



Care and Custody

QUICK FACTS

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) administers federal sentences through reasonable, safe, secure and humane custody that includes a wide range of activities to address the health and safety needs of offenders.

New federal inmates are initially admitted to a regional intake assessment unit. During assessment, the offender comes into contact with a multidisciplinary team of CSC employees that specializes in creating a correctional plan for the offender. These professionals determine a security level classification for the offender – maximum, medium or minimum – based primarily on institutional adjustment, escape risk and public safety. This classification is periodically reviewed throughout the sentence.

TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS

Maximum-security institutions house offenders who pose a serious risk to staff, other offenders and/or to the community. The perimeter of these institutions is well defined, highly secure and controlled. Inmate movement is strictly controlled within.

Medium-security institutions house offenders who pose a moderate risk to the safety of staff and the community. The perimeter is well defined, secure and controlled. Inmates have more freedom to move within the facility to attend programs and work/leisure-related activities.

Minimum-security institutions house offenders who pose a low risk to staff and the community. The perimeter of a minimum-security institution is defined but not directly controlled. Many offenders are on work-release programs that allow them to hold jobs during the day.

Multi-level security institutions combine the features of two or more security levels.

The **Special Handling Unit (SHU)** is a unique facility dealing exclusively with maximum-security offenders identified as particularly disruptive and a danger either to staff or other inmates. The goal of the SHU is to prepare these offenders to return to maximum-security institutions by placing them in programs that target violent behaviour.

Healing lodges are specially designed to accommodate the needs of minimum-security Aboriginal offenders, based on the principles, philosophy and teachings of the Aboriginal way of life. There are two distinct types of healing lodges, the first being an Aboriginal community-based correctional facility in which the community has entered into an agreement with the Minister of Public Safety for the provision of correctional care and custody to Aboriginal and sometimes non-Aboriginal offenders. The second type is located on CSC property and run by CSC with the assistance of the Aboriginal community.

Community correctional centres are designated as minimum-security institutions and house offenders who are primarily on day parole. The facility director, parole officers and support staff work, often in co-operation with community partners, to supervise and provide programs for offenders and prepare them for full parole.

Women offenders are incarcerated in five regional institutions exclusively for women. Typically they are housed in living units that accommodate 2-4 persons. Their movement, association and privileges are designed to give them freedom to pursue educational and training opportunities within the grounds of the institution. Women with serious behavioral issues may be confined to a “secure unit” within the larger institution.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Additional information about federal corrections in Canada is available on CSC's Web site at www.csc-scc.gc.ca.

January 2010

