy of Sex Offender Rehabilitation Programs (SORP) to provide meaningful program services to incarcerated sex offenders in TDCJ who are program eligible.

Other programs facilitated by the RPD, include the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI) for eligible male administrative segregation offenders who are within two years of release; the faith-based InnerChange Freedom Initiative for male offenders; the Courage Program for offenders under the age of 18 and the Transitioning Program for offenders aging out of the COURAGE Program, as well as the Young Adult Transition Offender (YATO) Program for offenders transferring directly from the juvenile corrections system (formerly TYC) to the TDCJ; the Gang Renouncement and Disassociation (GRAD) process for male offenders working towards reentering the prison general population; and the Corrective Intervention Pre-Release Program (CIPP) for certain offenders who are within four months of release; the Administrative Segregation Diversion Program, to allow offenders returning to TDCJ custody that would normally go back to administrative segregation to instead earn the ability to be housed in general population; and the Administrative Segregation Transition Program to prepare offenders for the transition from administrative segregation to general population.

Our Roadway to Freedom is an initiative developed to provide strong intervention and support services to women previously involved in prostitution. The participants are housed together within a program dorm and receive daily topical educational modules facilitated by staff, as well as the services of a peer recovery coach each week. Both prison and state jail offenders may participate.

The Baby and Mother Bonding Initiative (BAMBI) partners TDCJ divisions, other state agencies and the Santa Maria Hostel, Inc. to provide child development education and training for new offender mothers in a residential setting. The program gives eligible mothers and their newborns the opportunity to form a healthy attachment in a secure setting.

Through the collaboration between RPD and the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS), eligible offenders may apply to the Seminary in order to achieve an accredited Bachelor of Science in Biblical Studies.

Many additional services and activities are available to the offender population through volunteers, community groups, or agencies located in or near their service area.

These vary from substance abuse fellowships, arts and crafts, bible studies, veteran groups, and many others that help the offender build appropriate life skills, healthy relationships, and assist in adjustment to the incarceration setting, and often to assist in the transition from prison, to community, to home.

#### Post-Secondary Education

For offenders with a GED or high school diploma, academic and vocational post-secondary educational opportunities are available through the Rehabilitation Programs Division (RPD) which contracts with community colleges and universities.

RPD contracts with eight colleges and two universities which provide academic and vocational programs for offenders. Associate (two year), Baccalaureate (four year) and Masters Degrees are awarded upon completion of degree requirements. A certificate of completion is awarded after satisfactory completion of a vocational program. College credit may be awarded for vocational courses.

Eligibility requirements to participate in a college academic or vocational program, are set by the TDCJ and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, admission and registration requirements of the college must be met by all students.

College expenses utilizing state funds must be repaid by the offender upon release as a condition of parole. Those offenders who do not qualify for state funds must pay college expenses at registration or qualify for grant funding. An offender who is assigned to a unit that does not offer the college academic/vocation program for which he qualifies may contact RPD to request a transfer to a unit that does offer the program.



## **HEALTH**

The TDCJ medical, dental, and mental health care is primarily provided to the offenders via a managed health care system utilizing the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) in the northern, eastern and southern portions of the state; and by Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) in the western portion of the state.

When needed, a full range of specialty consultations is available, and hospital services are provided by either the TDCJ Hospital Galveston, the Montford Unit in Lubbock or local hospitals.

### Medical Visitation

Seriously or critically ill offenders at Hospital Galveston may be allowed family visits. The determination of whether the offender is seriously or critically ill is determined by the presiding physician. Upon notification from doctor, the unit health administrator shall notify the warden. The warden, or designee, will then make the appropriate notifications to the person designated by the offender as the emergency contact.

Offenders who are placed on the Seriously/Critically Ill List by a licensed physician are allowed to receive visitors in the unit infirmary or medical department at the warden's discretion with the presiding physician's medical consensus. The presiding physician shall make the determination regarding the offender's ability to receive visitors. The warden may provide alternate means for visiting these offenders on a case-by-case basis (ie., scheduling a visit during the week by special arrangement).

If the offender is in a free-world hospital, visitation usually does not take place. However, in exceptional circumstances, family visitation may be approved with the concurrence of the warden, free world hospital administration, and the medical provider. Factors taken into consideration shall include the seriousness of the illness (as determined by the attending physician), security needs and the hospital's physical structure or location.

If the offender is in hospice care, all visits shall be coordinated through the Chaplaincy Department and shall meet the approval of the warden (or designee) and unit medical staff. Visitation may occur seven days a week, generally between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The warden shall have final authority over visitation within the Hospice Program.

Inpatient and outpatient mental health treatment programs are provided for offenders with mental health needs. Special programs are also available for offenders with physical disabilities and intellectual impairment. Regular TDCJ rules regarding visitation apply to these programs.

## Medical Information

The TDCJ Patient Liaison Program (PLP) Family/Public Hotline number, 936-437-4271, is available for family members and the public to inquire about an incarcerated offender's health care during business hours, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. A message can be left using the automated voicemail when calling after hours or when experiencing longer than normal hold times. The PLP coordinator or designee for the hotline will return the telephone call on the next business day.

When medical information is requested regarding an offender's health, an "Authorization for Use and Disclosure of Protected Health information" PHI form signed by the offender is required before any personal health information can be shared.

A PHI form may be initiated for offenders by contacting the PLP office at 936-437-4271.

The PLP office will need the offender's name, TDCJ number, and the inquirer's full name and address to complete the PHI form. The PHI form will be faxed by the PLP office to the unit medical department where the offender is housed.

The unit medical department will schedule the offender to come to the medical department to sign the form. TDCJ - Health Services and the Correctional Managed Health Care staff can release and/or discuss the offender's protected health information with the inquirer only if authorized by the offender to do so. An offender may refuse to sign the PHI form or place restrictions on the form as to what information can be made available to the inquirer.

If an offender is a patient at Hospital Galveston, a PHI form is also required. Family members may call the "Family Calls Only Hotline" at 409-772-6131 for assistance.

## RECREATION

Offenders are afforded opportunities to engage in non-programmatic and programmatic recreation activities. Facilities and equipment for these activities are provided and maintained by TDCJ and the staff assigned to recreation oversight.

Non-programmatic recreation activities may include:

- Television viewing
- Dayroom games such as chess, checkers, and dominoes
- Team sports including basketball, softball, and volleyball
- Individual sports such as table tennis, handball, horseshoes, and weightlifting
- Basic in-cell craft activities.

Programmatic recreation activities may include:

- Intramural games
- Tournaments and league play
- Craft shop participation, where available.

## ⌀ **EMERGENCY ABSENCES**

An emergency absence is a privilege granted to an offender who meets eligibility criteria and who is considered by TDCJ to be an acceptable security risk for temporary release under escort for a particular period allowed by law.

Granting a request for an emergency absence is a discretionary decision made by TDCJ with public safety being the prime consideration. The offender absent on emergency leave under escort is considered to be in the custody of TDCJ and the offender must be under constant physical guard while absent.

Emergency absences may be granted for attending the funeral of an immediate family member, to view a deceased immediate family member or to visiting a critically ill immediate family member.

An immediate family member is defined as the offender's parents, spouse, siblings, half-siblings, and children. Surrogate parents are included if the relationship of the surrogate to the offender is verifiable from established TDCJ files.

Offenders must meet strict guidelines to be approved for emergency absences.

These guidelines include being at least Line Class 1, G3 custody with no major disciplinary penalties during the last six months, no disciplinary history of assaults on staff, within 12 months of parole eligibility, in TDCJ custody for six months and must not have a pending felony or U.S. Immigration detainer.

Additionally, the offender must not have been incarcerated in or sentenced to an adult correctional unit for committing, soliciting, attempting, conspiring, or aiding others to commit, solicit, attempt, and conspire to commit certain offenses to include:

- a. Homicide (Capital Murder; Murder; Voluntary Manslaughter; or any other homicide offense)
- b. Kidnapping (Aggravated Kidnapping; Kidnapping; False Imprisonment; or any other kidnapping offense)
- c. Sex Offense (Rape; Sexual Assault; Sexual Abuse; Aggravated Rape; Aggravated Sexual Abuse; or any other sexual assault offense to include Indecency with a Child)
- d. Robbery (Robbery; Aggravated Robbery; or any other robbery offense)
- e. Assault (Assault; Aggravated Assault; Injury to a Child; Injury to an Elderly Person; or any other assault offense)
- f. Escape (Any escape offense from an adult correctional facility)
- g. Any offense in which the offender used or exhibited a deadly weapon during the commission of the offense or during the immediate flight therefrom and where an affirmative finding on use of a deadly weapon was made by the trial court or jury.
- h. Stalking

State Jail offenders must be at least J2 custody. Offenders must have been in TDCJ custody for six months or for one-third of their sentence, whichever comes first.

All emergency absences are granted under TDCJ escort and must be completed within 24 hours of departing the unit.

Emergency absences requiring an overnight stay may not be granted and no out-of-state emergency absences will be granted. An offender may be released on emergency absence two times during a 12-month period.

Emergency absence requests should be directed by the medical provider or funeral home director to Classification and Records via fax at 936-437-8721.

## **1 TIME CREDIT CALCULATIONS**

### **Good Conduct Time**

Many offenders may shorten their prison stay by earning time credit for good behavior and by participation in work and other programs. Any good conduct time suspended may be reinstated after 12 months if the offender meets the required criteria. Any good conduct time forfeited due to a disciplinary infraction cannot be reinstated.

The two principle time-earning categories, state approved trusty and line class, each have different time-earning levels with a specific number of days that can be earned for each month actually served. Besides behavior in prison, the amount of good time that can be earned is also affected by the State laws relevant to good conduct time that were in effect when the offense was committed.

Good conduct time may apply to an offender's prison confinement in terms of eligibility for release to parole or mandatory supervision. For certain offenders serving sentences for assaultive offenses, good conduct time is not used to calculate parole eligibility.

More information about custody designations and time-earning status is available in the *Offender Orientation Handbook* located on the agency web site at:

[https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/publications/pubs\\_cid\\_offender\\_orientation\\_handbook.html](https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/publications/pubs_cid_offender_orientation_handbook.html).

### **State Jail Diligent Participation**

Any offender convicted of a state jail felony offense committed on or after September 1, 2011, may be eligible for time credit based on diligent participation in TDCJ work, treatment, education, vocational programs.

State jail offenders may be awarded diligent participation credit by the sentencing judge, or for offenses committed on or after September 1, 2015, the judge at the time of sentencing, may specify the offender is “presumptively entitled” to any credit earned by diligently participating.

For credit awarded by the sentencing judge: After the diligent participation days are reported by the TDCJ to the sentencing judge, the sentencing judge, based on the progress report received, may credit up to 20% of the offender’s sentence for days served in TDCJ custody, as long as the offender was diligently participating in a program and not subject to disciplinary action. The sentencing judge is not required to give credit for any or all days of diligent participation. If credits are not awarded, the offenders will serve their full sentence.

For offenders entitled to presumptive credit: Credits due will automatically be awarded to the offender based on diligent participation in TDCJ work, treatment, education, vocational programs on the 45th day before the offender serves 80% of the sentence. However, an offender who is subject to disciplinary action during incarceration or otherwise loses a day of eligibility, will instead have a progress report sent for consideration by the sentencing judge. In these cases, if credits are not awarded, the offenders will serve their full sentence. Awarding of diligent participation is a completely automated process and no action on the part of the offender or their family is needed to get credits.



## DISCIPLINE

All offenders are required to obey the rules established by TDCJ and by the unit to which they are assigned. Offenders receive information concerning rules soon after they arrive.

Depending on the degree of seriousness, violations of rules may be handled informally by counseling and verbal reprimand, or formally through disciplinary hearings.

Hearings are classified as major or minor, based on the seriousness and frequency of rule violations. In a minor hearing, a finding of guilt can result in punishment ranging from extra duty, restriction to living quarters, suspension of recreation, restriction from making commissary purchases and contact visitation.

Under a major hearing, the available penalties include solitary confinement, loss of accumulated good conduct time and/or demotion in time-earning class (except for state jail offenders, who earn no good conduct time).

A state jail offender involved in a disciplinary hearing may receive any penalty categorized as minor, or as major for the state jails. However, a state jail offender may be provided with a major hearing if assessment of monetary damages is imposed due to destruction of state property.

Disciplinary hearings for offenders sentenced to prison, but assigned in transfer status to a state jail, shall be conducted in accordance with the grade assigned to the disciplinary report and under the applicable minor or major hearing procedure.

Counsel substitutes are trained personnel assigned to units to represent offenders at major hearings. Offenders shall be provided with counsel substitutes prior to a major hearing when the following requirements are met:

- a. When the offender is developmentally disabled;
- b. When the offender is assigned to a psychiatric inpatient facility, or has been placed on an outpatient caseload;
- c. When the offender's literacy or understanding of English is questionable;
- d. When the offender, because of the complexity of the issue, would be unlikely to be able to collect and present the evidence necessary for an adequate comprehension of the case;
- e. When the offender is confined to any form of segregation pending the hearing; and,
- f. When a witness requested by the accused offender is unable to attend a disciplinary hearing because the requested witness or the accused offender has been transferred to another unit.

(Note: The requirement for Counsel Substitutes does not apply to state jail offender disciplinary hearings, except when state jail offenders are brought before major hearings for assessment of monetary damages for destruction of state property.)



## **GRIEVANCES**

The TDCJ Offender Grievance Program provides a means for identifying issues and facilitating corrective action, thereby contributing to a safer environment for staff and offenders. The program affords offenders a formal mechanism for review and redress of pertinent issues, and ensures them a fair and timely decision while providing agency administrators with the current information for direct interaction and proactive planning.

When a concern arises, offenders are required to attempt to resolve the issue informally before submitting a Step 1 grievance. If informal resolution is not successful, a grievance form and Instructions on How to Write and Submit Grievances may be obtained from any staff member or from the unit law library.

Each unit has a Unit Grievance Investigator (UGI) responsible for processing and resolving offender complaints. The UGI works closely with the warden and other department heads to ensure issues identified in grievances are appropriately addressed.

If an offender is not satisfied with the response to a Step 1 grievance, they may appeal the decision by submitting a Step 2 grievance. When submitting a Step 2 appeal, the offender must include the answered Step 1 and submit the grievance to the UGI on their unit of assignment. The UGI will forward the grievance to the Central Grievance Office for processing. Central administration and regional directors, as well as many other departmental specialists, are available to review the appeal and take additional corrective action, if necessary.

Protecting offenders' rights to file grievances and promoting problem solving at all levels is very important to TDCJ. It is a violation of policy to subject any offender to harassment, retaliation or reprisal for using the grievance procedure.



#### **PREA OMBUDSMAN**

The TDCJ has a "Zero-Tolerance" for all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment of offenders. The TDCJ is committed to taking a proactive approach concerning the detection, prevention, response, and punishment of sexual abuse, including consensual sexual contact, and sexual harassment of offenders in the custody of the department.

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Ombudsman was established by the 80th Legislature in 2007 (Texas Government Code, Section 501, subchapter F), and is appointed by the Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ). The PREA ombudsman reports directly to the chairman of the TBCJ, and is an office external to the reporting process of TDCJ.

The PREA Ombudsman was created to provide offenders, and the public, with an independent office to report sexual assaults. The PREA ombudsman provides a confidential avenue for offenders to report sexual abuse and sexual harassment, as well as investigating and responding to PREA complaints and inquiries received from elected officials, the public, and offenders.

The primary responsibilities of the PREA Ombudsman Office are to:

- Monitor TDCJ's efforts to eliminate the occurrence of sexual abuse and sexual harassment in correctional facilities;
- Review the TDCJ's policies and procedures to ensure they are in compliance with federal and state laws and standards; and
- Respond to public inquiries related to allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment in TDCJ correctional facilities and ensure impartial resolution.

**HOW TO CONTACT THE PREA OMBUDSMAN**  
(Please submit inquiries in writing)

Anyone knowledgeable of an offender-on-offender or staff-on-offender sexual abuse or sexual harassment that occurs within a TDCJ correctional facility is encouraged to immediately report the allegation.

**PREA Ombudsman Office**

P.O. Box 99, Huntsville, TX 77342-0099  
936-437-2133 phone 936-437-6981 fax  
[prea.ombudsman@tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:prea.ombudsman@tdcj.texas.gov)

## γ LEGAL ASSISTANCE

State Counsel for Offenders (SCFO) is the division responsible for providing limited legal services and representation to offenders who cannot afford to hire outside counsel.

SCFO cannot help offenders with civil rights issues, TDCJ policy or procedure issues, fee-generating cases and other legal areas depending upon the circumstances. SCFO attorneys and staff provide legal aid to offenders in the following areas:

- **Criminal Defense:** SCFO represents indigent offenders indicted for felonies allegedly committed in TDCJ.
- **Civil Defense:** SCFO represents indigent offenders targeted for civil commitment under the Sexually Violent Predator statute.
- **Appeals:** SCFO may represent indigent offenders in the appeal of trial and civil commitment cases. SCFO may also represent indigent offenders with time calculations, nuncs pro tuncs, or other post-trial matters.
- **Immigration:** SCFO is available to assist indigent offenders who are scheduled for removal or other immigration court procedures. SCFO is also available to answer questions regarding immigration law.
- **Legal Services:** SCFO assists indigent offenders with a variety of legal issues, such as:
  - Writs of habeas corpus;
  - Parole and mandatory supervision eligibility issues;
  - Shock probation;
  - Pending charges and detainers (another agency's hold on an offender prior to release);
  - Family law, including child custody, child support, termination of parental rights, and probate matters; and
  - Review files of civilly committed individuals in preparation for biennial reviews.

Offenders can obtain assistance by writing to State Counsel for Offenders through the prison mail system. Offenders are encouraged to refer to the SCFO's *Legal Handbook* prior to writing. A copy of the *Legal Handbook* is available in all unit law libraries.

**The Access to Courts Program** ensures that offenders who are assigned to correctional institutions operated, which are managed or monitored by TDCJ are provided their constitutional right of access to courts, counsel and public officials, and that access is "adequate, effective and meaningful" as required by state and federal law. Officers, employees, or agents of TDCJ shall not obstruct, harass, punish, or otherwise penalize any offender for seeking or gaining access to the courts.

Unit law libraries are composed of many publications, including court forms, digests, treatises, federal and state case law, as well as various statutes and codes. In addition, each law library contains instructional and/or help publications on how to use this material.

Offenders are allowed to utilize these facilities and resources for legal purposes such as to challenge their criminal convictions or the conditions of their confinement. An Access to Courts supervisor is available on each unit to respond to offender inquiries regarding the use of court forms and legal research material maintained in the unit's law library.



#### **REENTRY AND INTEGRATION**

The Reentry and Integration Division (RID) assists offenders and their families in preparing for the individual's eventual return to the community.

The RID provides a number of programs and services including: continuity of care for offenders with serious medical, psychiatric, or physical disabilities; assistance in obtaining identification documents, such as birth certificates, social security cards and Texas Identification Cards; individualized reentry planning; and post-release employment assistance.

RID has established a toll-free number, 1-877-887-6151, for family, friends or the general public to call on issues related to pre-release and post-release reentry services.

Additional information can be obtained regarding offender family support groups and organizations, other applicable state agencies, visitor day centers and hospitality houses providing overnight accommodations near certain units by contacting RID staff at 1-877-887-6151.

Other helpful contacts include:

- **Texas Inmate Families Association (TIFA)**  
512-371-0900
- **TXCURE**  
972-276-9865
- **Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)**  
1-800-832-2829
- **Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)**  
1-800-832-2829
- **Department of State Health Services (DSHS)** 1-888-963-7111
- **TexVet: Partners Across Texas Serving Texas Veterans and Their Families**  
<http://texvet.com/>

 **RELEASE**

When the time for release from prison draws near, the offender who is eligible for parole, is interviewed by the institutional parole officer to determine residence and employment plans. Offenders with special medical or mental health needs receive information from a field services representative about medication and other relevant aftercare plans.

Most offenders are released from regional release sites, releasing them closer to their county of conviction, residence, or approved release county.

Regional release sites are located at the Clements Unit (Amarillo), Crain Unit (Gatesville), Huntsville Unit (Huntsville), Hutchins State Jail (Dallas), McConnell Unit (Beeville), and Robertson Unit (Abilene). All male offenders with a detainer, classified as sex offenders, have special conditions of Super Intensive Supervision Program (SISP) or Electronic Monitoring imposed by the Board of Pardons and Paroles are released from the Huntsville Unit. Female offenders are released from Gatesville.

Releases from all facilities occur between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Note, scheduled releases may be subject to change.

Each offender is given a set of civilian clothing and a bus voucher (if traveling by bus), in addition to the remaining balance in the individual's trust fund account. Offenders released to parole or mandatory supervision receive a \$50.00 gate check and will receive another \$50.00 check upon reporting to their parole officer. Prison offenders that complete their sentence in the Correctional Institutions Division (flat discharge) receive a \$100.00 gate check when released.

State jail offenders are released from the unit of assignment, or given a bus voucher (if traveling by bus) to the county of residence. State Jail offenders do not receive money upon release (*Texas Government Code, Section 501.015 (b)*).

## PAROLE

The Parole Division supervises offenders released from prison who are serving the remainder of their sentences in Texas communities. The division also performs some pre-release functions by tracking parole eligible cases and submitting them for timely consideration to the Board of Pardons and Paroles.

The Parole Division does not make release decisions, nor does it decide whose parole should be revoked or what special conditions should be placed on releasees. Authority for those decisions rests with the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP), but the division works closely with the BPP and provides board members with the documentation needed to make informed decisions. When the time for release from prison draws near, the district parole officer investigates the proposed residential release plan and upon plan approval, a release certificate is issued and the offender is scheduled for release. Offenders with special medical or mental health needs receive information from a field services representative about medication and other relevant aftercare plans.

Offenders supervised by the Parole Division, due to board imposed conditions/sanctions or lack of residential release plans, may be temporarily housed in privately operated secure facilities. The following contracted facilities are utilized by the division to provide secure and responsible supervision of offenders: Intermediate Sanction Facilities (ISF), Residential Reentry Centers (RRC), Substance Abuse residential treatment facilities, and the County Jail Work Release Program.

In addition to the contracted facilities, the Parole Division also utilizes Temporary Housing Assistance Program (THAP) providers, which are private facilities that have applied and been approved to house offenders. These facilities can only exist in counties that do not have a state contracted RRC, and eligible offenders can only be placed in THAP locations within their own Legal County of Residence.

**Texas Department of Criminal Justice**  
**Correctional Institutions Division**  
**Prison Units**

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Tele. No.</u>
Allred	V	Wichita	2101 FM 369 North Iowa Park, TX 76367	(940)855-7477
Beto	II	Anderson	1391 FM 3328 Tennessee Colony, TX 75880	(903)928-2217
Boyd	II	Freestone	200 Spur 113 Teague, TX 75860-2007	(254)739-5555
Briscoe	IV	Frio	1459 West Highway 85 Dilley, TX 78017	(830)965-4444
Byrd	I	Walker	21 FM 247 Huntsville, TX 77320	(936)295-5768
Clemens	III	Brazoria	11034 Hwy 36 Brazoria, TX 77422	(979)798-2188
Clements	V	Potter	9601 Spur 591 Amarillo, TX 79107-9606	(806)381-7080
Coffield	II	Anderson	2661 FM 2054 Tennessee Colony, TX 75884	(903)928-2211
Connally	IV	Karnes	899 FM 632 Kenedy, TX 78119	(830)583-4003
Crain	VI	Coryell	1401 State School Road Gatesville, TX 76599-2999	(254)865-8431
Dalhart	V	Hartley	11950 FM 998 Dalhart, TX 79022	(806)249-8655
Daniel	V	Scurry	938 South FM 1673 Snyder, TX 79549	(325)573-1114
Darrington	III	Brazoria	59 Darrington Road Rosharon, TX 77583	(281)595-3465
Duncan	I	Angelina	1502 South First Street Diboll, TX 75941	(936)829-2616
Eastham	I	Houston	2665 Prison Road #1 Lovelady, TX 75851	(936)636-7321
Ellis	I	Walker	1697 FM 980 Huntsville, TX 77343	(936)295-5756
Estelle	I	Walker	264 FM 3478 Huntsville, TX 77320-3320	(936)291-4200
Ferguson	I	Madison	12120 Savage Drive Midway, TX 75852	(936)348-3751
Goree	I	Walker	7405 Hwy. 75 South Huntsville, TX 77344	(936)295-6331
Hamilton	VI	Brazos	200 Lee Morrison Lane Bryan, TX 77807	(979)779-1633
Havins	VI	Brown	500 FM 45 East Brownwood, TX 76801	(325)643-5575
Hightower	III	Liberty	902 FM 686 Dayton, TX 77535	(936)258-8013
Hilltop	VI	Coryell	1500 State School Road Gatesville, TX 76598	(254)865-8901
Hobby	VI	Falls	742 FM 712 Marlin, TX 76661	(254)883-5561
Hodge	II	Cherokee	379 FM 2972 W Rusk, TX 75785	(903)683-5781
Hospital	III	Galveston	P. O. Box 48, Substation #1 Galveston, TX 77555	(409)772-2875
Hughes	VI	Coryell	3201 FM 929 Gatesville, TX 76597	(254)865-6663
Huntsville	I	Walker	815 12 <sup>th</sup> Street Huntsville, TX 77348	(936)437-1555
Jester III	III	Fort Bend	3 Jester Road Richmond, TX 77406	(281)277-7000
Jester IV	III	Fort Bend	4 Jester Road Richmond, TX 77406	(281)277-3700

**Texas Department of Criminal Justice**  
**Correctional Institutions Division**  
**Prison Units**

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Tele. No.</u>
Jordan/Baten	V	Gray	1992 Helton Road Pampa, TX 79065	(806)665-7070
LeBlanc	III	Jefferson	3695 FM 3514 Beaumont, TX 77705	(409)724-1515
Lewis	I	Tyler	777 FM 3497 Woodville, TX 75990	(409)283-8181
Luther	VI	Grimes	1800 Luther Drive Navasota, TX 77868	(936)825-7547
Lynaugh	IV	Pecos	1098 South Hwy. 2037 Fort Stockton, TX 79735	(432)395-2938
McConnell	IV	Bee	3001 South Emily Drive Beeville, TX 78102	(361)362-2300
Michael	II	Anderson	2664 FM 2054 Tennessee Colony, TX 75886	(903)928-2311
Montford	V	Lubbock	8602 Peach Street Lubbock, TX 79404	(806)745-1021
Mountain View	VI	Coryell	2305 Ransom Road Gatesville, TX 76528	(254)865-7226
Murray	VI	Coryell	1916 North Hwy 36 Bypass Gatesville, TX 76596	(254)865-2000
Neal	V	Potter	9055 Spur 591 Amarillo, TX 79107-9696	(806)383-1175
Pack	VI	Grimes	2400 Wallace Pack Road Navasota, TX 77868	(936)825-3728
Polunsky	I	Polk	3872 FM 350 South Livingston, TX 77351	(936)967-8082
Powledge	II	Anderson	1400 FM 3452 Palestine, TX 75803	(903)723-5074
Ramsey	III	Brazoria	1100 FM 655 Rosharon, TX 77583	(281)595-3491
Roach	V	Childress	15845 FM 164 Childress, TX 79201	(940)937-6364
Robertson	VI	Jones	12071 FM 3522 Abilene, TX 79601	(325)548-9035
Scott	III	Brazoria	6999 Retrieve Angleton, TX 77515	(979)849-9306
Segovia	IV	Hidalgo	1201 E. El Cibolo Road Edinburg, TX 78542	(956)316-2400
Skyview	II	Cherokee	379 FM 2972 W Rusk, TX 75785	(903)683-5781
Smith	V	Dawson	1313 County Road 19 Lamesa, TX 79331-1898	(806)872-6741
Stevenson	IV	DeWitt	1525 FM 766 Cuero, TX 77954	(361)275-2075
Stiles	III	Jefferson	3060 FM 3514 Beaumont, TX 77705	(409)722-5255
Stringfellow	III	Brazoria	1200 FM 655 Rosharon, TX 77583	(281)595-3413
Telford	II	Bowie	3899 Hwy 98 New Boston, TX 75570	(903)628-3171
Terrell	III	Brazoria	1300 FM 655 Rosharon, TX 77583	(281)595-3481
Torres	IV	Medina	125 Private Road 4303 Hondo, TX 78861	(830)426-5325
Vance	III	Fort Bend	2 Jester Road Richmond, TX 77406	(281)277-3030
Wallace	V	Mitchell	1675 S. FM 3525 Colorado City, TX 79512	(325)728-2162
Wynne	I	Walker	810 FM 2821 Huntsville, TX 77349	(936)295-9126
Young	III	Galveston	5509 Attwater Ave. Dickinson, TX 77539	(409)948-0001

**Texas Department of Criminal Justice**  
**Correctional Institutions Division**  
**State Jail Facilities**

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Tele. No.</u>
Cole	II	Fannin	3801 Silo Road Bonham, TX 75418	(903)583-1100
Dominguez	IV	Bexar	6535 Cagnon Road San Antonio, TX 78252-2202	(210)675-6620
Formby	V	Hale	998 County Road AA Plainview, TX 79072	(806)296-2448
Gist	III	Jefferson	3295 FM 3514 Beaumont, TX 77705	(409)727-8400
Henley	III	Liberty	7581 Hwy. 321 Dayton, TX 77535	(936)258-2476
Hutchins	II	Dallas	1500 East Langdon Road Dallas, TX 75241	(972)225-1304
Kegans	III	Harris	707 Top Street Houston, TX 77002	(713)224-6584
Lopez	IV	Hidalgo	1203 El Cibolo Road Edinburg, TX 78542	(956)316-3810
Lychner	III	Harris	2350 Atascocita Road Humble, TX 77396	(281)454-5036
Ney	IV	Medina	114 Private Road 4303 Hondo, TX 78861-3812	(830)426-8030
Plane	III	Liberty	904 FM 686 Dayton, TX 77535	(936)258-2476
Sanchez	IV	El Paso	3901 State Jail Road El Paso, TX 79938-8456	(915)856-0046
Travis Co.	VI	Travis	8101 FM 969 Austin, TX 78724	(512)926-4482
Wheeler	V	Hale	986 County Road AA Plainview, TX 79072	(806)293-1081
Woodman	VI	Coryell	1210 Coryell City Road Gatesville, TX 76528	(254)865-9398

**Texas Department of Criminal Justice**  
**Correctional Institutions Division**  
**Transfer and Substance Abuse Facilities**

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Tele. No.</u>
<b>TRANSFER FACILITIES</b>				
Cotulla	IV	LaSalle	610 FM 624 Cotulla, TX 78014	(830)879-3077
Fort Stockton	IV	Pecos	1536 IH-10 East Fort Stockton, TX 79735	(432)336-7676
Garza East	IV	Bee	4304 Hwy. 202 Beeville, TX 78102-8981	(361)358-9880
Garza West	IV	Bee	4250 Hwy. 202 Beeville, TX 78102-8982	(361)358-9890
Goodman	I	Jasper	349 Private Road 8430 Jasper, TX 75951	(409)383-0012
Gurney	II	Anderson	1385 FM 3328 Palestine, TX 75803	(903)928-3118
Holliday	I	Walker	295 IH-45 North Huntsville, TX 77320-8443	(936)295-8200
Marlin	VI	Falls	2893 State Hwy. 6 Marlin, TX 76661-6588	(254)883-3858
Middleton	VI	Jones	13055 FM 3522 Abilene, TX 79601	(325)548-9075
Moore, C.	II	Fannin	1700 North FM 87 Bonham, TX 75418	(903)583-4464
Rudd	V	Terry	2004 Lamesa Highway Brownfield, TX 79316	(806)637-4470
San Saba	VI	San Saba	206 S. Wallace Creek Road San Saba, TX 76877	(325)372-4255
Tulia	V	Swisher	4000 Hwy. 86 West Tulia, TX 79088	(806)995-4109
Ware	V	Mitchell	1681 S. FM 3525 Colorado City, TX 79512	(325)728-2162
<b>SUBSTANCE ABUSE FACILITIES</b>				
Glossbrenner	IV	Duvall	5100 South FM1329 San Diego, TX 78384	(361)279-2705
Halbert	VI	Burnet	800 Ellen Halbert Drive Burnet, TX 78611	(512)756-6171
Jester I	III	Fort Bend	1 Jester Road Richmond, TX 77406	(281)277-3030
Johnston	II	Wood	703 Airport Road Winnsboro, TX 75494	(903)342-6166
Sayle	VI	Stephens	4176 FM 1800 Breckenridge, TX 76424-7301	(254)559-1581

**Texas Department of Criminal Justice**  
**Private Facility Contract Oversight and**  
**Monitoring Division**  
**Private Facilities**

<u>Unit</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Tele. No.</u>
<b>PRIVATE PRISONS</b>			
Bridgeport	Wise	4000 North 10th Street Bridgeport, TX 76426	(940)683-3010
Cleveland	Liberty	901 East 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Cleveland, TX 77327	(281)592-9559
Diboll	Angelina	1604 South First Street Diboll, TX 75941	(936)829-2295
Estes	Johnson	1100 Highway 1807 Venus, TX 76084	(972)366-3334
Kyle	Hays	23001 IH 35 Kyle, TX 78640	(512)268-0079
Lockhart	Caldwell	P. O. Box 1170 Lockhart, TX 78644	(512)398-3480
Moore, B.	Rusk	8500 North FM 3053 Overton, TX 75684	(903)834-6186
<b>PRIVATE STATE JAILS</b>			
Bartlett	Williamson	1018 Arnold Drive Bartlett, TX 76511	(254)527-3300
Bradshaw	Rusk	P. O. Box 9000 Henderson, TX 75653-9000	(903)655-0880
Lindsey	Jack	1620 FM 3344 Jacksboro, TX 76458	(940)567-2272
Willacy Co.	Willacy	1695 South Buffalo Drive Raymondville, TX 78580	(956)689-4900
<b>INTERMEDIATE SANCTION FACILITIES</b>			
South Texas	Harris	1511 Preston Road Houston, TX 77002	(713)223-0601
West Texas	Terry	2002 Lamesa Hwy. Brownfield, TX 79316	(806)637-4032
<b>PRE-PAROLE TRANSFER FACILITIES</b>			
Bridgeport	Wise	222 Lake Road Bridgeport, TX 76426	(940)683-2162
<b>MULTI-USE FACILITY</b>			
East Texas	Rusk	900 Industrial Drive Henderson, TX 75653	(903)655-3300

Texas Department of  
Criminal Justice



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please visit our website at  
[www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov)