



JJPOC Commissary Subgroup Meeting

JUNE 15TH, 2022

9:30 AM- 11:00 AM

Web-Based Meeting – Zoom

THIS MEETING DOES NOT CONTAIN A PRESENTATION- DISCUSSIONS AND UPDATES

Meeting Summary:

1. Review last 2 recommendations

- Noting that legislation was passed last session on accessibility and availability of feminine hygiene products
- One recommendation is enhanced quality control, meaning expanding the quality of hygiene products and having annual surveys about quality of products, there was acknowledgement that this would have a monetary component attached
- Another recommendation is increased opportunities for education, employment, and programming, creating structured pay scale, increasing pay, and more, this would also include extra monetary assistance
- Reminder that this group is focusing on the 15–17-year old's first then moving to the 18–21-year-old population

2. Review and discuss DOC policy brochure

- It was noted that DOC already has policies and procedures written about commissary procedures, so the recommendation was to create an information form that was clear and accessible
- The workgroup has received first draft of the information form
- The form gives information about the schedule, distribution, how to receive commissary, spending limit, return policy, warranty info, and loss of commissary
- There were questions about how inmates' makeup commissary pickup and ordering as it is not stated on the form, it was clarified that there is a process for makeups, but it is not clarified on the form
- DOC stated that there needs to be flexibility on what day is a makeup day, some were asking if info on makeups should be on the form



- Clarification was needed on how inmates ask for the forms and if the form can just be available in a common area, it was explained that hoarding of forms can become an issue, so they are individually handed out
- It was asked how the process of getting items approved by the property officer works, since inmates have property allotments that are stated on their property matrix, property officers compare the matrix to what they have ordered to ensure they haven't exceeded the limit of items
- It was supported that the information on makeup days should be added to this form
- When an inmate is admitted into the facility they receive identification right away, this was clarified after it was asked how new inmates order commissary with their IDs
- It was stated that there should be clarification about what property officer's role in and stating the approval standard
- The weekly spending limit is \$75 per inmate per week, this does not include property items, the commission approved a spending limit of \$100 yesterday
- It was asked what people are spending this money on, it is anything on the bubble sheet, it was noted that the amount seems like a high limit, clarified that some chose not to go to go to chow, so they use commissary as main food, commissary is also used as currency in some cases
- It was suggested that there could be parameters put around the amount that youth can order to mitigate bartering system
- Some were unaware that youth could decline to get regular meals and just eat commissary, it was noted that this usually is not seen in youth facilities because they must meet specific nutrition requirement
- It was thought that this form seems to apply to DOC as a whole, it was asked if one could be made just for youth, however DOC does not want to cause issues by specifying differences for youth and adults
- The broader issue is that they are youth are in the adult facility and they have to deal with the bartering of commissary items
- People probably will not get on board with the commissary for youthful offenders being banned, but by providing everyone with the same items with an incentive-based system would reduce the haves and have nots, therefore reducing extortion problems
- People feel that the form is good, but commissary is still becoming an issue, so it is clear there still needs to be some change
- It was asked if this would be an issue at YCI if changes were made for youth commissary, this would be to be brought up with the warden, but if it is codified in policy, it is not thought that it would be a problem



- At the community council, the members expressed that just being given a stipend would be helpful, but DOC is concerned that bartering would continue
- In terms of the 15–17-year-old population, they barter and take things that seem better than what they have which has been an issue
- It is important that when looking at the policy recommendations the group should also look at how extortion opportunities could arise
- There have been many issues recently within the youth facilities of youth bartering and hoarding name brand items
- Some were not clear on DOCs position about evening commissary opportunities out, it was specified that DOC would prefer to have a package of allotted goods to reduce the lopsidedness of opportunities
- DOC noted that they are seeing the benefit of leveling the playing field with phones, they feel the same would happen if there was an allotment of goods and a positive behavior intervention system was implemented, they feel that this would create better behavior and less extortion, everyone is on the same page with this idea
- As they are developing training for positive behavior incentive what does that look like when a part of commissary – don't know yet but concerns about how it could be funded
- It was asked if it would be possible to get an outline of the policies on makeup days, generally what is the process, this is possible, and the information could also be added to the form
- DOC state that for the allotment of goods monetary support from outside the facility would be needed
- It was asked if recreational items on the tablet were purchased using the same funds as commissary, they are not purchased through the same system, so they are not relevant in this conversation
- If the group is looking to go towards the route of creating an allotment of goods, there would need to be a fiscal analysis done
- It was expressed that the other recommendations such as youth in solitary confinement be include in commissary, religious food accommodations, and healthier foods, should not fall through the cracks as they are still important issues
- There were questions regarding the availability of items from Keefe, if the healthier items that this workgroup is asking for are even available and if not, should DOC look at what different states are offering or potentially a new contract with another vendor
- The group needs to specify what are they looking form in terms of healthier items, storage of fresh food items would create problems so that may not be a possibility



- It was noted that in residential centers, fresh fruits are offered daily with meals and snacks, but there are no fresh items in the store
- Potentially the group could pull the nutritionist into the conversation to see what prepackaged nutritious items there are for the youth
- In the survey many youths were asking for special items like acne cream, sugar free items, health care items, and generally higher quality products
- It was asked if Keefe provides alternative options and how would they satisfy requests from the youth if they do not have those items
- Many think it is more about the quality of the products, for example the items individuals receive in an indigent bag are lower quantity and quality than what can be ordered normally
- When talking about the food piece talking to nutritionist about maybe, asking why youth supplementing are so much with commissary items
- Items in the indigent bag are separate items that cannot be ordered through the commissary list
- Since the quality and amount in the indigent bags is an issue, the group would like higher quality items to be provided, DOC stated that this would be hard since cost is an issue as it would be a department wide change
- To avoid a department wide change, since that would complicate the request, maybe there could be a specific indigent bag for youth that is called something different, it would offer the high-quality items that they need
- The name of the bag would be changed, and the policy could specify that youth with less than a certain amount of money in their accounts would receive this bag, this would have to be discussed further with DOC
- In detention these bags are called care packages or hygiene bags not usually using the word indigent, although it is still known that these are indigent bags
- It was noted that language matter of how people view themselves, for youth it would create a negative self-image being labeled indigent, which is why changing the quality and name of these bags is needed

3. Next steps

- Send out National Query Summary
- Send out an email with some next steps for everyone to review
- Hopefully at the July meeting having answers about the change in indigent bags from DOC
- Fiscal analysis of the allotment of goods
- Putting out a request for the nutritionist to attend the next meeting
- Finding a time towards the end of the summer or when all ideas and recommendations are out together to meet with the community council

Next Meeting: