General Information Guide for Families of Offenders



Texas Department of Criminal Justice Executive Services Published July 2008 The Texas Department of Criminal Justice operates the state's system of facilities for the confinement of adult felony offenders.

This information guide is intended to provide the public with a brief description of principal program areas.

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## 🗭 INTAKE

Upon admission to a designated TDCJ intake center, offenders are photographed and fingerprinted as part of the identification process. Physical, dental and eve examinations are conducted. Various tests are administered to detect medical or mental health problems and to determine educational and intelligence levels. Interviews with offenders gather information relevant to family structure, criminal and social behavior, drug alcohol involvement, military and and institutional experience, as well as education and employment history.

The results of the tests and interviews are the basis for classification decisions that determine the unit of assignment, the level of security supervision, housing and job assignments and time-earning category. Recommendations concerning treatment for identified special needs may also develop from the intake process.

## MAIL

The families and friends of offenders are encouraged to write often. Letters sent to offenders should include the <u>offender's name</u>, <u>TDCJ number</u> and <u>unit</u> address on the envelope. All mail addressed to offenders must be received through authorized channels. Letters for different offenders should not be included in the same envelope.

Mail is forwarded to offenders who transfer from one unit to another within TDCJ. Letters will be forwarded to offenders who are released from prison, if the offender provides a forwarding address at his last unit of assignment.

Offenders may not write to minors whose parents disapprove, with the exception of an offender's own children or stepchildren.

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Unauthorized materials or contraband found in mail addressed to offenders will be rejected. Individuals who carry out serious violations of the correspondence rules may not be allowed to write to an offender.

Newspapers, magazines and books may be mailed directly to offenders only by the publisher, publication supplier or bookstore; subject to review and rejection in accordance with the correspondence rules. Stationery (defined as white, undecorated paper, not to exceed the size of 81/2" x 11", or unstamped white envelopes, including carbon paper and white envelopes with the offender's commitment name and TDCJ number preprinted in the return address portion of the envelope, but excluding any paper with names, addresses or letterhead and excluding tablets or writing pads with stapled binding) may be mailed to offenders only from legitimate vendors or suppliers of stationery. Items such as food, clothing, jewelry and toiletries may not be mailed to offenders. Individuals may not mail packages to offenders.

Additional information is available on the agency web site at www.tdcj.state.tx.us.

## MARY VISITATION

Visitation plays an important role in upholding the association between offenders and their families and friends. However, offenders are not assigned to specific TDCJ units for the convenience of visitation. Copies of the I-218, *Offender Rules and Regulations for Visitation* Booklet are to be prominently displayed in areas accessible to visitors.

Visitation Hours: Visits are normally conducted on Saturdays and Sundays between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The names of all visitors, 18 years old and older (except the offender's attorney), must be on the approved Visitors' List, which is limited to ten (10) individuals.

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- Visits Requiring Advance Scheduling: Visits may occur on Agency-closed holidays (except Christmas Day) that fall on Mondays or Fridays, if scheduled in advance. Arrangements to schedule these visits may not be made on any state holiday. All arrangements to schedule visits must be made through the Warden's office between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at least one (1) day, but not more than seven (7) days, prior to the visit. Visitors arriving late (i.e.: more than 15 minutes past the beginning scheduled visit time) may not be allowed to visit during any of the scheduled time. Unit administration shall make every effort to accommodate late arrivals, if time and space is available.
- Number of Visitors: All offenders, except those in the intake process solitary confinement, G5, lockdown status, or administrative segregation, are weekend, allowed one visit every normally two (2) adults for two (2) hours. Children under the age of 18 are not counted in this number, and must be accompanied by an approved adult visitor (18 years or older). The number of children allowed per visit will be based on the amount of space available for visitation and on the visitor's ability to manage and control the children. Additional adult visitors may be allowed at the Warden's discretion if special circumstances arise and space permits.
- Visitor Identification: For visitors 18 years of age and older, a pictured and signed identification (ID) of one (1) of the following is required: 1) valid state driver's license; 2) valid state Department of Public Safety (DPS) ID card; 3) valid

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Armed Forces ID card; 4) passport; or 5) ID card issued by the United States Department of Homeland Security, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) (i.e.: Visa Border Crossing ID Card [USA B1/B2 Visa BCC]).

If the visitor's ID is questionable or not acceptable, further verification shall be required (e.g., birth certificate, pictured credit card or other official ID). Children 17 years of age and younger may be required to provide an ID (e.g., birth certificate, DPS ID, or student ID) if the child's age is questionable due to physical maturity of the child. Valid student ID shall be used only for children 17 years old and younger.

Identification is required for hardship visitors. "Hardship Visits" allow children, ages 16 and 17, who are on the offender/parent Visitors' List and do not have an adult to accompany them, to visit parents who are incarcerated in the TDCJ (with the Warden's prior approval).

*Contact Visits*: Limited physical contact between eligible offenders and their visitors may be allowed if the visitors are immediate family: spouse (ceremonial, proxy or common-law), natural, adopted mother and stepmother; natural, adopted father and stepfather; natural, adopted children, stepchildren, grandchildren and step-grandchildren; natural adopted siblings and stepsiblings; natural, grandparents adopted and stepgrandparents; aunt; uncle; and persons related by marriage (in-laws: father, mother, daughter, son, brother, sister, grandchildren and grandparents).

With prior approval from unit administration, non-immediate family members may be allowed contact visits if immediate family members are unable to visit the offender. Due to the nature of their offense, some offenders cannot have contact visits with children. In addition, these same offenders will not be allowed a regular visit with children unless they are the legally recognized parent of that child and the child is not the victim of the offense.

- Search of Visitors and Vehicles: Visitors and their vehicles can be searched before entering the unit. Any visitor refusing the search procedure will have to leave the property. All visitors will be screened by a metal detector prior to visiting an offender. Cash (except coins), alcoholic beverages, tobacco, cell phones, drugs, firearms, escape implements, or dangerous weapons are strictly prohibited by statute and TDCJ rules and policies.
- Visitors must follow the ♦ Dress Code: dress code. Shirts and shoes must be worn. Shirts and blouses of fishnet, transparent material, sleeveless or open midriff are not allowed. Male visitors must wear long pants, and female visitors must wear dresses, skirts, Capri pants or long pants. Exceptions for preadolescent boys and girls may be made. If a dress, pants, skirt or any attire appears to be inappropriate, the Duty Warden shall be contacted for a decision. Hats may be worn, but will be searched. Visitors are not permitted to wear all Clothing marked by words or white. pictures considered profane or offensive by current public standards will not be allowed.

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- ◆ Carry-in Items: Visitors may bring only specific items into the unit. These items include a small wallet or change purse containing no more than \$20.00 in coins. Only visitors may purchase soft drinks to be consumed by offenders during the visit. Visitors with infants or small children may bring no more than three (3) diapers, a supply of baby wipes and two (2) baby bottles ("sippy" cups for toddlers). Visitors are not permitted to bring items of any kind to offenders. These items shall be stored in a clear plastic bag.
- Tobacco Policy: TDCJ units are tobacco free. Visitors are not permitted to bring cigarettes, cigarette lighters, matches or any tobacco products into TDCJ units.

Visits must be orderly to assure that visitors and offenders are not disturbed. Visitors who cannot control their children will be escorted out of the unit. Children shall not be left unattended.

Ex-offenders, unless immediate family, will not be allowed to visit for a period of 24 months following their release date.

Visitors are not allowed to switch from visiting one (1) offender to another. This conduct may cause the visit to be terminated and possibly the visitor's name removed from the offenders' Visitors' List.

Visitors are prohibited from loitering, walking the perimeter road or taking photographs. Radios played at a high volume and shouting at offenders will not be allowed.

Visits may be cancelled and future visits may be denied for security reasons or because of improper conduct by the visitor or the offender.

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## **Š** TRUST FUND

The Inmate Trust Fund, authorized by Section 501.014, Texas Government Code, provides a place of safekeeping for funds an offender may have access to, but not physical control of during their confinement.

Several Trust Fund deposit options are now available and include:

- ♦ MONEY ORDERS OR CASHIER'S CHECKS
- MONTHLY CHECKING ACCOUNT DEBIT (ACH)
- ♦ WESTERN UNION QUICK COLLECT
- ♦ WESTERN UNION CONVENIENCE PAY
- ◆ AMERICA'S CASH EXPRESS (ACE)
- ♦ JPAY
- ♦ MONEYGRAM<sup>®</sup> EXPRESS PAYMENT<sup>®</sup>

# Note: Sender's name and address is required when making a deposit to an offender's account.

- Money orders or cashier's checks made payable to "Inmate Trust Fund for Offender Name and Number"; obtain deposit slips from offender or by sending an addressed, stamped envelope to Inmate Trust Fund; send deposits and/or requests for deposit slips to Inmate Trust Fund, P.O. Box 60, Huntsville, TX 77342-0060, Phone number: (936) 438-8990.
- Monthly Checking Account Debit (ACH), (Free service provided by TDCJ.) complete an ACH authorization form and have a set amount automatically debited from a personal checking account once each month for deposit to a specified offender; attach a voided check on the account to be debited; debit transaction will occur on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month; submit form with voided check to Inmate Trust Fund, P.O. Box 60, Huntsville, TX 77342-0060.

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Western Union Quick Collect (fees vary) from anywhere in the United States; all three (3) Quick Collect products are subject to different fees, send amounts and other restrictions in certain states; standard fee for over-the-counter Quick Collect transaction at a Western Union location is \$8.95. Deposit will post to offender's account within 24 hours. Western Union Quick Collect, call Western Union at 1-800-325-6000, or visit www.westernunion.com to find the nearest Western Union location; Western Union Quick Collect by Phone, for credit card transactions call Western Union at 1-800-634-3422 (press 2 to send Q/C payment); Western Union Quick Collect web Online. for transactions visit www.westernunion.com. For each Quick Collect transaction the following information must be provided:

Pay to: TDCJ – Inmate Trust Fund Code City and State: TDCJ/TX Account number with facility: Offender's TDCJ number and offender's last name Attention: Offender's last name and offender's first name

- Western Union Convenience Pay (\$3.00 fee) offered at select locations within the state of Texas. Send up to \$200 to an offender's trust fund account for a service fee of \$3. Call 1-800-354-0005 to find a Convenience Pay agent location.
- America's Cash Express (ACE) (\$3.00 fee) from anywhere in the United States. Deposit funds to an offender's trust fund account. For the nearest ACE location, call 1-866-734-2306 or visit their website at www.acecashexpress.com.
- Jpay (\$1.95 to \$8.95 fee) allows you to send money to an offender for service fees ranging from \$1.95 to \$8.95. Visit their website at <u>www.jpay.com</u> or call 1-800-574-JPAY to send funds using Visa,

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Discover or MasterCard credit/debit cards. Senders can make cash deposits at MoneyGram locations nationwide using an Express Payment form. Senders may also make cash deposits from their home after setting up a cash collection account with a Jpay customer service representative.

MoneyGram<sup>®</sup>ExpressPayment<sup>®</sup> (\$6.95 fee) available nationwide at over 26,000 retail agent locations, including Wal-Mart. To deposit money to an offender account, call 1-800MoneyGram for the nearest MoneyGram agent location or visit <u>www.moneygram.com</u>. Bring cash to the MoneyGram agent location and fill out the blue form with the following information:

Receive Code: 5203 Company Name: Texas Department of Criminal Justice City: Huntsville State: TX Account Number, Offender Name: Offender ID#, Offender Last Name (01234567, Smith)

Pay the low \$6.95 fee and keep the reference number that confirms your transaction.

Cash and personal checks are not accepted and will be returned to the sender. Single transaction deposits of \$500.00 or more and/or insurance, company, payroll, estate checks and other like disbursements are held 14 days before offender access is authorized. Forwarding cash through the mail is not recommended.

Do not send trust fund deposits to offender's unit of assignment and do not send offender's personal mail or other items to the Inmate Trust Fund.

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The Inmate Trust Fund can respond to inquiries concerning the receipt of a deposit, but cannot release information regarding the offender's account or balance to anyone except the offender. Offenders receive monthly statements listing all trust fund account transactions for that period.

The Inmate Trust Fund does not pay interest; therefore, the account should hold no more than what is required to meet the offender's immediate needs. Offenders with funds in excess of their immediate needs are encouraged to open an account with, and transfer excess funds to a banking facility of their choice. Offenders may use funds in their trust fund accounts to make purchases from the unit commissary, or through approved vendors and to send funds to family or friends. An offender's trust fund balance is refunded upon release.

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No offender is allowed to possess money while in confinement. Offenders are provided meals, certain personal items and clothing. Grocery items, personal hygiene items and other goods may be purchased by offenders from unit commissaries. Payment for commissary items is completed by transferring funds from the offender's trust fund account to the agency's commissary account.

The offender may spend up to \$75.00 on ordinary merchandise every two weeks. However, this amount may be less as determined by the offender's custody status. The spend limit does not apply to special items such as radios, some clothing items, fans or hot pots. These special purchase items are made specifically for an institutional environment. They must be bought directly from the commissary by the offender for the offender's personal use.

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## HARDSHIP TRANSFERS

A hardship transfer is usually considered when there is a medical condition that impacts the immediate family member's ability to travel to visit the offender. Generally, transfer facility, state iail, intermediate sanction facility, substance abuse, Pre-Parole and Pre-Release offenders shall not be eligible for transfer consideration. Requests from the offender family member for an inter-facility transfer should be directed to the appropriate unit Warden or to the Assistant Director for Classification and Records. The Assistant Director for Classification and Records may grant an inter-facility transfer if the following criterion is met. Hardship transfer requests may be submitted to the Assistant Director for Classification and Records at P.O. Box 99, Huntsville. Texas 77342-0099; Attn: Hardship Transfer.

- Requests must come from an immediate family member. Immediate family is defined as natural or adoptive mother and stepmother; natural or adoptive father and stepfather; natural or adoptive children or stepchildren; natural or adoptive stepsiblings; spouse (common law or ceremonial); grandparents and grandchildren; persons related by marriage; aunt or uncle; or foster parents, the guardian of an offender's minor child, to include parent of the child.
- Requests made on medical hardship must pertain to a family member and documentation from the attending physician of the family member's inability to travel long distance is required. Such documentation should be on the physician's letterhead and signed by the physician.
- The offender's currently assigned facility must be greater than 200 miles from the requested area.

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- Prison sentenced offenders should be Line Class I or higher.
- Offenders who are G4 or a more restrictive custody are ineligible unless the G4 custody is due to a security precaution designator.
- Prison sentenced offenders should have no major disciplinary punishments for the preceding twelve months.

## FAMILY ASSISTANCE

Offenders are encouraged to attempt problem resolution at the unit level by utilizing the Offender Grievance Process. If, after the offender has exhausted administrative remedies, there still appears to be questions or concerns, families should contact the unit directly.

Staff at TDCJ units are encouraged to handle questions from offenders' families if at all possible. Each unit has a Family Liaison Officer, available during visitation hours, who answers questions and concerns of families and friends. If, however, no resolution can be reached or if the person insists on talking to someone else, they can contact a TDCJ Ombudsman.

The TDCJ Ombudsman Program ensures that TDCJ is responsive to the public, elected officials and other state agencies; helps offenders' families understand TDCJ policies and procedures; and attempts facilitating conflict resolution between TDCJ and the public. Ombudsmen gather information from many sources within TDCJ to provide clear, correct answers.

TDCJ Ombudsmen are the contact points for members of the general public. These offices do not answer questions from incarcerated offenders or agency employees.

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## HOW TO CONTACT A TDCJ OMBUDSMAN

(Please submit inquiries in writing)

For expediency, it is best to attempt to resolve issues and obtain information at the unit or parole office level. However, if this is not possible, contact one of the following:

## Ombudsman Coordinator

General issues concerning the agency's operation and policy and procedures.

P.O. Box 99, Huntsville, TX 77342-0099 (936) 437-8035 (936)437-8097 fax ombudsman@tdcj.state.tx.us

## TDCJ - Correctional Institutions Division Ombudsman Office

Issues from the public relating to secure units (prison units, state jails and substance abuse felony punishment facilities), and any specific concerns regarding offenders confined in these types of facilities.

P.O. Box 99, Huntsville, TX 77342-0099 (936) 437-6791 (936) 437-6668 fax ci.div@tdcj.state.tx.us \*\*Bilingual Staff Available – Se habla Espanol.\*\*

## TDCJ - Parole Division Ombudsman

Issues from the public relating to the parole process and parole supervision. May also respond to concerns from offenders on parole or mandatory supervision.

> P.O. Box 13401, Austin, TX 78758 (512) 406-5795 (512) 406-5858 fax parole.div@tdcj.state.tx.us

General offender status information may be obtained at: <u>www.tdcj.state.tx.us</u>

Agency Toll-Free Telephone Number 1-800-535-0283

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Windham School District (WSD) provides a variety of academic classes, life skills, and career and technology education classes for offenders who are confined in units operated by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Offenders are selected for enrollment in WSD programs based on the Individualized Treatment Plan (ITP) process. The ITP outlines activities programmatic and prioritizes participation in recommended programs based on the offender's needs, program availability and projected release date.

The Literacy Program provides adult basic education for offenders functioning below the sixth grade level, and secondary level adult education for those who are working toward attainment of a high school equivalency (GED) certificate. Based on individual achievement, students are assigned to beginning (Literacy I), intermediate (Literacy II), or advanced (Literacy III) level classes. Students needing help with basic reading skills may be enrolled in Literacy Literacy I-reading. teachers use an interdisciplinary approach to promote workplace competencies and learning in real-world Emphasis is placed on the skills contexts. employers demand, such as personal qualities, cultural sensitivity/tolerance, teamwork, decision-making and problem solving.

*Special Education* services are provided for eligible students with disabilities. An *English as a Second Language (ESL)* program is available for students with limited English proficiency.

The *Career and Technology Education (CTE)* program offers vocational training in approximately 34 occupational areas to prepare offenders for today's workforce.

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Additional vocational training opportunities may be available through apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training.

Life skills programs are available to help offenders learn to make better, pro-social decisions. The WSD Cognitive Intervention program is available at many units. This program addresses personal accountability and responsibility through instruction and exercises in interpersonal problem solving, management, impulse anger control, overcoming criminal thinking, creating positive attitudes and beliefs and goal setting.

Likewise, a reintegration program, entitled *Changing Habits and Achieving New Goals to Empower Success (CHANGES)*, offers a life skills curriculum to prepare offenders for release. CHANGES includes parenting, civic and legal responsibilities, victim sensitivity, health maintenance, employability, money management and other related life skills.

For offenders with a GED or high school diploma, academic and vocational postsecondary educational opportunities are available through the Division of Continuing Education which contracts with community colleges and universities.

The Division of Continuing Education has numerous programs to serve needs of offenders. Associate (two (2) year) and Baccalaureate (four (4) year) degrees are awarded upon completion of degree requirements. A certificate of completion is awarded after satisfactory completion of a vocational program. College credit may be awarded for vocational courses.

In order to participate in a college academic or vocational program, eligibility requirements set by the WSD, the TDCJ, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and admission and registration requirements of the college must be met by all students. College expenses

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utilizing state funds must be repaid by the offender upon release as a condition of parole. Those offenders who do not qualify for state must pay college expenses funds at registration or qualify for grant funding. The Youthful Offender Grant for 25 year olds and under and within five (5) years of release or parole eligibility is not required to be repaid. An offender who is assigned to a unit that does not offer the college academic program for which he/she qualifies may contact the current unit education staff to request a transfer to a unit that does offer the program. The TDCJ State Classification Committee will make all decisions on unit assignments.

WSD strives to offer a comprehensive guidance program that assists the offender with vocational assessment and career guidance. *Project RIO (Re-Integration for Offenders)* is administered by the Texas Workforce Commission in collaboration with TDCJ and WSD. Project RIO provides a link between education, training and employment during incarceration and after release.

WSD is committed to providing a positive environment where offenders can improve their educational achievement. By taking advantage of the academic, life skills and vocational educational opportunities offered by WSD, offenders are better prepared to successfully reintegrate back into society.

## **X** JOB TRAINING

In addition to the programs offered through Windham School District, job training is available to offenders who work in the various operations of TDCJ.

The mission of the **Manufacturing and Logistics Division** is to benefit the State of Texas by providing quality service in warehousing operations, freight transportation, the management of TDCJ vehicles and by providing quality manufactured

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products and services to TDCJ, other state agencies and political subdivisions, while affording rehabilitative opportunities for incarcerated offenders. The objective is to provide work program participants with marketable job skills through coordinated programs of job skills training, documentation of work history, access to resources provided by Project RIO and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and to share with the TWC information regarding offender participation in the Work Against Recidivism (WAR) Program.

The Manufacturing and Logistics Division partners with the Windham School District, colleges and other TDCJ divisions to optimize certified training programs, when appropriate. Nationally accredited certification programs are available to eligible offenders such as A+, Network +, Braille transcription at both entry and advanced levels, GEOMedia Professional, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 608 and 609, National Center for Engineering and Educational Research (NCEER), Outdoor Power Equipment and Engine Service Association (OPEESA), American Welding Society (AWS) and the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE).

The Agribusiness, Land and Minerals Department operates farms and ranches throughout the state to produce as much as possible of the food and fiber requirements of the TDCJ. Offenders have the opportunity to participate in these programs and learn marketable job skills.

Offenders learn animal husbandry through participation in cattle, swine, poultry, horse or dog programs. They can gain experience in farming and equipment operation bv participating in the field and/or edible crop programs and in mechanical skills in the farm shops. Offenders can also learn warehousing and plant operation skills by working in the food processing plants, cotton mills, feed mills or in the local food bank programs. Formal training and/or certification is available through many of these jobs.

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The **Facilities Division** utilizes offenders in construction and building maintenance.

The most commonly utilized trades are electrician; heating, ventilation and air conditioning mechanic; plumbing; painting; construction equipment operator; concrete finishing; and carpentry.

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The religious needs of offenders are addressed by trained clergy who provide ministerial care to the entire criminal justice community. They encourage offenders to stay in touch with their particular faith by offering pastoral counsel and guidance. Jewish, Muslim, Catholic, Christian Non-Roman Catholic and Native American faiths are represented. Other religions may be served by faith group volunteers.

The schedule of religious programs and events is posted on unit bulletin boards and in the chaplain's office. Offenders who are unable to attend scheduled religious services because of illness or disciplinary reasons are visited on a regular basis by unit chaplains, certified volunteer chaplain assistants or approved volunteers.

Family members who experience an emergency crisis (death, hospice care and other such personal matters) can contact the unit chaplain, who in turn will advise the offender of the situation. Other inquiries should be addressed to the Warden.

## TREATMENT

Through the Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division, eligible offenders may be provided treatment during incarceration for addiction to or abuse of substances or alcohol.

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Additionally, certain sex offenders may participate in treatment, either in designated sex offender treatment group or an education group.

Other programs, which are also cognitivebased, include the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI) for eligible male administrative segregation offenders who are within two (2) years of release; the faithbased InnerChange Freedom Initiative for male offenders; the Youthful Offender Program (YOP) for offenders under the age of 18; and the Gang Renouncement and Disassociation (GRAD) process for male offenders who work towards reentering the prison general population.

## HEALTH

Through a managed care system, health care (medical, dental and mental health) is provided to offenders by the University of Texas Medical Branch in the northern, eastern and southern portions of the state; by Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center for the western portion of the state; and by private corporations. Primary outpatient care is provided at all units where sick call is held at least five days per week. When needed, a full range of specialty consultations is available, and hospital services are provided by either the TDCJ Hospital Galveston, the Montford Unit in Lubbock or Inpatient and outpatient local hospitals. treatment programs are provided for offenders with mental health needs. Special programs are also available for physically handicapped and mentally retarded offenders. The Patient Liaison Family/Public Hotline number is 936-437-4271.

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Offenders are afforded opportunities to engage in non-programmatic and programmatic recreation activities.

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Non-programmatic recreation activities may include:

- Television viewing
- Dayroom games such as chess, checkers and dominoes
- Team sports including basketball, softball and volleyball
- Individual sports such as table tennis, handball, horseshoes and weightlifting
- Basic in-cell craft activities

Programmatic recreation activities may include:

- Intramural games
- Tournaments and league play
- Craft shop participation, where available

Facilities and equipment for these activities are provided and maintained by TDCJ and the staff assigned to recreation oversight.

## NON-MEDICAL EMERGENCY ABSENCES

A non-medical emergency absence is a privilege granted to an offender who trustworthiness demonstrates and industriousness, and who is considered by TDCJ to be an acceptable security risk for temporary release under escort for a particular period allowed by law. Granting a request for a non-medical emergency absence is a discretionary decision made by TDCJ with public safety being the prime consideration. The offender absent on emergency leave under escort is considered to be in the custody of TDCJ and the offender must be under constant physical guard while absent.

Non-medical emergency absences may be granted to approved offenders for attending the funeral of an immediate family member, visiting a funeral home to view a deceased

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immediate family member or visiting a critically ill immediate family member. An immediate family member is defined as the offender's parents, spouse, siblings, half-siblings and children. Surrogate parents are included if the relationship of the surrogate to the offender is verifiable from established TDCJ files.

Offenders normally will not be approved for a non-medical emergency absence unless they meet strict guidelines. These guidelines include being at least Line Class 1, G3 custody with no major disciplinary penalties during the last six (6) months, no disciplinary history of assaults on staff, within 12 months of parole eligibility, in TDCJ custody for six (6) months and having no unresolved pending felony or U.S. Immigration detainer. Additionally the offender must not have been incarcerated in or sentenced to an adult correctional unit for committing, soliciting, attempting, conspiring or aiding others to commit, solicit, attempt, conspire to commit certain offenses to include:

- a. Homicide, (Capital Murder; Murder; Voluntary Manslaughter; or any other homicide offense)
- b. Kidnapping, (Aggravated Kidnapping; Kidnapping; False Imprisonment; or any other kidnapping offense)
- c. Sex Assault, (Rape; Sexual Assault; Sexual Abuse; Aggravated Rape; Aggravated Sexual Abuse; or any other sexual assault offense to include Indecency with a Child)
- d. Robbery, (Robbery; Aggravated Robbery; or any other robbery offense)
- e. Assault, (Assault; Aggravated Assault; Injury to a Child; Injury to an Elderly Person; or any other assault offense)
- f. Escape, (Any escape offense from an adult correctional facility)

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- g. Any offense in which the offender used or exhibited a deadly weapon during the commission of the offense or during the immediate flight therefrom and where an affirmative finding on use of a deadly weapon was made by the trial court or jury.
- h. Stalking

State Jail offenders must be at a minimum J2 custody. Offenders must have been in TDCJ custody for six (6) months or for one-third of their sentence, whichever comes first.

All emergency absences are granted under TDCJ escort and must be completed within 24 hours of departing the unit. Emergency absences requiring an overnight stay may not be granted and no out-of-state emergency absences will be granted. An offender may be released on emergency absence two (2) times during a 12-month period.

Emergency absence requests should be directed by the attending physician or funeral home director to Classification and Records via FAX at 936-437-8721.

## **1** GOOD CONDUCT TIME

Many offenders may shorten their prison stay by earning time credit for good behavior and by participation in work and other programs. This privilege is <u>not</u> available to State Jail offenders (*Article 42.12, Section 15 (h) (l), Code of Criminal Justice*). Accumulated good conduct time may be forfeited as punishment for violation of institutional rules or refusal to participate in required treatment programs.

The two (2) principal time-earning categories, state approved trusty and line class, each have different time-earning levels with a specific number of days that can be earned for each month actually served. Besides behavior in prison, the amount of good time that can be

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earned is also affected by the circumstances of the offense of conviction as determined by the sentencing court and by the State laws relevant to good conduct time that were in effect when the offense was committed.

Good conduct time may apply to an offender's prison confinement in terms of eligibility for release to parole or mandatory supervision. For certain offenders serving sentences for assaultive offenses, good conduct time is not used to calculate parole eligibility. Offenders are not allowed to regain that good conduct time that was lost due to disciplinary action.

All offenders are required to obey the rules established by TDCJ and by the unit to which they are assigned. Offenders receive information concerning rules soon after they arrive.

Depending on the degree of seriousness, violations of rules may be handled informally by counseling and verbal reprimand, or disciplinary hearings. formally through Hearings are classified as major or minor, based on the seriousness and frequency of rule violations. In a minor hearing, a finding of guilt can result in punishment ranging from extra duty, restriction to living quarters, suspension of recreation, restriction from making commissary purchases and contact visitation. Under a major hearing, the available penalties include solitary confinement, loss of accumulated good conduct time and/or demotion in time-earning class (except for State Jail offenders, who earn no good conduct time).

Trained personnel, called counsel substitutes, are assigned to units to represent offenders at major hearings who are charged with disciplinary violations.

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The TDCJ Offender Grievance Program provides offenders with a formal procedure for presenting written complaints on matters relating to their confinement. All offenders, regardless of custody or disciplinary status are entitled to utilize the grievance procedure. When a concern arises, offenders are required to attempt to resolve the issue informally before submitting a grievance. If informal resolution is not successful, a grievance form and instructions for completing the form may be obtained from any staff member or from the unit law library. Each unit has a Unit Grievance Investigator (UGI) who is responsible for, not only processing and resolving offender complaints, but also assisting offenders who experience difficulties associated with the grievance process. The UGI works closely with the warden and other department heads to consider offender input derived from grievances when addressing concerns on the unit. If an offender is not satisfied with the response to a grievance, he may appeal the decisions to the Central Grievance Office in Huntsville, Texas. Central and regional directors, as well as many other departmental specialists, are available to review the appeal and take additional corrective action, if necessary.

Protecting offenders' rights to file grievances and promoting problem solving at all levels is very important to TDCJ. It is a violation of policy to subject any offender to harassment, retaliation or reprisal for using the grievance procedure.

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State Counsel for Offenders (SCFO) is the division responsible for providing limited legal services to offenders who cannot afford to hire outside counsel. SCFO cannot help offenders

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with civil rights issues, TDCJ policy or procedure issues, fee-generating cases and various other legal areas depending upon the circumstances. SCFO attorneys provide legal aid to offenders in the following areas:

- Trials: SCFO represents indigent offenders indicted for felonies allegedly committed while the offender is confined within TDCJ.
- ◆ Appeals: SCFO may represent indigent offenders in the appeal of convictions of the above trial cases. SCFO may also represent indigent offenders in writ areas arising from those trials and/or convictions.
- *Civil Commitment:* SCFO represents indigent sex offenders targeted for civil commitment under the Sexually Violent Predator statute.
- General Legal: SCFO assists indigent offenders with questions about convictions after the appeal process is complete, writs of habeas corpus, parole and mandatory supervision eligibility issues and shock probation. They can also answer offenders' questions about child custody cases and can help resolve problems offenders may have with pending charges and detainers (another agency's hold on an offender prior to release). In addition, SCFO staff will investigate whether jail time credit was awarded to an offender and provide information regarding other time credit calculations.
- *Immigration:* SCFO is available to answer any questions regarding immigration law and to assist offenders who are scheduled for immigration court procedures.

Offenders can obtain assistance by writing to State Counsel for Offenders through the prison mail system. Prior to writing, offenders are encouraged to consult SCFO's *Legal Handbook*. A copy of the Legal Handbook is available at all unit libraries.

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The Access to Courts Program ensures that offenders, who are assigned to correctional institutions operated, managed or monitored by TDCJ, are provided their constitutional right of access to courts, counsel and public officials, and that access is "adequate, effective and meaningful" as required by state and federal law. Officers, employees or agents of TDCJ shall not obstruct, harass, punish or otherwise penalize any offender for seeking or gaining access to the courts.

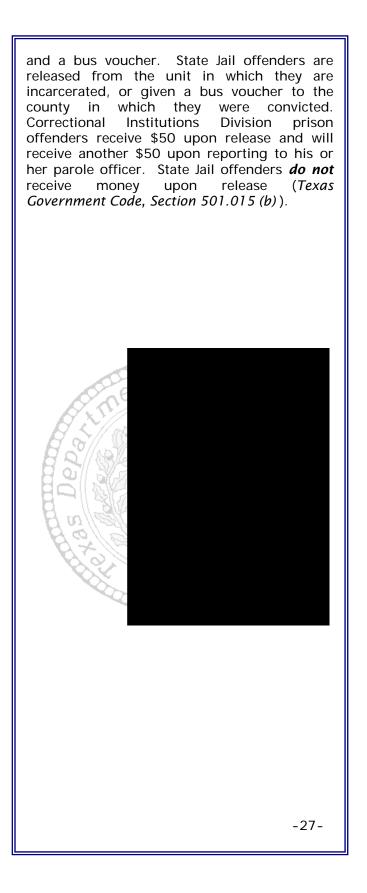
Unit law libraries are composed of many publications, including court forms, digests, treaties, federal and state caselaw and various statutes and codes. In addition, each law library contains instructional and/or help publications on how to use this material. Offenders are allowed to utilize these facilities and resources to challenge their criminal convictions, or the conditions of their confinement. An Access to Courts supervisor is available on each unit to respond to offender inquiries regarding the use of court forms and legal research material maintained in the law library.

## RELEASE

When the time for release from prison draws near, the offender who is eligible for parole, is interviewed by the institutional parole officer to determine residence and employment plans. Offenders with special medical or mental health needs receive information from a field services representative about medication and other relevant aftercare plans.

Most male offenders incarcerated in the Correctional Institutions Division prisons are released from the Huntsville Unit between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday. Female offenders are released from the Gatesville Unit. In addition to the remaining balance in the individual trust fund account, each offender is given a set of civilian clothing

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## Texas Department of Criminal Justice Correctional Institutions Division Prison Units

Unit	<u>Region</u>	County	Address	<u>Tele. No.</u>
Allred	V	Wichita	2101 FM 369 North	(940)855-7477
Baten*	v	Gray	Iowa Park, TX 76367 1995 Hilton Road Pampa, TX 79065	(806)665-7070
Beto	П	Anderson	P. O. Box 128 Tennessee Colony, TX 75880	(903)928-2217
Boyd	П	Freestone	200 Spur 113 Teague, TX 75860-2007	(254)739-5555
Briscoe	IV	Frio	1459 West Highway 85 Dilley, TX 78017-4601	(830)965-4444
Byrd	I	Walker	21 FM 247 Huntsville, TX 77320	(936)295-5768
Central	Ш	Fort Bend	One Circle Drive Sugar Land, TX 77498	(281)491-2146
Clemens	Ш	Brazoria	11034 Hwy 36	(979)798-2188
Clements	v	Potter	Brazoria, TX 77422 9601 Spur 591 Amarillo, TX 79107-9606	(806)381-7080
Coffield	П	Anderson	Route 1 Box 150	(903)928-2211
Connally	IV	Karnes	Tennessee Colony, TX 75884 899 FM 632 Kenedy, TX 78119	(830)583-4003
Dalhart	V	Hartley	11950 FM 998 Dalhart, TX 79022	(806)249-8655
Daniel	V	Scurry	938 South FM 1673 Snyder, TX 79549	(325)573-1114
Darrington	Ш	Brazoria	59 Darrington Road Rosharon, TX 77583	(281)595-3465
Eastham	I	Houston	2665 Prison Road #1 Lovelady, TX 75851	(936)636-7321
Ellis	I	Walker	1697 FM 980 Huntsville, TX 77343	(936)295-5756
Estelle	T	Walker	264 FM 3478	(936)291-4200
Ferguson	T	Madison	Huntsville, TX 77320-3320 12120 Savage Drive Midway, TX 75852-3654	(936)348-3751
Gatesville	VI	Coryell	1401 State School Road Gatesville, TX 76599-2999	(254)865-8431
Goree	I	Walker	Goree Unit Huntsville, TX 77344	(936)295-6331
Hamilton	VI	Brazos	200 Lee Morrison Lane Bryan, TX 77807	(979)779-1633
Havins	VI	Brown	500 FM 45 East Brownwood, TX 76801	(325)643-5575
Hightower	Ш	Liberty	902 FM 686 Dayton, TX 77535	(936)258-8013
Hilltop	VI	Coryell	1500 State School Road Gatesville, TX 76598	(254)865-8901
Hobby	VI	Falls	742 FM 712 Marlin, TX 76661-4685	(254)883-5561
Hodge	П	Cherokee	P. O. Box 999 Rusk, TX 75785	(903)683-5781
Hospital	Ш	Galveston	P. O. Box 48, Substation #1 Galveston, TX 77555	(409)772-2875
Hughes	VI	Coryell	Route 2 Box 4400 Gatesville, TX 76597	(254)865-6663
Huntsville	I	Walker	815 12 <sup>th</sup> Street Huntsville, TX 77340	(936)437-1555
Jester III	Ш	Fort Bend	3 Jester Road Richmond, TX 77406	(281)277-7000
Jester IV	Ш	Fort Bend	4 Jester Road Richmond, TX 77406	(281)277-3700

\*State-operated Intermediate Sanction Facility housing parole violators.

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## Texas Department of Criminal Justice Correctional Institutions Division Prison Units

<u>Unit R</u>	egion	County	Address	Tele. No.
Jordan	V	Gray	1992 Hilton Road Pampa, TX 79065	(806)665-7070
LeBlanc	ш	Jefferson	3695 FM 3514 Beaumont, TX 77705	(409)724-1515
Lewis	I	Tyler	P. O. Box 9000 Woodville, TX 75990	(409)283-8181
Luther	VI	Grimes	1800 Luther Drive Navasota, TX 77868	(936)825-7547
Lynaugh	IV	Pecos	1098 South Hwy. 2037 Fort Stockton, TX 79735	(432)395-2938
McConnell	IV	Bee	3001 South Emily Drive Beeville, TX 78102	(361)362-2300
Michael	Ш	Anderson	P. O. Box 4500 Tennessee Colony, TX 75886	(903)928-2311
Montford	V	Lubbock	8602 Peach Street Lubbock, TX 79404	(806)745-1021
Mountain View	VI	Coryell	2305 Ransom Road Gatesville, TX 76528	(254)865-7226
Murray	VI	Coryell	1916 North Hwy 36 Bypass Gatesville, TX 76596	(254)865-2000
Neal	V	Potter	9055 Spur 591 Amarillo, TX 79107	(806)383-1175
Pack	VI	Grimes	2400 Wallace Pack Road Navasota, TX 77868	(936)825-3728
Polunsky	I	Polk	3872 FM 350 South Livingston, TX 77351	(936)967-8082
Powledge	Ш	Anderson	1400 FM 3452 Palestine, TX 75803	(903)723-5074
Ramsey	ш	Brazoria	1100 FM 655 Rosharon, TX 77583	(281)595-3491
Roach	V	Childress	15845 FM 164 Childress, TX 79201	(940)937-6364
Robertson	VI	Jones	12071 FM 3522 Abilene, TX 79601	(325)548-9035
Scott	ш	Brazoria	6999 Retrieve CR 290 Angleton, TX 77515	(979)849-9306
Segovia	IV	Hidalgo	1201 E. El Cibolo Road Edinburg, TX 78542	(956)316-2400
Skyview	II	Cherokee	P. O. Box 999 Rusk, TX 75785	(903)683-5781
Smith	V	Dawson	1313 County Road 19 Lamesa, TX 79331-1898	(806)872-6741
Stevenson	IV	DeWitt	1525 FM 766 Cuero, TX 77954	(361)275-2075
Stiles	ш	Jefferson	3060 FM 3514 Beaumont, TX 77705	(409)722-5255
Stringfellow	ш	Brazoria	1200 FM 655 Rosharon, TX 77583	(281)595-3413
Telford	Ш	Bowie	P. O. Box 9200 New Boston, TX 75570	(903)628-3171
Terrell	ш	Brazoria	1300 FM 655 Rosharon, TX 77583	(281)595-3481
Torres	IV	Medina	125 Private Road 4303 Hondo, TX 78861	(830)426-5325
Vance	ш	Fort Bend	2 Jester Road Richmond, TX 77406	(281)277-3030
Wallace	V	Mitchell	1675 S. FM 3525 Colorado City, TX 79512	(325)728-2162
Wynne	I	Walker	Wynne Unit Huntsville, TX 77349	(936)295-9126
Young	Ш	Galveston	5509 Attwater Ave. Dickinson, TX 77539	(409)948-0001

## **Texas Department of Criminal Justice** Correctional Institutions Division State Jail Facilities

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>County</u>	Address	Tele. No.
Cole	Ш	Fannin	3801 Silo Road Bonham, TX 75418	(903)583-1100
Dominguez	IV	Bexar	6535 Cagnon Road San Antonio, TX 78252	(210)675-6620
Formby	V	Hale	998 County Road AA Plainview, TX 79072-9641	(806)296-2448
Gist	Ш	Jefferson	3295 FM 3514 Beaumont, TX 77705	(409)727-8400
Henley	Ш	Liberty	7581 Hwy. 321 Dayton, TX 77535	(936)258-2476
Hutchins	Ш	Dallas	1500 East Langdon Road Dallas, TX 75241	(972)225-1304
Kegans	Ш	Harris	707 Top Street Houston, TX 77002	(713)224-6584
Lopez	IV	Hidalgo	1203 El Cibolo Road Edinburg, TX 78542	(956)316-3810
Lychner	Ш	Harris	2350 Atascocita Road Humble, TX 77396	(281)454-5036
Ney	IV	Medina	114 Private Road 4303 Hondo, TX 78861-3812	(830)426-8030
Plane	Ш	Liberty	904 FM 686 Dayton, TX 77535	(936)258-2476
Sanchez	IV	El Paso	3901 State Jail Road El Paso, TX 79938	(915)856-0046
Travis Co.	VI	Travis	8101 FM 969 Austin, TX 78724	(512)926-4482
Wheeler	V	Hale	986 County Rd. AA Plainview, TX 79072-9682	(806)293-1081
Woodman	VI	Coryell	1210 Coryell City Road Gatesville, TX 76528	(254)865-9398

**Texas Department of Criminal Justice** Correctional Institutions Division Transfer and Substance Abuse Facilities

<u>Unit</u>	Region	County	Address	<u>Tele. No.</u>
		TF	ANSFER FACILITIES	
Cotulla	IV	LaSalle	610 FM 624 Cotulla, TX  78014-8022	(830)879-3077
Duncan	I	Angelina	1502 South First Street Diboll, TX 75941	(936)829-2616
Fort Stockton	IV	Pecos	1536 East IH-10 Fort Stockton, TX 79735	(432)336-7676
Garza East	IV	Bee	4304 Hwy. 202 Beeville, TX 78102-8981	(361)358-9880
Garza West	IV	Bee	4250 Hwy. 202 Beeville, TX 78102-8982	(361)358-9890
Goodman	I	Jasper	Route 1 Box 273 Jasper, TX 75951	(409)383-0012
Gurney	II	Anderson	P. O. Box 6400 Tennessee Colony, TX 75861	(903)928-3118
Holliday	I	Walker	295 IH-45 North Huntsville, TX 77320	(936)295-8200
Marlin	VI	Falls	2893 State Hwy. 6 Marlin, TX 76661-6588	(254)883-3858
Middleton	VI	Jones	13055 FM 3522 Abilene, TX 79601	(325)548-9075
Moore, C.	II	Fannin	1700 North FM 87 Bonham, TX 75418	(903)583-4464
Rudd	V	Terry	2004 Lamesa Highway Brownfield, TX 79316	(806)637-4470
San Saba	VI	San Saba	206 S. Wallace Creek Road San Saba, TX 76877	(325)372-4255
Tulia	V	Swisher	4000 Hwy. 86 West Tulia, TX 79088	(806)995-4109
Ware	V	Mitchell	1681 S. FM 3525 Colorado City, TX 79512	(325)728-2162

#### SUBSTANCE ABUSE FACILITIES

Glossbrenner	IV	Duvall	5100 South FM1329 San Diego, TX 78384	(361)279-2705
Halbert	VI	Burnet	P. O. Box 923 Burnet, TX 78611-0923	(512)756-6171
Jester I	Ш	Fort Bend	1 Jester Road Richmond, TX 77406	(281)277-3030
Johnston	П	Wood	703 Airport Road Winnsboro, TX 75494	(903)342-6166
Sayle	VI	Stephens	4176 FM 1800 Breckenridge, TX 76424	(254)559-1581

# **Texas Department of Criminal Justice** Private Facility Contract Oversight and Monitoring Division Private Facilities

<u>Unit</u>	<u>County</u>	Address	Tele. No.		
		PRIVATE PRISONS			
Bridgeport	Wise	4000 North 10th Street Bridgeport, TX 76426	(940)683-3010		
Cleveland	Liberty	P. O. Box 1678 Cleveland, TX 77328	(281)592-9559		
Diboll	Angelina	1604 South First Street Diboll, TX 75941	(936)829-2295		
Estes	Johnson	1100 Highway 1807 Venus, TX 76084	(972)366-3334		
Kyle	Hays	23001 IH 35 Kyle, TX 78640	(512)268-0079		
Lockhart	Caldwell	P. O. Box 1170 Lockhart, TX 78644	(512)398-3480		
Moore, B.	Rusk	8500 North FM 3053 Overton, TX 75684	(903)834-6186		
	I	PRIVATE STATE JAILS			
Bartlett	Williamson	1018 Arnold Drive Bartlett, TX 76511	(254)527-3300		
Bradshaw	Rusk	P. O. Box 9000 Henderson, TX 75653-9000	(903)655-0880		
Dawson	Dallas	P.O. Box 650051 Dallas, TX 75265-0051	(214)744-4422		
Lindsey	Jack	1620 Old Post Oak Road Jacksboro, TX 76458	(940)567-2272		
Willacy Co.	Willacy	1695 South Buffalo Drive Raymondville, TX 78580	(956)689-4900		
	CONTR	ACT TRANSFER FACILITIES			
Bowie County	Bowie	105 W. Front Street Texarkana, TX 75501	(903)798-3530		
Jefferson County	Jefferson	P. O. Box 3689 Beaumont, TX 77701	(409)832-5966		
Limestone Count	y Limestone	910 North Tyus Street Groesbeck, TX 76642	(254)729-8615		
Newton County	Newton	Rt. 3 Box 22-100 Hwy. 87 N. Newton, TX 75966	(409)379-3000		
INTERMEDIATE SANCTION FACILITIES					
North Texas	Tarrant	4700 Blue Mound Road Fort Worth, TX 76407	(817)740-0180		
South Texas	Harris	1511 Preston Road Houston, TX 77002	(713)223-0601		
West Texas	Terry	2002 Lamesa Hwy. Brownfield, TX 79316	(806)637-4032		
PRE-PAROLE TRANSFER FACILITIES					
Bridgeport	Wise	222 Lake Road	(940)683-2162		
Mineral Wells	Parker	Bridgeport, TX 76426 759 Heintzelman Road Mineral Wells, TX 76067	(940)325-6933		
MULTI-USE FACILITY					
East Texas	Rusk	900 Industrial Drive Henderson, TX 75653	(903)655-3300		

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For more information regarding TDCJ, please visit our website at www.tdcj.state.tx.us