Information Package

Correctional Officer Recruit Training

Program

Adult Corrections and Community Services

Department of Justice

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

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INFORMATION PACKAGE

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER RECRUIT TRAINING

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This package is designed to provide information to individuals interested in pursuing a
career as a Correctional Officer with the Adult Corrections and Community Services
Division, Institutional Services Branch, Department of Justice, Newfoundland & Labrador.
It is not, nor is it intended to be, a comprehensive description of the recruitment process
nor employment opportunities with the Adult Corrections and Community Services
Division.

INSTITUTIONS

The Corrections & Community Services Division, Department of Justice, is responsible for Institutional Services, Community Corrections, Victim Services and Youth Corrections for the province.

The **Institutional Services Branch** comprises six correctional facilities and two detention centres which provides services and programs for sentenced, remanded and detained offenders.

This is a list of adult facilities:

- (A) Her Majesty's Penitentiary, constructed in 1859 and renovated in 1945, 1981 and 1994, is located in St. John's. It is the primary facility for housing medium/maximum security male prisoners. All admissions from the Avalon Peninsula, high security male inmates, long term remands and those awaiting transfer to a federal penitentiary are housed at HMP.
- **(B)** The Clarenville Correctional Centre for Women, Clarenville, located 140 km west of St. John's, opened in 1982, is the only facility for female prisoners in the province. All provincially sentenced females, remands, federal inmates who do not pose a security risk as well as federal inmates awaiting transfer to Kingston Prison for Women are admitted to NLCCW.
- **(C)** The **West Coast Correctional Center** is located in Stephenville on the West coast of Newfoundland.
- **(D) The Bishop's Falls Correctional Centre** is located in Central Newfoundland. A duplicate of the Clarenville Correctional Centre, this centre was opened in 1983 and accommodates minimum security male inmates from Central Newfoundland.
- **(E) The Labrador Correctional Centre**, located in Happy Valley, Goose Bay was opened in 1984. All minimum and medium security risk inmates population is primarily of Inuit and Innu aboriginal descent.
- **(F)** Corner Brook Lockup has been operated by the Adult Corrections Division since 1981. It serves as a short-term holding unit for male and female persons remanded to await court appearances, as well as, for individuals detained under the Mental Health Act.
- (H) The St. John's Lockup has been operated by the Adult Corrections Division since 1981. It is a short-term holding unit for the detention of male and female persons remanded to await court appearance. Individuals detained under the Mental Health Act or the Detention Intoxicated Persons Act are also held here.

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MISSION STATEMENT CORRECTIONS DIVISION

As a partner in the Criminal Justice System, we will strive for a safer society by encouraging and assisting offenders to become law abiding citizens.

We will strive to ensure that victims are able to participate meaningfully in the criminal justice process.

We will exercise fair, just and humane measures of custody, supervision and control.

We will strive to provide access to programs and services necessary for the offenders reintegration into the community.

We will strive to provide access to programs and services necessary for the healing and recovery of victims.

OUR VALUES

We believe in the fundamental worth of all persons.

Therefore we will....

- Preserve the dignity of the individual.
- Treat people fairly and justly.
- Provide for people's basic human needs.

•

We believe in the right of all persons to be safe from harm.

Therefore we will....

Employ reasonable measures for protection, security and control.

•

We believe every person has the potential for self-improvement.

Therefore we will...

Strive to give everyone in our system access to programs and services necessary to develop their potential.

>

We believe in excellence and integrity.

Therefore we will....

- Work co-operatively.
- Communicate effectively.
- Operate efficiently.
- ▶ Be accountable for what we do.

COMPETENCIES AND RECRUITMENT

Over the past two decades, the human resource profession has adopted the concept of using competencies to integrate and bind together most of the major human resource functions such as recruitment and selection, classification, training and development, compensation, succession planning, performance management, and team building.

From a recruitment perspective, competencies are the characteristics of an individual which underline performance or behaviour at work. The term competency is a new label for what was formerly called qualifications, however, it is much broader in scope.

When a position is analysed to determine the competencies required for successful performance in the position, the elements that are normally identified as position competencies are typically of the following type:

- aptitudes
- skills and abilities
- knowledge
- physical competencies
- personality
- principles, values, attitudes, beliefs

The objective of developing such a position competency profile position is to create an ideal template of competencies against which a wholistic assessment of an individual may be compared. A competency profile will also outline the environment or organizational context in which the individual performance outcomes or behaviour can be expressed, observed and measured.

With these concepts in mind, a correctional officer competency profile has been developed and a competency-based recruitment model has been formalized to produce for a complete or wholistic assessment of individuals seeking entrance into this profession.

<u>Correctional Officer Recruit Training</u> <u>Participant Selection Process</u>

Basic Requirements

- 19 years of age or older
- Canadian citizen
- Class 5 drivers licence
- Completed either a minimum of 3 years continuous work experience and/or
- Successfully completed a minimum of 2 years post secondary education in social sciences or
- Successfully completed a recognised federal/provincial correctional officer training program.

Selection tools and phases for competency assessment:

- Screening of basic qualifications
- Medical Assessment
- COPAT
- Security checks (may include polygraph)
- Reference checks

Pass all stages

Fail any stages

Proceed on CORT

Fail any more than 2 tests under re-test policy

Interview with Superintendent

Disqualified

Successfully complete course and proceed on "On the Job" training.

Final Assessment Interview For Correctional Officer Positions. May re-apply in future competitions

COPAT

Correctional Officer Bona Fide Occupational Requirements (BFOR) make sure that all correctional officers have the medical and physical abilities to do the job. The standards, which are required by Canadian human rights legislation, help the Correctional Service ensure the safety of staff, inmates and others in the institutions. They also help ensure public safety, for instance, when a correctional officer is escorting an inmate on a temporary absence in the community. At the same time, they promote the health and well-being of the individual correctional officers.

Bona Fide Occupational Requirements are designed to directly reflect what correctional officers may have to do, particularly in emergency situations. As a result, the BFOR test occupational fitness, not physical fitness. They are made up of two parts: a medical examination and a physical test call COPAT - the Correctional Officers' Physical Abilities Test. As a candidate, you must meet these requirements before you will be accepted into this profession.

THE MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

The medical examination is the first part of the BFOR. Since it is an occupational health assessment, it will be done by a licenced medical doctor. The doctor will check your hearing to ensure you can hear the equivalent of a conversation from three metres, as well as your sight, to see if you could distinguish a person's features from across a room. You can use glasses, contacts or a hearing aid for this. Your blood pressure will also be checked - it must be under 150/100. (The COPAT pushes the heart close to it maximal capacity and anyone with a higher blood pressure could be at risk of a cardiac event like a heart attack if they took the COPAT). Finally, the doctor will sign a medical form that will be forwarded to Justice stating whether you can take the COPAT.

COPAT - THE PHYSICAL ABILITIES TEST

The COPAT is an occupational fitness assessment designed to evaluate whether you can meet the physical requirements of correctional officers' work. It is a minimal test - it's not checking your athletic abilities, only your ability to do the job. At the same time, though, the test will make you work real hard, and you should prepare for it. Attached you will find a diagram of the COPAT course and a description of what it involves.

HOW CAN I PREPARE?

Preparation is the key to successfully completing the COPAT. You will need to prepare for both the aerobic and the strength requirements. Your activities and exercises should mirror the test's requirement and doing these, rather than unrelated activities, will increase your chance of success when you take the COPAT. Some work with weights to build upper body strength is also a good idea.

THE DAY OF YOUR TEST

W hen you arrive, your blood pressure will be checked to verify that you won't be at risk by taking the test. You must also complete a Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire. A COPAT instructor will take you through each stage of the test and answer any questions. You will have a

chance to practice individual components, like the push/pull machine and your COPAT assessor will lead you in a proper warm up. Finally, before you take the COPAT you must sign an informed consent form to show that you understand everything.

THE COPAT

The COPAT reflects 3 phases of physical work correctional officers must do with responding to emergencies in institutions

Phase 1 - Respond

Phase 1 involves responding - getting to a situation. This part, shown in the diagram includes running, opening doors (using the push/pull machine without lifting the weight) and climbing or jumping over barriers. This series, on the left side of the diagram, is repeated 3 times. You go on to climb the stairs - going up and down 3 times - then continue running. You will have to turn around several corners and modify your stride to avoid 2 low obstacles.

Phase 2 - Control

The second phase deals with resolving the situation - controlling the inmate - and its shown in the diagram. The COPAT uses a push/pull machine with a 36.5 kilo (80 pound) weight to simulate the force you would need to exert to control the average inmate. First you will pull the weight over a 180 degree arc going back and forth 6 times, then you do a set of 6 modified squat, thrust and stands, falling first to your stomach, then to your back and repeating. You return to the machine and do the same thing only this time by pushing the weight. This phase ends with 4 more modified squat, thrust and stands.

Phase 3 - Remove

The third phase shown in the diagram is removing the problem - carrying a 36.5 kilo (80 pounds) torso bag 20 meters (65 feet) and then safely placing it on the floor. This reflects the controlled removal of the inmate or an injured person from the scene.

TIME LIMITS

The first 2 phases of the COPAT must be completed in 2 minutes and 40 seconds, following this your heart rate will be taken and the 3rd phase must be started within 30 seconds. It is not timed.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CORRECTIONAL OFFICER

Under the direction of an officer in charge, a Correctional Officer performs security, custodial, supervisory and rehabilitative duties associated with the incarceration of sentenced or detained persons with the correctional system.

Duties and responsibilities include the following:

- conducts body searches, frisks, cell searches and inmate counts.
- ensures proper key control.
- observes all inmate activity.
- escorts inmates to other correctional facilities or community services.
- controls inmate movement within the correctional facility.
- **monitors inmate visitation.**
- participates in the admission and release process of offenders.
- ensures compliance with institutional rules and regulations.
- knows and observes legal requirements associated with the job.
- submits written reports on inmate violations of the rules and regulations.
- documents incidents of an exceptional or serious nature.
- participates in the inmate disciplinary process.
- applies reasonable use of force in restraining inmates, including application of restraint equipment.
- provides guidance and support during the inmate's incarceration.
- assists in the delivery of social, recreational and educational programs.
- exercises discretion, judgement and tact in dealing with the public.
- participates in educational programs such as life safety, health services, emergency response, suicide intervention, non-violent crisis intervention.
- maintains uniform, dress and appearance in a standard consistent with correctional policy.
- exercises promptness and dependability respecting assigned duties.
- conducts daily inspections in all areas of the institution.
- refers inmates to social worker/classification officer.
- checks institutional perimeter according to set policy.
- ensures proper maintenance of institutional vehicle in accordance with institutional policy.
- communicates and promotes effective working relations with employees.
- **carries through on verbal orders given by superiors.**
- applies non-violent crisis intervention techniques where possible in solving inmate crisis.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER

Health Issues

General

- 1. Every officer may be placed in a situation which may require that he physically enter into an altercation with inmates in order to aid his or her fellow officers. The officers act as a team, usually the majority of members of each shift team work together continuously and therefore get to know each others' strengths, weaknesses and capabilities. Penal institutions are classic conflict environments, in which the "it's them or us" attitude is shared by both inmates and guards. This attitude is continually focused by each group on the other. This raises questions about psychological suitability for the job.
- 2. Some control rooms are darkened relative to the "ranges" or open areas, where inmates congregate when not in their cells or other designated activity areas. The darker interiors allow better visibility into "range" areas, as well as to prevent inmates from observing the guards.
- 3. Many control rooms are designed in order to permit the monitoring of two levels of ranges at a time, i.e., the viewing windows of control rooms are at mid-level between range floors. This requires that guards be physically flexible.
- 4. Some groups of inmates may be at risk of tuberculosis, Hepatitis B and HIV infection; hence some officers may be at increased risk of contracting these diseases.
- 5. These officers work in a hazardous environment from the standpoint of potential violence, and at the same time, occupationally the lifestyle is similar to that of the firefighter, in that the majority of the time is spent in relative inactivity, with the potential for immediate physical and emotional stress conceivable at any time. There is some risk of sustaining penetrating wounds during cell searches. In concert with the above is a degree of boredom associated with the guarding function and the subconscious worry, that is increasingly apparent as one moves from minimum to maximum security environments.
- 6. Shift work is a requirement for many of these employees.
- 7. The use of respirators may be required.

Occupational Requirements

Colour vision is necessary to aid in the identification of inmates. Must clearly understand voice communication by speaking, shouting, or radio.

Advisory Requirements

Should not suffer from an impairment which results in sudden unpredictable loss of consciousness.

Should not suffer from any disability which prevents mobility, including the climbing of stairs.

Should not have an active psychiatric disorder, including drug or alcohol addiction.

Should not have a medical condition or other condition that precludes the wearing of a respirator.

Examination Guidelines

- Medical Examination mandatory - completed by your physician.

- Mental Health Assessment - completed by examining physician; referral to psychiatrist, if necessary.

- Visual acuity - corrected vision 6/9 (20/30) in better eye

6/15 (20/50) in other eye; glasses and soft contact lenses are

acceptable.

- Colour Vision - colour vision acceptable (CVA);

- fails Ishihara test but possess Colour Lantern Test

- Hearing - average loss in the better ear is not more than 25dB with a hearing

range 500 - 3000 Hz.

- note - good hearing is essential but need not be binaural. - the above standards apply, with or without hearing aids.

- audiometers calibrated to the CSA standard.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER RECRUIT TRAINING (CORT) PROGRAM.

Design Plan Principles

- 1. The design of CORT promotes the Mission and Values of the Adult Corrections Division.
- 2. The re-designed curriculum adheres to problem based and experimental learning principles.
- 3. The re-designed curriculum presents a change in "learning process" as well as in "content" when compared to the current curriculum design.
- 4. The learner is a very active participant in the learning process.
- 5. The CAPRA problem solving model is used extensively to address situations and problems.
- 6. Significant emphasis is placed upon promoting "respect for the law"
- 7. Situations and sessions are designed to reflect the actual duties of the CO.
- 8. Situations and problems reflect a cross section of institutions from all regions including women's institutions and Federal facilities.
- 9. The situation or problem is the means for achieving the session aim and objectives. Subject content emerges during the problem solving process, situation response and subsequent CAPRA assessment.
- 10. The situation or problem provides a concrete and practical example of the application of knowledge or skills.
- 11. Knowledge or skills gained in previous sessions are essential for the successful problem solving of most subsequent sessions.
- 12. Knowledge and skills are gained cumulatively through problems and situations that progressively increase in complexity.
- 13. Situations and problems are designed to challenge the learner yet permit successful resolution of the situation or problem through the application of appropriate skills and knowledge.
- 14. Specific knowledge and skills are reviewed and reinforced on several occasions, thereby enhancing the probability of long term retention of the knowledge and skills.
- 15. Effective communication, interpersonal skills and professionalism are integral parts of all situations in all sessions.
- 16. The progressive acquisition and successful application of skills and knowledge throughout the program is aimed towards producing a graduate who is better able to assess situations, engage in effective problem solving and make professional and effective responses.
- 17. CORT promotes teamwork and group learning. Most situations or problems are addressed in a four team format.

CORT CONTENT

CORT is based substantially on the Corrections Canada induction training program with the appropriate customizing required for it to adhere to provincial legislation while fitting the provinces prison system.

The program is made up of 47 sessions which are categorized into 5 modules:

- Working in Corrections
- The Offenders World
- The Everyday Job: To Assist and Control
- Putting it all Together
- Specialized Skills.

This program in essence teaches all the hands on skills required to work in a modern day correctional facility. In order to ensure that all competencies identified in the competency model were covered in the course content a cross reference was carried out.

An overview of the course is provided at the end of this section.

COURSE DURATION

The five modules take 280 hours to complete equating to 40 days based on 7.0 hours learning time per day, excluding health breaks and lunch. This time does not reflect any Statutory Holidays or "Snow" days that may occur within the course time frames and would require a course extension.

Upon the successful completion of the 8 week program individuals will complete a 4 week "on the job" orientation at HM.Penitentiary in St.John's..

COURSE FEES

Course fees may be charged up to a maximum of \$5000, payable four weeks in advance of registration and are based on a cost recovery system

RE - TEST POLICY

The CORT re-test policy applies for all practical skill evaluations in:

- Pat Down Frisk
- Strip Search
- Area Search
- Vehicle Search
- Restraint Equipment
- Communication equipment
- Chemical Agents
- Arrest and Control techniques
- Observation skills
- Self Defence

and the final examination.

Participants are permitted a maximum of two (2) re-tests throughout the entire CORT program. Failure of a re-test or failure in a third test (practical or theory) will result in your case being referred to the Superintendent of Prisons. **Normally, this will result in your release from CORT.**

There will be no refunds of course fees at any time under these circumstances.

INTERVIEW

Candidates who have successfully met all of the following standards will be invited by the Selection Board for a personal interview.

- Basic Qualifications
- Medical Assessment
- COPAT

The interview will be essentially structured as a behavioural interview whereby you will have to rely on your past experiences and training to respond to the information and hypothetical questions.

The Selection Board will consist of one to two representatives from the Corrections and Community Services Division and one from the Human Resources Division.

If candidates are coming to St. John's from outside the Avalon Peninsula to participate in this recruitment initiative, the Selection Board may condense the standards testing phase and have all candidates complete all testing and an interview within a two to three day period; before returning to their place of residence. Results will not be available for approximately one week after these activities are completed. It is hoped that this form of condensed testing will reduce time and travel costs for candidates.

All expenses for travel, medical examination are the responsibility of the candidate. If employed by this organization, relocation expenses are also the responsibility of the candidate.

Are You Ready for a Behavioural Interview?

"Tell me about a time when you were on a team, and one of the members wasn't carrying his or her weight". If this is one of the leading questions in your job interview, you could be in for a behavioural interview. Based on the premise that the best way to predict future behaviour is to determine past behaviour, this style of interviewing is gaining wide acceptance among recruiters.

Today, more than ever, every hiring decision is critical. Behavioural interviewing is designed to minimize personal impressions that can affect the hiring decision. By focusing on the applicant's actions and behaviours, rather than subjective impressions that can sometimes be misleading, interviewers can make more accurate hiring decisions.

Behavioural vs. Traditional Interviews

If you have training or experience with traditional interviewing techniques, you may find the behavioural interview quite different in several ways:

- 1) Instead of asking how you would behave in a particular situation, the interviewer will ask you to describe how you did behave.
- 2) Expect the interviewer to question and probe (think of "peeling the layers from an onion").
- 3) The interviewer will ask you to provide details, and will not allow you to theorize or generalize about several events.
- 4) The interview will be a more structured process that will concentrate on areas that are important to the interviewer, rather than allowing you to concentrate on areas that you may feel are important.
- 5) You may not get a chance to deliver any prepared stories.
- 6) Most interviewers will be taking copious notes throughout the interview.

The behavioural interviewer has been trained to objectively collect and evaluate information, and works from a profile of desired behaviours that are needed for success on the job. Because the behaviours a candidate has demonstrated in previous similar positions are likely to be repeated, you will be asked to share situations in which you may or may not have exhibited these behaviours. Your answers will be tested for accuracy and consistency.

If you are an entry-level candidate with no previous related experience, the interviewer will look for behaviours in situations similar to those of the target position:

- 1) "Describe a major problem you have faced and how you dealt with it."
- 2) "Give an example of when you had to work with your hands to accomplish a task or project".
- 3) "What class did you like the most? What did you like about it?"

Follow-up questions will test for consistency and determine if you exhibited the desired behaviour in that situation:

- 1) "Can you give me an example?"
- 2) "What did you do?"
- 3) "What did you say?"
- 4) "What were you thinking?"
- 5) "How did you feel?"
- 6) "What was your role?"
- 7) "What was the result?"

You will notice an absence of such questions as, "Tell me about your strengths and weaknesses."

How to Prepare for a Behavioural Interview

- Recall recent situations that show favourable behaviours or actions, especially involving course work, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning, and customer service.
- Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.
- Be sure each story has a beginning, a middle, and an end, i.e., be ready to describe the situation, your action, and the outcome or result.
- Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favourable.)
- Be honest. Don't embellish or omit any part of the story. The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.
- Be specific. Don't generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one event.

A possible response for the question, "Tell me about a time when you were on a team and a member wasn't pulling his or her weight" might go as follows:

"I had been assigned to a team to build a canoe out of concrete. One of our team members wasn't showing up for our lab sessions or doing his assignments. I finally met with him in private, explained the frustration of the rest of the team, and asked if there was anything I could do to help. He told me he was preoccupied with another class that he wasn't passing, so I found someone to help him with the other course. He not only was able to spend more time on our project, but he was also grateful to me for helping him out. We finished our project on time, and got a 'B' on it."

The interviewer might then probe: "how did you feel when you confronted this person?" "Exactly what was the nature of the project?" "What was his responsibility as a team member?" "What was your role?" "At what point did you take it on yourself to confront him?" You can see it is important that you not make up or "shade" information, and any you should have a clear memory of the entire incident.

Don't Forget the Basics

Instead of feeling anxious or threatened by the prospect of a behavioural interview, remember the essential difference between the traditional interview and the behavioural interview: The traditional interviewer may allow you to project what you might or should do in a given situation, whereas the behavioural interviewer is looking for past actions only. It will always be important to put your best foot forward and make a good impression on the interviewer with appropriate attire, good grooming , a firm handshake and direct eye contact. There is no substitute for promptness, courtesy, preparation, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude.

References and Criminal History Checks

The Human Resources Division of the Department of Justice will conduct reference checks on all applicants prior to employment. These checks will consist of contacting past and present employers to verify employment, duration of employment and the nature of the work performed.

The HR Division will also inquire as to your demonstrated ability to perform the work in question, your ability to work as a team member, your ability to establish and maintain effective interpersonal work relations and other job related personal suitability factors.

The criminal history checks will include a search of police and court data banks to ensure that you are suitable for employment as a correctional officer, a position of trust within this organization.

A polygraph may be administered by Royal Newfoundland Constabulary technicians as part of the selection process.

BENEFITS

Union Membership

Correctional Officers are covered under the provisions of the Correctional Officer Collective Agreement and all the benefits and protections provided therein.

Salary

The present annual starting salary for a Correctional Officer Recruit is \$29,745 and increases to \$48,077 after 37 months of employment, (presently under review)

Probationary Period

Correctional Officer Recruits are subject to a probationary period of 12 months during which performance is formally evaluated every three months. Unacceptable behaviour may lead to dismissal.

Hours of Work

Correctional Officers are regularly scheduled to work, on average, 40 hours per week following a 12 hour shift rotation.

Uniforms and Equipment

Uniforms are issued. These include boots, pants, tunic, shirts, ties, handcuffs and other equipment essential for a Correctional Officer. An annual clothing and boots issue ensures that a high standard of uniform appearance is maintained throughout the Service.

Annual Leave

During the first 10 years members are entitled to 120 working hours of annual leave: after 11 years, the entitlement is 160 working hours and after 20 years, 200 working hours.

Statutory Holidays

Members are eligible for 14 paid statutory holidays each year plus any other day proclaimed by the Provincial Government.

Retirement Pension Plan

Correctional Officers are covered under the Uniformed Services Pension Plan which is contributory.

Employee Group Insurance

Members of the Correctional Services are covered under a compulsory Employee Group Insurance Plan.

List of Human Resources Contacts For the Department of Justice

Joanne Turner - Manager for Corporate Services 709-729-0486

Graham Rogerson - Training & Development Officer 709-729-1740