

Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
Discharge from Distant Court Program for Vulnerable Inmates

Generic Communique and Q's & A's

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) is implementing a provincial wide program in its adult correctional institutions to assist identified vulnerable remand clients, 18 years of age or older, who have:

- chronic or acute mental health concerns, concurrent disorder, addiction, developmental disability or dual diagnosis, **and**
- been identified as likely to be released from court in a distant location from the correctional institution.

This program supports vulnerable inmates who have little community supports and unable to return to the institution to retrieve their property and necessary medication.

This program objective is to decrease re-contact with the justice system through the transportation of the identified inmate's essential personal property, specifically their wallet, identification, keys, prescription and/or critical medications (minimum of three day supply), etc., in a sealed red envelope. The content of the envelope is given to the inmate if they are released at court by the mental health court support worker. All other property belonging to the inmate remains at the facility until they can pick up, post discharge.

This program is established in partnership with local institutions, police services including the OPP, who transport inmates to the distant court, and mental health service provider agencies who provide support in the court house. Implementation will be phased in across the province over 2018.

Referral Process

- Requests for the service need to be made a minimum of 1 business day in advance of court appearance and can be made by the inmate, family, institution staff, service providers, legal counsel, community supports, or other justice partners, to the correctional institution.
- Referral forms can be faxed or emailed to the institution. All referrals will be verified and approved by the institution.
- Should the inmate not be released at court, the red envelope remains sealed and is returned to the institution by the transporting police service, and is returned to the inmate's property.

Q's & A's

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Why are we providing this service?

The purpose of the Discharge for Distant Court Program is to assist vulnerable inmates with mental health concerns or developmental disabilities, who may be released at court in a distant location from the institution and do not have the supports or capabilities of returning to the institution to pick up essential documentation or medication, to manage in the community.

Which inmates are eligible?

All inmates remanded into provincial institutions with significant mental health or development disabilities related concerns, who fit the program criteria. These inmates are attending court a long distance away from the correctional institution and require this support. The request is reviewed by the institution management and site specific identified contact to ensure the inmate meets the criteria for approval into this program.

The target client group are those who have a diagnosis or symptoms of chronic or acute mental illness/disorder, concurrent disorder, addiction, developmental disability (i.e., intellectual, cognitive disability, including fetal alcohol spectrum disorder [FASD], brain injury [BI]) or dual diagnosis.

Who can make a referral for this service?

The inmate and both external and internal stakeholders. Social workers, psychologists, doctors, nurses, native inmate liaison officers (NILO), release from custody workers, correctional officers, etc., can make a request internally at the facility. Externally, the request can be made by family, mental health workers, crown or defence attorneys, Indigenous community, other community support organizations, and police services.

What property/medication will be provided to the client?

Their wallet with personal identification, medication or prescriptions, keys, money, bank card, cash, cell phone/charger and naloxone kit may be included in the red envelope.

How does the inmate's property go from the institution to the court house and given to them?

This will be facilitated once the request is approved, in partnership with the transporting police service and a designated court worker/liaison agent. If the inmate is released at court, the court worker will release the property to the inmate that is contained in the red envelope.

How are external stakeholder(s) identified by each institution?

This will be done by the local facility with its justice and community partners.

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What happens if the inmate is not released at court?

Should the inmate not be released at court, the inmate's property will return to the institution with the inmate. The red envelope will remain sealed along with all completed documentation which will indicate the inmate was not released at court. The sealed red envelope will be returned to the facility via the police service.

How is property tracked and accounted for?

Property is tracked through established forms and processes by each of the partners at every step of the process by document/signing continuity of the inmate's property.

Who is responsible for lost property?

Correctional Services policy and procedures for lost or damaged inmate property will apply. If contents are lost or damaged, the institution will investigate, and if refund is approved, will reimburse the inmate.

Are Narcotic or Opioids included in the Red Envelope?

No narcotics or opioids are included in the medications in the Red Envelope. methadone or suboxone will not be included as medication. If the inmate requires these medications, a "bridging" prescription will be provided by the institutional physician and will be included in the red envelope.

Do any of the medications require special handling considerations for storage?

Generally, most medication will not require any special considerations. If this is a requirement, this will be indicated by the institution.

How much time is required to initiate the Discharge from Distant Court Program referral?

Request should be submitted at least one (1) business day in advance of the inmate's court date, but some request can be considered with less than a 24 hour timeframe.

Are all red envelopes to be remained sealed until the inmate signs for the property in the red envelope, or returned to the institution?

Yes.