



Issue Brief - 2008

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Inmate Products and Workforce Development Programs

Overview

An offender in the custody of the Department of Corrections (DOC) has the opportunity to make and sell products to the public, including DOC employees, in two ways: while working in a DOC hobby program or by creating a product independently during their leisure time.

Products produced as a result of a DOC hobby program

Inmates who have reached a set incentive level can be assigned to a hobby program. Hobby programs, if they are available, require the inmate has 18 months of clear conduct to qualify for placement on the waiting list. It is not uncommon for an inmate to be on the waiting list for as long as four years.

All materials and tools used in a hobby program are purchased by the inmate from either the canteen or from an approved vendor. The vendor must be authorized by the institution superintendent.

DOC employees and the public are able to request, in writing, a particular item by making a special order through the hobby program supervisor. If a member of the public needs help finding an inmate with particular skills, the institution or Inmate Services can help them.

The price of the item is set by the inmate and is non-negotiable. All proceeds from the sale of the item are deposited into the inmate's trust account in the form of a money order or cashier's check.

Products produced during an inmates leisure time

In situations where inmates create a product during their leisure time, all of their materials must be purchased solely from the canteen. The production of the handiwork is accomplished during the inmate's leisure time, either in the inmate's cell or in another area. The handiwork is not part of an inmate assignment or DOC hobby program.

The price of the item is set by the inmate and is non-negotiable. All proceeds from the sale of the item are deposited into the inmate's trust account in the form of a money order or cashier's check.

Workforce Development Programs

All vocational training and educational work experience training is coordinated through the Workforce Development Program (WDP). Examples of on-the-job training include hair styling and barista programs.

DOC purchases all materials and supplies for these programs the revenue generated by WDP services are applied to the cost of the programs. DOC employees must pay the fair value of the work as determined by WDP. Inmates receive no monetary compensation or gratuities for their work.

Generally, these services are restricted to inmates and staff because the programs exist within the secure perimeter of the institution. Public access to these services is unfeasible, as members of the public would have to undergo background checks and require escorts. ■

**The mission of the
Oregon Department of Corrections
is to promote public safety by holding
offenders accountable for their actions
and reducing the risk of future
criminal behavior.**



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