

10 March 2020

C118571

Moka Harris
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Tēnā koe Moka

Thank you for your email of 11 February 2020, requesting information about a review of file notes and concerns regarding female staff working in male prisons. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested:

How does an inmate overturn bad file notes?

A key factor in managing prisoners is how well we record, manage and share the information we hold about them. All staff are required to record all relevant interactions when they occur and ensure they are entered onto Integrated Offender Management System (IOMS). File notes should be recorded as soon as practicably possible after interaction. File notes are important as they are a record of what action staff have taken in respect to an individuals circumstances and situation.

If prisoners have any concerns regarding the quality or accuracy of their case notes these concerns should be raised with the Principal Corrections Officer (PCO) of their unit in the first instance. People no longer under Corrections' management can request a review of their files via the Prison Director of the prison from which they were released. Corrections is committed to having the most up-to-date information and endeavour to ensure all recorded information is accurate. Under Principle 7 of the Privacy Act 1993, individuals have the right to request correction of their personal information. Alternatively, a statement can be added to their file identifying any correction they have requested, if Corrections does not agree to change our records.

Further information is available on our website at:
www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/Communication/C-04-Prisoner-internal-information

You requested:

Why are female staff able to see/watch male inmates showering, and able to file note when the inmates make a stand toward this?

Please be assured, there are no instructions stating that prison staff should watch prisoners showering, unless they are alerted to an incident occurring, in which case they have a duty to respond. If a prisoner has any concerns regarding their management in prison, they should raise the matter with prison staff in the first instance. As advised above, prison staff are required to note all relevant interactions with prisoners, including those where prisoners advise of their concerns regarding their management.

Corrections demands a high standard of conduct from all employees, and staff are expected to role model positive law-abiding behaviour. The overwhelming majority of our staff fulfil their duties with integrity and commitment, in what is often a pressured and challenging environment.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi nui

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized, flowing line that starts with a small loop and ends with a long, horizontal tail.

Rachel Leota
National Commissioner