

# ABCs TO BOP

## AWARENESS BEFORE CONFINEMENT

**US. Probation  
Southern District of IL**

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This newsletter will provide useful information to defendants and their families preparing for a commitment to a federal prison facility. It is hoped that this information will reduce anxiety defendants feel, and create a positive transition for defendants and their families. This information is a summary of information obtained from the Bureau of Prisons. For more information, visit the Bureau of Prisons' website, [www.bop.gov](http://www.bop.gov).

The Mission of the U.S. Probation Office in the Southern District of Illinois is to strive for excellence as we serve the Courts and community by providing quality supervision, promoting community safety, inspiring positive changes in those we serve, and administering justice with fairness and integrity.

### CONVICTION

Upon conviction, either by plea or jury trial, the Court will decide if the defendant will be remanded to the custody to the U.S. Marshals Service, or be continued on bond. If remanded, the defendant will be placed in a local detention facility pending sentencing. If allowed to remain on bond, the Court may continue the bond as originally ordered, or impose additional conditions of release. Regarding Pretrial Services supervision, it is imperative that the defendant remain compliant with all conditions of release. Compliance with bond is evaluated by BOP. Defendants that are in full compliance with pretrial supervision may receive a lower security classification at time of designation.



# ABCs TO BOP

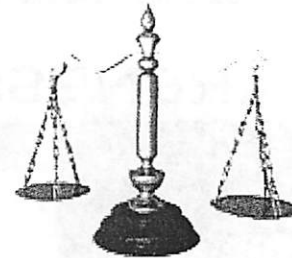
## CONVICTION CONT.

The Court will also order the U.S. Probation Office to prepare a Presentence Investigation Report. This report contains detailed information about the defendant's personal history, the offense conduct, and applicable statutes and sentencing guidelines. The Presentence Investigation Report will be submitted to the Court, the prosecuting attorney, and defense counsel, prior to sentencing. Defendants may either receive their own copy, or review the report with their attorney. The U.S. Probation Officer may request the defendant provide certain documents including marriage and birth certificates, divorce records, military records, financial information, tax return records, educational documents, verification of any medical conditions and medications, and the name and contact information of a person who can verify background information. Prior to the sentencing hearing, the defendant should consider which facility offers programming that interests him/her (i.e., vocational training, treatment, etc.).

If requesting specific institution placement, the defendant should be prepared to advise the Court and provide reasons supporting his/her request. The Court can make a recommendation for institutional placement; however, the Bureau of Prisons has the final determination.

## SENTENCING

At the sentencing hearing, the Court will determine what type of punitive measures the defendant will receive for committing his/her offense. If the Court sentences the defendant to a term of probation, the defendant will be required to report to the U.S. Probation Office immediately following the hearing. If a term of incarceration is imposed, the Court will again decide if the defendant will be remanded pending transfer to the Bureau of Prisons, or be continued on bond pending self-surrender.



If continued on bond, the defendant will be required to continue to report to his/her assigned officer. The U.S. Probation Office will continue to monitor and assist the defendant pending self-surrender.

## DESIGNATION AND SELF-SURRENDER

After sentencing, the Bureau of Prisons' Designation Center determines to which correctional facility the defendant will report. The Bureau of Prisons attempts to designate defendants to facilities matching their security and program needs within a 500-mile radius of their release residence. If the defendant is placed at an institution that is more than 500 miles from his/her release residence, generally, it is due to specific security, programming, or population concerns.



# ABCs TO BOP

## DESIGNATION AND SELF-SURRENDER, CONT.

**D**efendants are designated/re-designated to institutions based on:

- the level of security and staff supervision the defendant requires,
- the level of security and staff supervision the institution provides,
- the medical classification care level of the defendant and the care level of the institution,
- the defendant's program needs (e.g., substance abuse treatment, educational/vocational training, individual and/or group counseling, medical/mental health treatment), and
- various administrative factors (e.g., institution bed space capacity; the defendant's release residence; judicial recommendations; separation needs; and security measures needed to ensure protection of victims, witnesses, and the general public).

The designation process usually takes approximately two to six weeks after sentencing. The defendant is responsible for securing transportation to the designated facility. The defendant should contact his/her officer immediately if an emergency occurs and he/she is unable to self-surrender to Bureau of Prisons, as designated.

## TYPES OF FEDERAL FACILITIES

**A** defendant's security level is determined by the Bureau of Prisons based upon instant offense, prior record, history of violence, medical issues, and other factors and based upon the defendant's program needs. There are five different security levels in the Bureau of Prisons; minimum, low, medium, high, and administrative.

**Minimum:** Also known as Federal Prison Camps (FPC's), have low staff to inmate ratio, and no fences. These institutions have dormitory housing, are work and program oriented and may be adjacent to larger institutions or military base.

**Low:** Federal Correctional Institutions (FCI's) have double fenced perimeters, mostly dormitory housing, and strong work and program components.

**Medium:** FCI's have strengthened perimeters, cell-type housing, and wide variety of work and treatment programs.

**High:** Also known as United States Penitentiaries (USP's), have highly secure perimeters, multiple and single cell housing, highest staff to inmate ratio, close control of inmate.

**Administrative:** Facilities which have special missions, such as detention of non-citizens, medical facility, or dangerous or violent inmate.



# ABCs TO BOP

## TYPES OF FEDERAL FACILITIES, CONT.

Upon arrival at a new institution, an inmate is interviewed and screened by staff from the case management, medical, and mental health units. Later, an inmate is assigned to the Admission and Orientation (A&O) Program, where he or she receives a formal orientation to the programs, services, policies, and procedures of that facility. This program provides an introduction to all aspects of the institution. Research has conclusively demonstrated that participation in a variety of programs that teach marketable skills helps to reduce recidivism. Additionally, institution misconduct can be significantly reduced through programs that emphasize personal responsibility, respect, and tolerance of others. Accordingly, the Bureau of Prisons offers a wide variety of program opportunities for inmates that teach pro-social values and life skills. These programs include vocational training, the Life Connections Program, parenting programs, and job fairs.

## VISITATION IN THE BOP

BOP encourages visiting to help inmates maintain morale and ties with family members, friends, and others in the community. Inmates are permitted face-to-face visits with approved family and friends, and confidential visits with attorneys. Each institution schedules visiting hours, and inmates receive this information during the orientation process so they can advise family members and others as to how and when they can visit. Institutions may restrict visitation based on security concerns. All institutions have visiting hours on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays; and most have them at other times during the week. Individual prisons can set up evening hours. Institutions try to allow for families' special circumstances, such as the distance you have to travel or health problems. Staff can help with directions, including how to get there by public transportation when available; but there is no Government payment or reimbursement for transportation. Again, call the prison before you travel for a visit. The inmate you plan to visit should tell you what the hours are for that prison. By law, an inmate gets at least four hours of visiting time per month. Usually, the prison can provide more. The Warden can decide to restrict the length of visits or the number of people who can visit at once, to avoid overcrowding in the visiting room. Sometimes the prison may have to limit visiting per inmate to one day on a weekend, because it is the most popular time to visit.

**United States  
Probation Office  
Southern District of Illinois**



# ABCs TO BOP

## ELECTRONIC MESSAGING (E-MAIL)

Bureau of Prisons allows inmates housed at institutions operating the Trust Fund Limited Inmate Computer System (TRULINCS) access to electronic messaging. Electronic messaging through the use of e-mail allows for text only correspondence in a secured manner between inmates and the general public. In order to maintain security and the good order of our institutions, electronic messages are subject to monitoring.



## TELEPHONES

Bureau of Prisons extends telephone privileges to inmates to help maintain ties with families and other community contacts. Ordinarily, the inmate pays for the calls; but in some cases the receiving party pays. Limitations and conditions may be imposed upon an inmate's telephone privileges to ensure they are consistent with the Bureau of Prison's responsibilities. A notice is posted next to each telephone advising inmates that calls are monitored. Unmonitored calls to attorneys are permitted in certain circumstances. Third-party or other alternative calling arrangements are not permitted; this ensures inmates do not have the opportunity to use phones for criminal or other inappropriate purposes.

## WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

BOP encourages inmates to write to family, friends, and other community contacts to maintain these ties during incarceration. Inmate correspondence is classified as either "general" or "special" mail. "General" mail is opened and inspected by staff for both contraband and content that might threaten the security or good order of the institution. Incoming "special mail" is opened only in the presence of the inmate and is inspected for physical contraband and the qualification of any enclosures as special mail. The Program Statement on Correspondence should be consulted for a detailed discussion of "general" and "special" mail procedures. Inmates may also receive certain commercial publications from the community. The Bureau of Prisons permits an inmate to subscribe to or receive publications without prior approval as long as the incoming publication is not detrimental to the security, discipline, or good order of the institution, or facilitate criminal activity.



# ABCs TO BOP

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

For security, safety, and sanitation reasons, the Bureau of Prisons limits the amount of property (jewelry, photographs, books, magazines, etc.) inmates may have and the types of publications inmates can receive. The institution issues clothing, hygiene items, bedding, and provides laundry services. Inmates may purchase other personal care items, shoes, some recreational clothing, and some food items through the commissary. Civilian clothing (i.e., clothing not issued to the inmate or purchased by the inmate from the commissary) ordinarily is not authorized for the inmate. The only packages an inmate may receive from home are those containing release clothing. Release clothing packages may only be received with

prior approval by the inmate's unit team or authorized staff member within the last 30 days of confinement. Inmates may only possess those items they are authorized to retain upon admission to the institution, items issued by authorized staff, items purchased by the inmate from the commissary, or items purchased or received through approved channels (to include that approved for receipt by an authorized staff member or authorized by institution guidelines). All other items are considered contraband and will be seized and disposed of (destroyed, mailed out of the institution at the inmate's expense, etc.) in accordance with Bureau of Prisons regulations. Contraband that threatens the security of the institution may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution for the inmate.

## INMATE MONEY

Inmates' families and friends choosing to send inmates funds through the mail must send those funds to the following address:

Federal Bureau of Prisons  
Inmate Name  
Inmate Eight Digit Register Number  
Post Office Box 474701  
Des Moines, Iowa 50947-0001

The deposit must be in the form of a money order made out to the inmate's full committed name and complete eight digit register number. The Bureau of Prisons will return funds that do not have valid inmate information to the sender provided the envelope has an adequate return address. Personal checks and cash cannot be accepted for deposit. The sender's name and return address must appear on the upper left hand corner of the envelope to ensure that the funds can be returned to the sender in the event that they cannot be posted to the inmate's account. The deposit envelope must not contain any items intended for delivery to the inmate. The Bureau of Prisons shall dispose of all items included with the funds. In the event funds have been mailed but have not been received in the inmate's account and adequate time has passed for mail service to Des Moines, Iowa, the sender must initiate a tracer with the entity who sold them the money order to resolve any issues.



# ABCs TO BOP

## EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The Bureau of Prisons offers a variety of programs for inmates to acquire literacy and marketable skills to help them obtain employment after release. All institutions offer literacy classes, English as a Second Language, parenting classes, wellness education, adult continuing education, library services, and instruction in leisure-time activities. Inmates who do not have a high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate must participate in the literacy program for a minimum of 240 hours or until they obtain the GED. Non-English-speaking inmates must take English as a Second Language. Occupational and vocational training programs are based on the needs of the inmates, general labor market conditions, and institution labor force needs. An important component is on-the-job training, which inmates receive through institution job assignments and work in Federal Prison Industries.

The Bureau of Prisons also facilitates post-secondary education in vocational and occupationally-oriented areas. Some traditional college courses are available, but inmates are responsible for funding this course work. Parenting classes help inmates develop appropriate skills during incarceration. Recreation and wellness activities encourage healthy life styles and habits. Institution libraries carry a variety of fiction and nonfiction books, magazines, newspapers, and reference materials. Inmates also have access to legal materials to conduct legal research and prepare legal documents.

Through the Inmate Skills Development (ISD) initiative, the Bureau of Prisons is focusing on building the kinds of skills essential to successful reintegration — ranging from activities of daily living, such as budgeting, to cognitive skills, such as the ability to maintain self-control. Once fully implemented, the process will involve identifying inmate strengths and weaknesses using a standardized assessment tool, linking programs used to specific deficit areas, and tracking the inmate's progress on his/her individualized plan throughout incarceration. Developed in collaboration with other agencies, including the courts and probation, the Inmate Skills Development System (ISDS) — the automated, web-based, assessment and tracking tool that supports this initiative — was created to help staff identify an inmate's strengths and weaknesses, as these relate to release readiness. Once fully integrated with the Bureau of Prisons' legacy information system, the ISDS is expected to:

- help link inmates with the most appropriate programs given their specific needs,
- ensure all parties are focused on the same measurable outcomes,
- assist in program resource allocation, and
- improve information flow to partners with a stake in the outcome (the Courts, supervision agencies, etc.).



# ABCs TO BOP

## EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, CONT.

Dynamic in nature, this tool, which is gradually being rolled out to Bureau of Prisons institutions, incorporates information from a variety of sources, including court documents and behavioral observations. It is administered at the beginning of an inmate's sentence, with subsequent updates to the assessment information over the course of the inmate's incarceration, and can be shared via a web-based application with supervision agencies. By providing inmates with programs most appropriate to their identified deficit areas, the Bureau of Prisons anticipates that inmates will be better-prepared and more likely to succeed. This is expected to be particularly useful for those offenders with the greatest needs. Close inter- and intra-agency collaboration is essential to achieving optimal re-entry outcomes. A number of interagency initiatives are underway, the most comprehensive being the National Workforce Development

Partnership, which also includes representatives from the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor and Veterans Affairs; the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts; the Office of Probation and Pretrial Services; the National Institute of Corrections; the Legal Action Center - National Hire Network; and others. Providing a viable means of employment is to offenders being able to support themselves and succeed as law-abiding citizens; and this partnership is designed to enhance re-entry success by increasing opportunities for career-oriented employment of ex-offenders and addressing barriers to offender employment. The Bureau of Prisons is committed to the goal of creating a seamless transition between incarceration and the community for releasing offenders that ensures continuity of support and care. This coordinated, competency-based program is expected to help increase the likelihood of a successful community transition.

### FEMALE OFFENDERS

Of the 27 facilities that currently house female inmates, all have mixed populations except for the "Big Six" — Alderson, Bryan, Carswell, Danbury, Dublin, and Tallahassee (Dublin and Tallahassee each have a small male detention unit). For more information on women's facilities, see the website, [www.bop.gov](http://www.bop.gov).





# ABCs TO BOP

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

In Fiscal Year 1989, the Bureau of Prisons designed a comprehensive substance abuse treatment strategy in an effort to change inmates' criminal and drug-using behaviors. This strategy begins with drug abuse education and ends with a strong community transition component. Inmates are required to participate in a drug abuse education course if (1) there is evidence in their presentence investigation report that alcohol or drugs contributed to the commission of their instant offense; (2) they violated supervised release, parole, conditions of a halfway house placement, or conditions of home confinement based on alcohol or drug use; or (3) the sentencing judge recommended that they participate in a drug treatment program during incarceration. In the drug abuse education course, inmates receive information about alcohol and drugs and the physical, social, and psychological impact of abusing these substances. Inmates who are identified as having a further need for treatment are encouraged to participate in non-residential or residential drug abuse treatment. Non-residential drug abuse treatment and counseling are available at every Bureau of Prisons institution. Treatment includes individual and group therapy, group counseling, and the use of interactive cognitive restructuring treatment modules that provide skills-building activities and prepare inmates for their transition to the community. In addition, more than 50 Bureau of Prisons institutions have residential drug abuse treatment programs (RDAP). Inmates who participate in the residential program are housed together in a separate unit of the prison that is reserved for drug treatment. The residential program provides intensive half-

day programming, five days a week. The remainder of the day is spent in education, work skills training, and/or other inmate programming. Upon RDAP completion, aftercare treatment services are provided to the inmate while he/she is in the general population, and also later at the residential re-entry center. This maximizes the carry-over of skills, ensuring an effective transition from the institution program to the community. The 1994 Violent Crime Control Act provided a powerful incentive for inmates who volunteer to participate in the residential drug abuse program. Non-violent inmates who are diagnosed with a substance use disorder may be eligible for up to a year off his/her sentence, at the discretion of the Director of the Bureau of Prisons.

## HEALTH CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Bureau of Prisons provides essential medical, dental, and mental health (psychiatric) services by professional staff in a manner consistent with accepted community standards for a correctional environment. The Bureau of Prisons uses licensed and credentialed health care providers in its ambulatory care units, which are supported by community consultants and specialists. For inmates with chronic or acute medical conditions, the Bureau of Prisons operates several medical referral centers providing advanced care.



# ABCs TO BOP

## RELEASE PREPARATION

The prospect of having to search for meaningful work upon release from prison can be a daunting one, particularly for inmates who have been out of the labor market for a number of years. Many inmates acquire valuable work experience and skills through programs like Federal Prison Industries (FPI), vocational training opportunities, and/or other occupational education courses offered at Bureau of Prisons facilities. But inmates nearing release in today's society need to re-learn, or perhaps for the first time learn, how to effectively "search for a job." Although it is the Bureau of Prisons' philosophy that release preparation begins the first day of incarceration, focus on release preparation intensifies at least 18 months prior to release. The Release Preparation Program includes classes in areas such as resume writing, job search, and job retention. The program also includes presentations by community-based

organizations that help ex-inmates find jobs and training opportunities after release. The Bureau of Prisons places appropriate inmates in halfway houses prior to release to help them adjust to life in the community and find employment. Some inmates will be eligible for a release gratuity, clothing, or money for transportation to their release destination. The Inmate Transition Branch provides additional pre-release employment assistance. Many institutions hold mock job fairs to provide inmates an opportunity to practice job interview skills and to expose community recruiters to the skills available among releasing inmates. Qualified inmates may apply for jobs with companies that have posted job openings. This Branch also helps inmates prepare release folders that include a resume; education certificates, diplomas, and transcripts; and other significant documents needed for a successful job interview.

## NORTH CENTRAL REGION LOCATIONS

