

Australian Capital Territory

Corrections Management (Conflict Resolution) Policy 2011

Notifiable instrument NI2011-135

made under the

***Corrections Management Act 2007*, section 14(1) (Corrections policies and operating procedures)**

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Corrections Management (Conflict Resolution) Policy 2011*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after it is notified.

3 Policy

I make the

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

attached to this instrument, to facilitate the effective and efficient management of correctional services.

4 Revocation

This instrument revokes notifiable instrument NI2009-123.

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A/g Executive Director
ACT Corrective Services
21 February 2011



**ACT Corrective Services
Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC)**



CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

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Purpose

To outline a policy to ensure that conflicts are resolved quickly and effectively and that all staff and prisoners have ready access to constructive means of resolving conflicts that arise within the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC).

Authority

Legislation

Corrections Management Act 2007, section 14.

Policy

Principles

Conflicts in prisons can arise suddenly and for little apparent reason. This may simply be a reaction to stress and frustration, or could relate to events that have occurred outside the prison.

In a prison environment disputes can escalate rapidly. Instead of resorting to threats or violence, conflict between prisoners, or prisoners and staff, should be resolved (wherever possible):

- openly, promptly, and calmly;
- by negotiation and without the need for threat or overt pressure;
- in a manner that allows all concerned to have their say and feel heard; and
- by allowing dignity and self respect to be maintained.

Staff awareness

In their daily dealings with and observation of prisoners, corrections officers will become aware of current or potential conflicts between prisoners. Where these arise staff should:

- attempt to discuss the issues with either or both parties so as to understand the issues and seek to resolve the conflict. This should be done separately and privately. As some disputes arise from criminal activity, prisoner/s may refuse such offers;
- offer to mediate between the parties, or be present while the matter is discussed;

- ask the parties to identify a person whom they believe may help with the resolution of the conflict and if appropriate refer the matter to such a person. Prisoners should be encouraged to discuss matters with a staff member if appropriate;
- reinforce with all parties as frequently as possible that most disputes can be resolved, but that threats or violence will lead to disciplinary sanctions whatever the rights and wrongs of the matter; and/or
- seek to clarify with both parties exactly what they are seeking to achieve and what they think the other party is seeking to achieve.

Corrections officers who are aware of prisoners who are experiencing difficulty in resolving conflict appropriately should raise the possibility of an appropriate program with the prisoner and his/her case manager. This can be negotiated as part of the prisoner's rehabilitation plan.

Preventative action

While resolving the conflict is the most desirable aim, some conflicts present a serious risk to the security and good order of a correctional centre. Therefore, corrections officers will need to consider whether some form of preventative action is required.

This may involve (where the conflicting parties are prisoners):

- a change of accommodation location for one or more parties;
- transferring one or other party to the Management Unit; and/or
- disciplinary action against one or more parties.

These actions will be in accordance with the *Segregation Policy*, *Prisoner Discipline Policy* and *Schedule of Penalties*.

Disciplinary action

Corrections officers should be mindful that conflict resolution is not a substitute for disciplinary action. Behaviour that constitutes a disciplinary breach should be addressed in accordance with the *Prisoner Discipline Policy* and *Schedule of Penalties*. However, the conflict resolution process should be used as a parallel process to discuss the prisoner's conduct openly.

Peer Support

Corrections officers are to remain mindful that conflict can be stressful. The Peer Support team and Employee Assistance Program (EAP) are available should a corrections officer require emotional support.

Forms/templates

Nil

Related Policies/Procedures

Incident Response Policy
 Incident Report Policy
 Use of Force Policy
 Use of Force Procedure
 Segregation Policy

Prisoner Discipline Policy
Schedule of Penalties
Peer Support Policy