

Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures

16.7 Interview room security

Policy summary

Offices and interview rooms in correctional facilities may be used by Corrective Services NSW staff and other professional staff and visitors to interview inmates.

The risks associated with the use of offices and interview rooms in correctional facilities for inmate/staff and or professional interviews must be assessed and action taken to minimise or eliminate the risks.

Management of Public Correctional Centres Service Specifications

Service specifications	Safety and security
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Scope

This policy applies to all correctional facilities, transitional centres, court cells and other restricted facilities administered by Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW), and all CSNSW employees.

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1 Interview room security

1.1 Policy

The Manager of Security (MOS) or Functional Manager (FM) must regularly review the risks associated with inmate/staff and/or professional interviews and when necessary take action to minimise or eliminate the risks. Correctional Centre managers must implement a Local Operating Procedures (LOP) that ensures the safety of staff and others whilst undertaking inmate interviews. The private nature of interviews with inmates carry a risk that misconduct or violence can occur without detection.

The LOP: *Interview room security* must identify how supervision and monitoring of these types of interviews will be managed. This may include but is not limited to interviews being conducted in rooms fitted with CCTV, or assigning a position in a correctional centre to patrol inmate interview spaces at irregular intervals.

Privacy and privileged communication between interviewers and inmates is to be maintained in the following interview categories:

- Medical consultations
- Inspector of Custodial Services
- Intelligence
- Threat assessments
- Legal and Police

The above type of interviews still allow staff supervision or monitoring via observation windows and/or CCTV.

If the doors or walls of an office or interview room in a correctional facility are not manufactured from clear glass with an unobstructed view into the room, the doors must be modified to include an observation window (ideally 45cm x 45cm, but at a minimum 12% of the area of the door) at a height that allows staff to view inside the room or office. Under no circumstances is the observation window to be covered.

1.2 Arrangement of furniture

Furniture in an interview room should be arranged so that the interviewer can be seated closest to the door with the inmate sitting opposite behind a desk or table. This will maximise the safety of staff and other personnel.

1.3 Door locks

Rooms and offices used for interviews with inmates are never to be locked during an interview. This allows other staff to respond if an incident occurs during the interview.

1.4 Duress alarms

If the interview room or office is regularly used to interview inmates, a risk assessment must be undertaken to consider installing a permanent, fixed duress alarm. A fixed duress alarm button must be within immediate reach and be readily accessible to the interviewer.

If no fixed duress alarm is available the interviewer may be provided with a personal duress alarm and instructed in how to use the alarm. If a personal duress alarm is issued, the Control room must be contacted and given details of the alarm and the name of the person it was issued to.

1.5 Procedure for supervising inmate interviews in rooms or offices

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Ensure that the interviewer is seated in the room closest to the door with the inmate seated opposite behind a desk or table.	Correctional officer
2.	Ensure that the door to the room is not locked.	Correctional officer
3.	Ensure the observation window to the room is not covered and there is an unobstructed view of the interviewer in the room at all times.	Correctional officer
4.	Ensure the interviewer is provided with a personal duress alarm where there is no fixed duress alarm and is instructed on how to use the alarm.	Correctional officer
5.	Contact and advise Control (Monitor) Room staff of personal duress alarm number and the name of the person it was issued to.	Correctional officer Control Room officer
6.	In maximum and medium security facilities the inmate is to be pat searched after the interview.	Correctional officer

2 Quick links

- [Related COPP](#)
- [Forms and annexures](#)
- [Related documents](#)

3 Definitions

COPP	Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures
CSNSW	Corrective Services NSW
FM	Functional Manager
MOS	Manager of Security

4 Document information

Business centre:	Statewide Operations	
Approver:	Dr Anne Marie Martin (Deputy Commissioner Security and Custody)	
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Version	Date	Reason for amendment
1.0	16/12/17	First Publication (<i>Replaces sections 12.1.10 of the superseded Operations Procedures Manual</i>)
1.1	12/03/20	General formatting update and improvements
1.2	26/07/24	Additions to 1.1 Policy requiring LOPs to identify supervision and monitoring standards for interview rooms, and specifications for observation windows.