

Government of West Bengal

Directorate of Correctional Services

No.1669/IG/10

Dated. 01.07.10

Role & Functions of the Psychologist

Six posts of Clinical Psychologists (on contract) have been created for six central correctional homes of West Bengal vide Jails Deptt Notification No. 1316-Jails dated 01.12.09. These posts have been sanctioned in addition to the already existing posts of Receptionist Psychologist and Assistant Psychologist. Following will be the role and functions of the Psychologists appointed to correctional homes of the State henceforth irrespective of their appointment on permanent or contractual basis :

1. A Psychologist's primary mission is to identify the inmates with mental or adjustment problems and assist in offender correction, rehabilitation, and reintegration with the help of Psychometry and Counselling. Additionally, the Psychologist enhances staff and inmate safety by promoting a healthy institutional environment.
2. **Role of the Psychologist:** The psychologists have the important role of developing intervention techniques and treatment programmes for use with both under-trial prisoners as well as with convicts. They are to develop one-to-one or group treatment programmes to specifically address offending behaviour and psychological need, for example, to manage depression, anger or anxiety. They have a critical role in the assessment of offenders are to provide support and training to the correctional staff. Research is a further element of their work, as is presenting evidence in courts and advising parole boards and review boards considering cases for release of prisoners.
3. **Relations with correctional staff:** Using the expertise based on psychological theories and research, the Psychologist shall work closely with the Superintendent, Chief Controller, Welfare Officer, Medical Officer and other staff of the correctional home as well as with professionals and agencies both in the assessment and treatment of individuals.
4. **Relations with NGOs working in the correctional home:** The Psychologist will work in close association with the volunteers / activists of those NGOs who have been allowed to work in the field of mental health or for psychological assistance to prisoners as and when required. He / She should particularly take the help of such NGOs in the treatment or counseling for prevention of suicide, behaviour modification and de-addiction as also for any psychological support needed to be provided to the family of the prisoner in the interest of prisoner's mental health.
5. **Functions & duties:** Following will be the duties and functions of the Psychologist :
 - a) **Case table:** The Psychologist will attend the case table of the Superintendent of the Superintendent of the correctional home held everyday for the classification etc of the newly admitted prisoners to the correctional home as per provisions of Chapter V of the West Bengal Correctional Services Act, 1992 and Chapter IX of the West Bengal Jail Code. The main objective is preliminary identification of convicts and under trial prisoners who may need the care and attention of the Psychologist during their stay in the correctional home. The Psychologist will officer views regarding suitability of labour/punishment given by the Chief Controller/Superintendent and record the same in the History Ticket of the inmate.

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- b) **Weekly parade of Superintendent:** The Psychologist will accompany the Superintendent during the weekly parade of the prisoners as provided for in Rule 79 and 646 of the West Bengal Jail Code and keep a note of any prisoners who need to be interviewed with a view to identify if the prisoner requires the care and support of the Psychologist. The Superintendent, the Chief Controller, Welfare Officer, Medical officer and other staff of the correctional home shall also refer any case of a prisoner who has emotional or psychological problems, to the Psychologist, during such parades.
- c) **Inspection of Medical Officer:** The Psychologist must be present during the Inspection of the prisoners received in a correctional home by the Medical Officer as per Section 18(4) of the West Bengal Correctional Services Act, 1992 and Rule 95 of the Jail Code, with the objective of identification of prisoners who may require the care and attention of the Psychologist;
- d) **Weekly inspection of prisoners:** The Psychologist shall remain present during the inspection of all the prisoners once a week at the general parade by the Medical Officer in terms of Rule 95 of the West Bengal Jail Code. During such inspection, if the Psychologist is of the opinion that the mental health of any prisoner is being affected due to his employment in any kind or class of labour, or for any other reason, he/she shall report the case in writing to the Medical Officer and the Superintendent, accompanied by such suggestions as he/she may think the case requires. On receipt of the report, the Superintendent shall record such opinion in the prisoner's history ticket and such prisoner shall not be employed in that work, but shall be placed on such other kind or class of labour as the Superintendent may consider suited for him.
- e) **Mental injury etc:** Whenever the Psychologist shall have reason to believe that either the mind or the body of a prisoner is likely to be injuriously affected by the discipline or treatment observed in the prison he/she shall, after careful scrutiny (as convicts are prone to feign insanity), report the case in writing to the Medical Officer and the Superintendent, accompanied by such suggestions as he/she may think the case requires.
- f) **Visit to cells:** The Psychologist shall periodically visit all prisoners confined in cells and examine the general condition of confinement and keep the Superintendent and the Chief Controller of the correctional home informed of any matter that the Psychologist feels is having an adverse effect on the mental health of a prisoner who has been confined in cell;
- g) **Examination of History Sheets:** The Psychologist shall examine the History Sheet of the prisoners prepared vide Rule 549 of the Jail Code and identify cases of violent behaviour, suicidal tendencies, depression etc and take necessary action to interview them for their treatment etc. Where necessary, he/she shall make necessary entries in the History Sheets of the prisoners who have been observed for any behaviour which requires constant attention of the correctional staff as is done by the Medical officer vide Rule 553 of the Jail Code;
- h) **Solitary confinement:** The Psychologist shall examine all cases of solitary confinement as laid down in Chapter XII of the West Bengal Jail Code and shall record his/her observations in cases where a prisoner should not undergo solitary confinement, which will be a supplement to the observations of the Medical Officer as per Rule 562 of the Jail Code;

i) **Cases of prisoners due for release:** The Psychologist must examine the prisoners due for release from the correctional home as laid down in Chapter XIII of the Jail Code and shall record his/her observations regarding any prisoner who is under treatment for any psychological disorder.

j) **Cases of prisoners to be placed before Review Boards:** The Superintendent of correctional home shall in addition to the report of the Medical Officer obtain a report from the Psychologist about prisoners whose case for release are to be placed before the State Sentence Review Board.

k) **Transfer of mentally ill prisoners:** The Psychologist will take steps for proper treatment of mentally ill prisoners both inside the correctional home as well as in outside institutions where proper treatment can be provided.

l) Personal counseling and therapy of prisoners in correctional settings :

The Psychologists will do personal counseling and therapy of prisoners by:-

- i) carrying out one-to-one assessment to assess the risk of reoffending (e.g. for lifers being released into the community or sex offenders after a treatment programme) or of suicide, self-injury or other high risk behaviour;
- ii) dealing with emotional and psychological problems of the prisoners;
- iii) providing counseling to prisoners facing problems of adjustment within the correctional home and in relation to their families outside;
- iv) helping the prisoners develop their self-image, self-confidence and motivation for correctional treatment;
- v) advising the correctional personnel on incidents inside and outside correctional homes involving prisoners;
- vi) developing and evaluating the contribution of assessment test / techniques of psychometry;
- vii) checking and monitoring treatment groups to ensure standards and quality;
- viii) assisting in the training of correctional personnel;
- ix) preparing risk assessment reports of prisoners;
- x) overseeing the provision of support during serious incidents; hostage negotiation;
- xi) liaising with and providing consultancy to hospital staff, correctional officers, social workers working in the correctional homes, probation officers, representatives of the judiciary and legal system;
- xii) associating in case study notes and court work, including attendance and providing expert testimony in connection with parole of prisoners, as well as release of prisoners by the Review Board;
- xiii) requiring attendance of the family members of the prisoners at the correctional home through the correctional home authorities, if required, for counseling in the interest of prisoner's treatment or behaviour modification

6. Reports & Registers:

- a. The Psychologist will maintain a Register of Psychological Screening & Report of Inmates containing information of the prisoners interviewed by him / her in the proforma given in Appendix-A.
- b. There will be an 'Interview Schedule' in prescribed proforma for use by the Psychologists in each case. The particulars obtained from a prisoner, during interview shall be entered in the proforma (Interview Schedule) as per Appendix-B.
- c. The Register and the Forms containing particulars obtained during interviews are confidential documents and shall remain in the personal custody of the Psychologist. The register and the Interview forms shall be shown to the Superintendent, Chief Controller and the Medical Officer of a Correctional Home. The Deputy Inspector General, Additional Inspector General and the Inspector General during their visit to the Correctional Home can also be shown the Registers for their information.
- d. A monthly extract of the prisoners interviewed, counseled etc shall be maintained in a separate Register containing the following information:

Month & Year		
1	No of prisoners interviewed	UTP's / Convicts
2	No of prisoners counseled	Individual /Group Counseling
3	No of prisoners referred to outside institutions for psychiatric evolution & treatment	
4	No of prisoners observed to be violent, depressed or having suicidal tendencies	UTP's / Convicts
5	No of cases in which reports prepared for parole, pre-mature release and for consideration by Review Boards	Parole / Pre-mature Release

7. **Personal counseling of staff showing aberrant behaviour:** The Psychologist will provide counseling to officers and guarding staff of the correctional home who show aberrant behaviour during discharge of duty or at home on being referred to him by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent will make available an office suited for the purpose of personal counseling by the Psychologist where personal counseling can be done on one to one basis without any hindrance. It should be preferably located at a calm and quiet place with appropriate illumination and ventilation.

The Register of Psychological Screening & Report of Inmates and the 'Interview Schedule' can be obtained on requisition from Alipore Central Correctional Home Press.

The Superintendents of correctional homes with the sanction of the posts of Clinical Psychologists / Receptionist Psychologist / Assistant Psychologist will ensure that the above guidelines are strictly complied with in their correctional home with effect from 01.07.10.

(B.D.Sharma, IPS)
ADGP & IG of Correctional Services
West Bengal

No. 1669/1(14)/IG/10 Dated. 01.07.10**Copy to:**

1. Superintendents of Central Correctional Homes.
2. Chief Medical Officer, Directorate of Correctional Services.
3. Senior Medical Officers of Central Correctional Homes.
4. Manager, Press & Forms.

.....for information and necessary action.

(B.D.Sharma, IPS)
ADGP & IG of Correctional Services
West Bengal

No. 1669/2(10)/IG/10 Dated. 01.07.10**Copy to:**

1. All AIsG of CS and DIsG of CS, West Bengal.
.....for information and ensuring compliance.
2. Sri S.Ramakrishnan, IPS (Retd), OSD (Trg) & Director, WBICA,,,,,,for information.

(B.D.Sharma, IPS)
ADGP & IG of Correctional Services
West Bengal

No. 1669/3(2)/IG/10 Dated. 01.07.10**Copy to:**

1. PS to MIC, Deptt of Correctional Administration.for kind information of Hon'ble MIC.
2. Addl. Chief Secretary, Home & Deptt of Correctional Administration. ...for kind information.

(B.D.Sharma, IPS)
ADGP & IG of Correctional Services
West Bengal