OFFICE OF THE

OMBUDS FOR CORRECTIONS

Family and Friends of Incarcerated Group – MCF Shakopee

Meeting Agenda

- Introduction
- Group Overview and Guidelines
- Presentation and Reason
- DOC Staff Introductions
- Facility Updates
- Discussion and Questions

DOC Family Supports Unit

The **Family Supports Unit (FSU) Purpose: Supporting the incarcerated and impacted families as the point contact for critical concerns and navigating policies or processes. The FSU also coordinates family visitation or parent education programs.**

The FSU can:

- Child Support Navigation: Assist justice-impacted people in navigating the child support and paternity system.
- Community Resource Navigation: Assist justice-impacted people with researching and establishing connections with professionals & community partners.
- Facility Navigation Services: Assist justice-impacted people with parenting education programming.
  - Family-centered case plan that aligns with needs identified through assessment and the justice impacted-individual's desires.
- SHK Parenting Coordinator: Supports those who are pregnant in preparing for childbirth and helps mothers maintain their parental role while incarcerated.

Incarcerated individuals can contact facility navigators by using the DOC mailing.

Information about our unit can be found at Family Supports Unit / Department of Corrections

Family and Friends of Incarcerated Group

The DOC Family and Friends of Incarcerated Group is a collaboration between community partners and cross-agency partners to help strengthen support systems for justice impacted families and loved ones

The purpose of the group is to be a resource for families, friends and loved ones

Group Guidelines

- **Respectful:** Expectation of respectful conversations from **all** participants. Can be removed for disruptive, offensive, or threatening behaviors.
- **General:** Questions should be about process, conditions, and policies (type questions into the chat during presentation)
  - No discussions about specific incarcerated individuals but can ask general questions about how to or who to follow up on certain issues.
  - No discussion about courts/convictions.
- **Data practices:** Data is classified as private/confidential under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act Sec. 13.856 MN Statutes

Essential Information for Family/Friends

DOC Website (Public)

https://mn.gov/doc/

Facility Specific Information

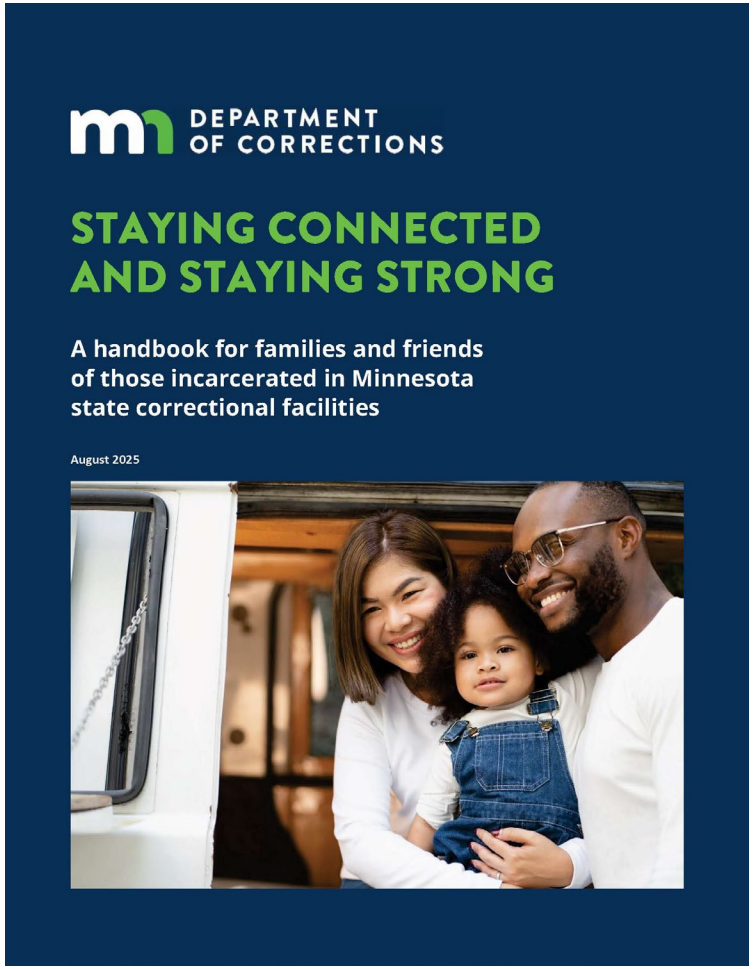
Each facility has their own page on the public website. MCF – Shakopee's page can be found at:
https://mn.gov/doc/facilities/shakopee/

DOC Friends and Family Handbook

Helps friends and family members know what to expect when someone in their lives are incarcerated. Includes:

- Facility locations and information
- Classification
- Staff
- Terms and Abbreviations
- Programming
- Property
- Financing
- Visiting
- Contacting loved ones

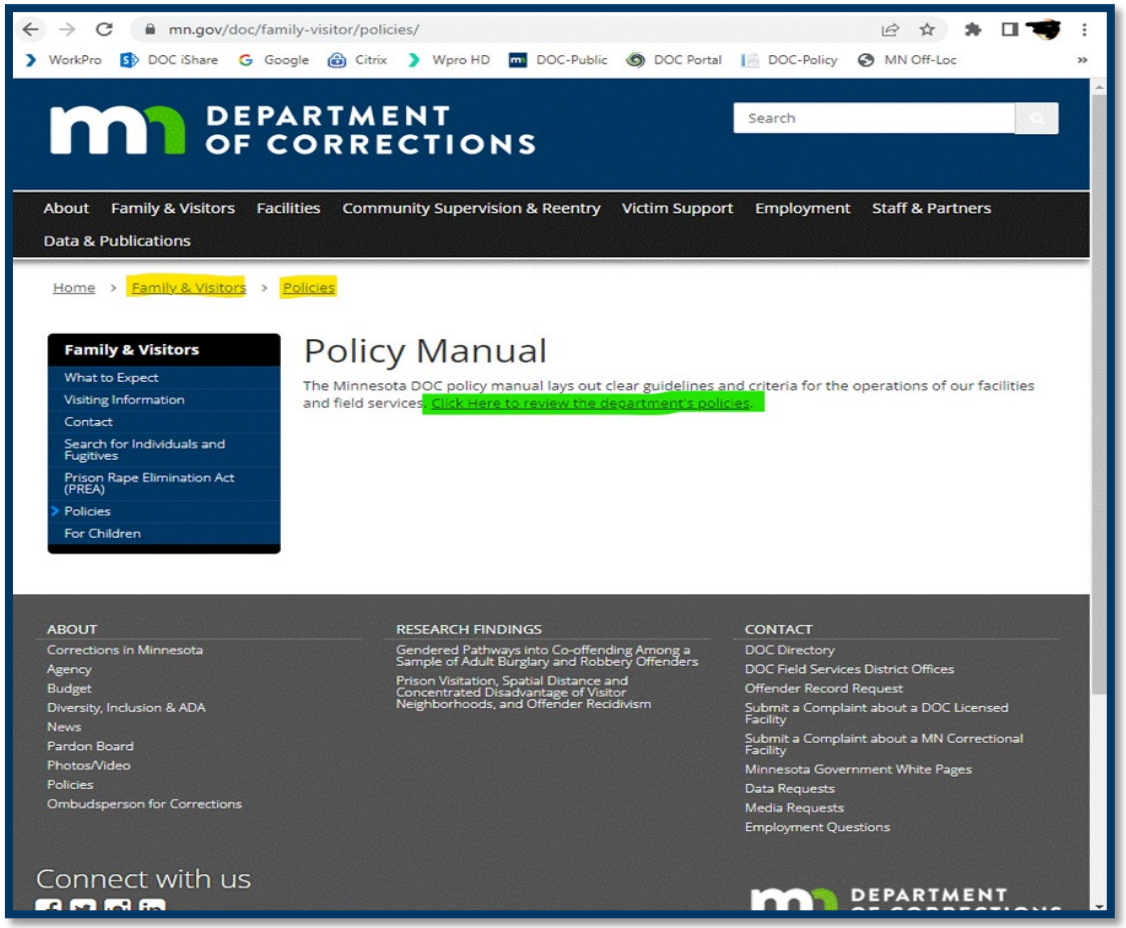
https://mn.gov/doc/assets/FriendsAndFamilyHandbook_08-25_ENGLISH_tcm1089-706844.pdf



DOC Policies and Procedures

Resource for understanding:

- Rules and requirements of those incarcerated.
- What is expected of your loved one while incarcerated.
- Specific information for loved ones regarding every aspect of incarcerated life and DOC management of those incarcerated.



Intake – First Days at MCF – Shakopee

- Health Services Screening within 24 hours of arrival to the facility
- Behavioral Health Screening within 14 calendar days
- Property Inventory
- ID special needs/concerns, emergency contact
- Five-day orientation
- Begin case management, learn classification and their MNSTARR score
- Programming, employment
- PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act)
- Many more

New intakes have immediate access to phones during this time.

Visiting for Family and Friends

Important to know the rules and what to expect prior to your visit for the incarcerated person and for you as the visitor. https://mn.gov/doc/family-visitor/visiting-information/

- **Apply:** Must be approved on someone's visiting list.
  - A criminal history check will be completed (having a history does not automatically mean you're not approved).
  - All applications are completed online and processed at **MCF-Rush City**, regardless of where housed.
  - Your loved one will get a notice when you are approved. The incarcerated person will need to inform you when you're approved. Staff cannot confirm that over the phone.

- Visitation Policy: 320.010 Visiting
- Important to be aware that different rules apply if someone is in restrictive housing.

Visiting Rules and Regulations

Items not allowed during visits

- Prohibited items lock in locker or your vehicle
- Cell phones/cameras/video cameras
- If staff suspect you are under the Influence of drugs/alcohol you will be asked to leave, and your visit will be denied.

Searches

- All visitors must submit to a security check such as a metal detector, hand-held wand, and/or pat search
- All clothing must pass metal detection to be admitted (includes under-wire bras)
- Clothing types, clothing length, clothing styles, etc., are limited for security purposes. Conservative dress that is not revealing is required. See Statewide Visiting Guidelines
- Failure to comply will result in denial of visit

Mentor Program

- Living Units at MCF – Shakopee have **Reception and Orientation Mentors** among the incarcerated population
- Mentors can assist newly incarcerated persons in navigating issues that arise such as:
  - Chain of command
  - Making phone calls
  - How to send a kite
  - And/or just be someone to listen/talk to

Case Managers and Release of Information (ROI)

Case Managers - All incarcerated persons are appointed an onsite case manager who:

- Are a first line of contact for loved ones; however, cannot share private or confidential information. Find case manager at: https://coms.doc.state.mn.us/PublicViewer/
- Are the liaison between various departmental processes and the incarcerated person.

Release of Information (ROI):

- In appropriate situations, an ROI can be signed which allows the DOC to share some information with a family member regarding the incarcerated individual. This request must be initiated by the incarcerated individual.

Internal Processes

- **Chain of Command:** Every facility has a chain of command that incarcerated individuals must follow for any questions or needs that arise.
- **Grievances:** Each facility also has a grievance process whereby incarcerated individuals can file a grievance with the facility or the DOC if they do not agree with a decision that affects them
- **Self-advocacy:** It is critical that incarcerated individuals be able to advocate for themselves when it comes to their needs. Encourage your loved ones to follow these internal processes, as opposed to your incarcerated loved one asking you to call the facility on their behalf. It's more effective and more efficient. Additionally, it is required if they later wish to pursue legal action.

Facility Updates from Shakopee DOC Staff

Questions

- Questions should be about process, conditions, and policies
- No discussions about specific incarcerated individuals but can ask general questions about how to or who to follow up on certain issues.
- No discussion about courts/convictions.

Contact Information

DOC – Family Supports Unit

- familysupportsunit.doc@state.mn.us
- Or 651-361-7133

Earl Miller, Director

MCF – Shakopee

- MCF-Shakopee.doc@state.mn.us
- Or 952-496-4440 Main facility number

Kathy Halvorson, Warden

Next Meeting: *TBA*