

SIFC Meeting 12-8-2017

I. Old Business:

A. Drug Interdiction

Currently the low dose X-ray backscatter technology is used at all prisons. This process only involves inmates (not visitors) and is used for entry/exits as inmates visit and work. This is not a pilot program and no outcome data is available.

The EDDE technology formerly used for visitors (ion scanners) is now only used for mail, packages, and certain inmate screens within the prison. If an inmate has a positive screen (drug detected), any disciplinary action requires confirmation with urine test.

Two canine units (a unit is one dog and one handler) are planned at each prison. Currently 21 prisons have at least one unit.

Metal detectors have been re-calibrated for visitor entry. If a family member cannot pass this screen, the policy states that the visitor then will be hand-wanded by visiting staff.

B. Update on J-Pay Tablets

A pilot is running involving 5 prisons: SATF, High Desert (C Yard), CIW, CCWF, and KVSP (C Yard). It will run through May, 2019. No new prisons will be added before that time because pilot programs cannot be implemented for more than 10% of the total prison population. Inmates and families are very pleased with the program which includes E-mails, video games, and books. Soon, movies will be added for download similar to Netflix or Redbox.

C. Family Visiting Update

The turn-around time for family visits at most prisons is under 90 days despite increases in the number of inmates eligible for family visits. Repair of visiting units continues; budget is limited.

SIFC requested a report listing the number of family visiting units per prison. Updated family visiting regulations are in final stakeholder review and are expected to be released within the next few weeks.

D. SIFC Update

To date SIFC website (www.statewide-IFC.com) has had over 357,000 views. People use this site to find package companies as well as to get information about family visits, going home resources, and visiting regulations. There are links to relevant CDCR website pages for further information.

Currently SIFC is distributing a survey to local IFC's to determine their needs. If you are a local IFC Chair and have not participated in this survey, please contact SIFC through their website for a survey or follow up with your Ombudsman.

E. Work Groups

1. VPASS/Visiting

SIFC members, local IFC guests, and CDCR administrators have participated in a group focused on making VPASS easier to use. In the near future, a short online survey will be available when you make a VPASS appointment. Please participate. Due to positive changes made through this group, decision was made to broaden the work group to include other visitor issues. The next topic will be vending. At today's meeting a representative from the Department of Rehabilitation was present. This agency hires vendors. She reported that the cashless vending pilot is currently on hold and vending machines will be replaced according to formerly used set schedule.

2. In the past, SIFC has participated in a Medical workgroup and we request that process continue. The Medical Ombudsman, Eric Joe, has been given responsibility for more prisons. His scope of review includes CHCF, SAC, CMF, RJD, and CMF. There is current recruitment for the position of Medical Communications Director. This administrator Chaired the Medical Workgroup in the past.

F. Programming Yards – overcrowding, program availability, classification changes, inmate transfers

1. San Quentin will be the next prison converted to a non-designated facility. The whole prison, except Condemned, will be a Level II, non-designated programming facility..
2. Although the state prison census is below required numbers, there are still some prisons that are overcrowded due to several factors. One factor is Medical Transports. With staff diversion for medical transport, programs are shut down.
3. Division of Rehabilitation Programs is working cooperatively with California colleges to provide more face-to-face college classes. Rand Corporation did an analysis that showed that college education is effective in reducing recidivism. 34 of 35 prisons have some face-to-face classes accredited for 2-year degree.
4. There is a pilot of the National Pell Program with CSULA and LAC for a 4 year face-to-face program. If inmates are interested in this program, they should speak with their counselor and ask for a transfer.

G. Inmate Welfare Fund-Collaboration among stakeholders (Inmate Councils and IFC's)

A few prisons hold yearly meetings between stakeholders while most depend on administrators relaying needs of each group. SIFC supports face to face meetings between stakeholders. Central CDCR administration is not prohibiting that, but arrangements must be made locally. It is up to individual wardens, so local IFC need to address this issue locally.

The Finance Office agreed to provide quarterly IWF expenditure reports at the end of the year. Thanks for that effort.

H. Proposition 57 Implementation – availability of programs

There has been a temporary pause in awarding Educational Credits (Milestones) for certain classes. CDCR is working to get all credits awarded as quickly as possible. This is a temporary restriction; any credit earned is not lost.

There is a Public Comment period for the Proposition 57 implementations that runs through December 29, 2017. Please make comments!

II. New Business

A.GTL Issues – is there flexibility to minimize message interruption during calls?

Recorded reminders are mandated by law to let parties know that their call is being recorded. The final 30 second notification may not be mandated. SIFC requested removal of that message and this request will be reviewed.

Phone rates and charges are the same for CDCR prisons and contract facilities. There may be a \$3.00 reloading fee for adding funds if the wrong GTL number is called. CDCR will review this complaint and provide SIFC with appropriate numbers to call.