COPP 6.5 Prisoner Hygiene and Laundry

Prison

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| **Principles**  As referenced in the [Guiding Principles for Corrections in Australia, 2018](https://www.corrections.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/embridge_cache/emshare/original/public/2019/04/7f/88fc42ada/guiding_principles_correctionsaustrevised2018.pdf):  4.2.4 Prisoners are provided with clean clothing, bedding and sanitation facilities appropriate to the climate, to support and maintain personal and group health and ensure decent living conditions in prison. |

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# Scope

This Commissioner’s Operating Policy and Procedure (COPP) applies to all prisons administered by or on behalf of the Department of Justice (the Department).

# Policy

Prisoners shall be provided with clean serviceable clothing suitable for:

1. any activity they perform
2. climatic conditions
3. the adequate maintenance of good health.

The Superintendent shall ensure prisoners are encouraged to maintain their personal hygiene and given regular changes of clean clothing and bedding.

Superintendents are required to develop and document procedures for their prison that ensure the regular supply of personal hygiene items as well as regular changes of adequate clean bedding and clothing.

Prisoners working in the laundry shall be encouraged to undertake accredited training in laundry practices.

# Initial Issue on Reception

## General Requirements

### The Superintendent may determine within their Standing Order the items to be issued on reception to a new prisoner, and what items will be provided once the prisoner has been placed in their Unit.

### As a minimum, prisoners should be issued with sufficient clothing, personal hygiene items and linens to last two to three days, until a full kit can be issued.

### The Superintendent may also detail in their Standing Orders, the minimum items to be issued should a new reception intake occur after hours.

# Prisoner Clothing

## General requirements

### Prisoners shall be issued with clothing and footwear of a standard suitable to the climatic conditions of the region in which they are imprisoned.

### A change of clean clothing shall be provided at least once a week unless work, climatic conditions, illness or other factors may necessitate more frequent exchange to assure cleanliness. The change of clothing shall allow for a daily change of underwear.

### The Superintendent may document the procedures for distribution of clean clothing and collection of soiled clothing (See [Appendix A – Laundry Service Quality Assurance](#_Appendix_A_–_1)) for suggested Laundering and Distribution Procedures).

### When prisoners are provided work clothing, the Superintendent shall ensure prisoners are trained and provided suitable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and supervision when required for employment related activities[[1]](#footnote-1).

## Remand prisoners

### The Superintendent may determine within their Standing Order and with the interests of prison security if remand prisoners are able to wear their own clothing[[2]](#footnote-2).

### The remand prisoner may not wear their own clothing if the clothing is[[3]](#footnote-3):

1. Inadequate
2. unfit to be worn
3. required to be used as evidence.

### Prisoners who are authorised to wear their own clothing shall[[4]](#footnote-4):

1. where possible, clean and maintain their clothing
2. not part with the possession of or destroy any item of clothing, without the approval of the Superintendent/Officer in Charge
3. have the clothing in their possession entirely at their own risk.

# Bedding and Linen

## Standard issue

### A standard issue of bedding and linen to each prisoner shall include, but is not limited to, the following clean, safe and serviceable items:

* 1 x mattress
* 1 x pillow
* 2 x sheets
* 1 x pillow case
* 1 x towel
* 2 x blankets, or   
  1 x blanket and 1 x doona (or more depending upon climatic conditions).

### Washable items such as sheets, pillow cases and towels shall be exchanged for clean replacements at least once each week or more often if necessary.

### Blankets shall be laundered or dry cleaned at least every 6 months or more often if necessary.

### The condition of mattresses shall be checked on a periodic basis. The check shall include a visual inspection for tears, staining and damage as well as a physical test of the mattress to ensure the integrity of the foam composition.

# Prisoner Personal Hygiene

## Standard issue

### Prisoners shall be able to obtain and replace the following personal hygiene items:

* 1x toothbrush
* 1x toothpaste
* 1x soap
* 1x box tissues (or equivalent)
* 1 x comb or hair brush
* 1 x shaving implements.

### The Superintendent shall ensure prisoners have access to shampoo, conditioner and deodorant.

### In addition to the above, the Superintendent shall ensure female prisoners have access to sanitary items without having to ask prison staff.

### The Superintendent shall ensure prisoners have access to condoms and dental dams without having to ask Prison Officers, where practicable.

### Prisoners who identify as Trans, Gender Diverse or Intersex shall have access to personal hygiene items of their choosing per [COPP 4.6 – Trans, Gender Diverse and Intersex Prisoners](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx).

# Showers

## General access

### Each prisoner shall be required to shower at least daily unless Health Services advises another schedule due to a medical condition.

### Prisoners whose work results in them becoming unclean and those making court appearances shall be given an opportunity to have an additional shower and a change of clothing.

### Whenever clearly justified for health or sanitary reasons, Prison Officers may require a prisoner to shower under supervision.

# Haircuts

## General

### Prison Officers may require a sentenced prisoner to have a haircut for health or sanitary reasons[[5]](#footnote-5).

### If directed by a Medical Officer, a remand prisoner may be required to have a haircut in the interests of health or cleanliness[[6]](#footnote-6).

### A Prison Officer may require a male prisoner to cut or shave his beard or moustache for health or sanitary reasons[[7]](#footnote-7), consideration shall be given to a prisoner’s observance of their religious or spiritual belief[[8]](#footnote-8).

# Disposable Safety Razors

## General Requirements

### For allmaximum security and remand prisons, and prisoners being managed under the At-Risk Management System (ARMS), sections 9.2 to 9.5 shall be observed.

### If a Superintendent determines disposable safety razors are not to be used in their prison, or a deviation from section 9.2 to .5 is required, the Superintendent shall ensure the risk has been assessed and may have their Standing Orders detail the alternative arrangements.

### Prison Officers shall wear protective gloves at all times when handling disposable safety razors.

## Issuing

### Maximum security and remand prisoners, and prisoners on ARMS or SAMS, shall not have a disposable safety razor in their possession unless it is issued by the prison.

### Prisoners who do not have an electric razor are to be given the opportunity each day to request and be issued a single disposable safety razor.

### Where possible, disposable safety razors should be issued to prisoners locked in their cell.

### Prisoners shall not tamper with a disposable safety razor, including the removal of any blades.

### Prison Officers shall record on the Unit Occurrence Book (or similar) that a disposable safety razor has been issued to a prisoner.

## Return

### Disposable safety razors issued to prisoners shall be returned to a Prison Officer within 90 minutes after issue.

### At the time the used disposable safety razor is returned, the prisoner shall show the razor to a Prison Officer who shall visually check (without touching the razor) that all blades are in place, and that no other tampering has occurred.

### The prisoner shall then place the disposable safety razor, blade end first, into a sharps container.

### Prison Officers shall record on the Unit Occurrence Book (or similar) that the disposable safety razor has been returned.

### Disposable safety razors returned by prisoners shall not be re-issued.

### If a disposable safety razor is not returned, or if Prison Officers identify that the razor has been tampered with, Prison Officers shall order the prisoner to return the razor and any removed components.

### If the prisoner refuses to comply, Prison Officers shall undertake a search of the prisoner’s cell to retrieve the disposable safety razors, using appropriate PPE.

### If the disposable safety razor is not located during the cell search, the prisoner is to be moved to a secure location, where a strip search may be conducted, with appropriate personal protective equipment in accordance with [COPP 11.2 – Searching](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx).

## Retention as evidence

### If a disposable safety razor, or a component thereof, is required to be retained as evidence, it shall be placed in a clear, rigid walled, puncture resistant plastic container with a well-secured (preferably screw-top) lid.

## Disposal

### Each week, or as required, the sharps container shall be sealed and taken to the prison Health Centre, where it will be disposed of in accordance with the applicable health policy.

# Laundering Prisoner Clothing, Bedding and Linen

## Bulk laundry process

### Laundering instructions and procedures based on Australian/New Zealand Standard 4146:2000 Laundry Practice (AS 4146), shall be developed and documented by each prison for all types of washable items (see suggested laundering procedures at [Appendix A – Laundry Service Quality Assurance](#_Appendix_A_–_1)).

### The laundering and distribution procedures shall be readily available to all officers and prisoners.

## Private laundry facilities

### Where infrastructure, security and prison management requirements allow, prisoners shall have access to laundry facilities to wash their own clothes.

# Standing Orders

## General

### Superintendents may develop Standing Orders, compliant with this COPP as operationally required.

### For prisons requiring a standing order this shall be compliant with [COPP 1.3 – Standing Orders](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx) and the Departments [Operational Policy and Procedure Framework](http://justus/intranet/department/standards/Documents/opp-framework-prisons.docx).

### Standing Order(s) aligned with this COPP may include procedures for (but not limited to):

1. initial supply of items on Reception
2. regular supply of personal hygiene items and clean bedding and clothing
3. laundry system
4. dealing with deliberate damage to bedding and clothing
5. testing of mattresses to determine if suitable for use
6. management of disposable safety razors
7. process to arrange prisoner haircuts.

# Annexures

## Appendix

* [Appendix A - Laundry Service Quality Assurance](#_Appendix_A_–_1)

## Related COPPs and other documents

Related COPPs

* [COPP 1.3 – Standing Orders](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx)
* [COPP 4.6 – Trans, Gender Diverse and Intersex](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx)
* [COPP 11.2 – Searching](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx)
* [COPP 13.1 Incident Notifications, Reporting and Communications](https://dojwa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx)

Other Documents

* Australian/New Zealand Standard 4146:2000 Laundry Practice
* Western Australian Code of Practice for Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment

## Definitions and acronyms

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| Term | Definition |
| At Risk Management System (ARMS) | ARMS is the Department's multi-disciplinary suicide prevention strategy for offenders. The tri-level system includes:   1. primary prevention includes strategies to create a physical and social environment in the prison that limits stress on prisoners 2. secondary prevention includes strategies to support prisoners at statistically higher risk of self-harm or suicide 3. tertiary prevention includes strategies aimed directly at individuals who are identified as at risk of self-harm or suicide.   ARMS draws together the expertise of different staff groups for the prevention and management of prisoners facing an acute self-harm or suicidal crisis. |
| Commissioner’s Operating Policy and Procedures (COPP) | COPPs are policy documents that provide instructions to staff as to how the relevant legislative requirements are implemented. |
| Guiding Principles for Corrections in Australia, 2018 | The guiding principles constitute outcomes or goals to be achieved, rather than a set of absolute standards or laws to be enforced. They represent a statement of intent that each Australian State and Territory can use to develop their own range of relevant legislative policy and performance standards to reflect best practice and community demands. |
| Officer in Charge (OIC) | An officer designated as having the charge and superintendence of a prison in the absence of the Superintendent. |
| PPE | Personal Protective Equipment |
| Prison Officer | A person engaged or deemed to have been engaged to be a prison officer under s.13 [*Prisons Act 1981*](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_751_homepage.html)or deemed to have been appointed under s 6 to an office designated by [COPP](http://www.correctiveservices.wa.gov.au/_files/prisons/adult-custodial-rules/ac-rules/ac-rule-12.pdf) 14.1 – Delegation of Officers as Prison Officers and suitably trained to undertake searches in accordance with this COPP. |
| Superintendent | A person designated as a Superintendent under section 36(1) of the [*Prisons Act 1981*](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_751_homepage.html) and includes any reference to the position responsible for the management of a private prison under Part IIIA [*Prisons Act 1981*](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_751_homepage.html). Does not extend to the Officer in Charge (OIC) of a prison. |
| Support and Monitoring System (SAMS) | SAMS is a whole of prison approach to the way prisoners who require multi-disciplinary intervention are identified and monitored. The system provides a standardised approach across all prisons managing prisoners identified as:   1. 'Disturbed and Vulnerable' 2. long-term (chronic) risk to self 3. experiencing sensitive cultural or spiritual issues.   The purpose of SAMS is to make sure there is a collaborative, coordinated approach to identifying and managing prisoners who are not an immediate risk to themselves, however, require additional support, intervention and/or monitoring in prison. |

## Related legislation

* *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*
* *Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022*
* [*Prisons Act 1981*](https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/law_a633.html)
* [*Prisons Regulations 1982*](https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/law_s4716.html)

# Assurance

It is expected that:

* Prisons will undertake local compliance in accordance with the [Compliance Manual](http://justus/intranet/department/standards/Pages/monitoring.aspx).
* The relevant Deputy Commissioner will undertake management oversight as required.
* Operational Compliance Branch will undertake checks in accordance with the [Operational Compliance Framework](http://justus/intranet/department/standards/Pages/monitoring.aspx).

Independent oversight will be undertaken as required.

# Document Information

## Document version history

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version no | Primary author(s) | Description of version | Date completed | Effective date |
| 0.1 | Operational Policy | Initial draft | 4 November 2019 | N/A |
| 0.2 | Operational Policy | Updated following consultation, including Superintendents | 14 January 2020 | N/A |
| 0.3 | Operational Policy | Tabled for approval at the Project Steering Committee | 28 January 2020 | N/A |
| 0.4 | Operational Policy | Amended following feedback from the Project Steering Committee | 28 February 2020 | N/A |
| 0.5 | Operational Policy | Approved by the Project Steering Committee | 28 February 2020 | N/A |
| 0.6 | Operational Policy | Formatting and minor amendments | 08 March 2021 | N/A |
| 1.0 | Operational Policy | Approved by the A/Director Operational Policy Compliance and Contracts | 14 May 2021 | 28 June 2021 |
| 2.0 | Operational Policy | Approved by the A/Director Operational Policy Compliance and Contracts | 24 March 2023 | 28 March 2023 |
| 3.0 | Operational Policy | Approved by the Assistant Director Operational Policy  CM Ref: D24/479366  Feedback Ref: 9 | 08 May 2024 | 15 May 2024 |

# Appendix A – Laundry Service Quality Assurance

**Purpose**

This document is a guide for prisons to develop and document a laundry collection, processing and distribution system.

Unwashed linen should be treated as hazardous because it could be contaminated with infectious material or hazardous objects. Once it has been deposited by its owner into the soiled linen receptacle, appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be worn before it is handled (refer to relevant Safe Operating Procedure (SOP) and Safety Data Sheet as per the manufacturer’s instructions).

**Goal**

To deliver a quality laundry service, guided by Australian/New Zealand Standard 4146:2000 Laundry Practice (AS 4146), which produces clean hygienic linen in a customer focused and efficient manner.

**Collection of Soiled Linen**

Each prison shall develop and document a procedure that meets the needs of the users of the laundry service. Linen laundered in commercial equipment with programmed wash cycles and automatic chemical dispensing, meeting AS 4146, opens the possibility of a range of distribution systems including one for one exchange.

**Processing**

Receival of items for laundering

All items for laundering should be received in a manner that they can easily be handled by laundry workers without the risk of injury and keeping contamination to a minimum.

Sorting of soiled items

Sorting takes place to separate different classes and material composition of the items for washing. The reason is to run the items through the best possible programme for the type of material and degree of soiling. PPE should be worn at all times during this process.

Washing

The washing of the sorted items shall be done using the programme best suited to ensure the removal of dirt, grease, oils, bodily fluids and any bacteria or fungal matter in line with AS 4146.

Once the clean, hygienic items are removed from the washing machine they should never come into contact with any soiled items or receptacles that have been used to transport soiled items unless they have been disinfected thoroughly. The general rule is that a separation between clean and soiled linen should be a minimum distance of 2m.

Drying

Drying must be started within one hour of washing to prevent the growth of bacteria in the wet washing. If this cannot occur for reasons out of normal control the items are to be rewashed as before.

Folding

Folding is done to achieve good presentation of the items and a quality check for items damaged, substandard or still soiled and not acceptable for return to the customers.

**Distribution**

Storing

Items are to be stored in an area that is dry, secure, and clean with sufficient air flow to prevent bacterial and fungal growth, aid in the reduction of pilfering and prevention of malicious tampering.

Despatching

Laundry for external and internal customers shall be bagged or wrapped in plastic to maintain the integrity of the cleaned items, stacked neatly in shipping receptacles with a comprehensive packing list clearly indicating the contents, its destination, customer and the delivery address. This will ensure that the chances of misdirected delivery and wrongly despatched goods are minimal.

Distribution

Returning items for distribution back to units, work shop areas and kitchens shall be done in line with individual prisons’ schedules and transported in locked, clean trolleys to maintain the integrity of the washed items and deliver a professional service to comply with Australian Standard AS 4146.

**Chemicals**

It is highly recommended that chemicals are automatically dispensed into the machines under programme control. Some industrial chemicals, especially alkaline wash boosters, should not be manually handled because of the risk of injury.

Chemical companies usually install dispensing equipment where chemicals are purchased from them. Chemical companies also provide a monitoring service to check that the wash cycles meet the correct chemical concentration and temperature.

Typical chemicals include:

1. alkali booster and surfactant
2. anionic and/or non-ionic detergent
3. hydrogen peroxide for stain removal and disinfection (looks like water)
4. acidified or sour finishing agent
5. fabric softener and bacteriostatic rinse agent
6. ozone as cleaning agent.

**Equipment**

It is always preferable to use commercial machinery with pre-programmed wash cycles and automatic chemical dispensing because this controlled environment ensures that AS 4146 conditions exist in the washing of the linen. Domestic style machines are much inferior because they do not drain fully and therefore can transfer pathogens from one wash to the next and the temperature and chemicals are user inputs resulting in less certainty of settings.

1. s.19 *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. r. 60(1) Prisons Regulations 1982 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. r. 60(1) Prisons Regulations 1982 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. r. 60(2) Prisons Regulations 1982 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. r. 41(4) [*Prisons Regulations 1982*](#_Related_legislation) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. r. 62 [Prisons Regulations 1982](#_Related_legislation) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. r.41(4) *Prisons Regulations 1982* [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. s. 95E *Prisons Act 1981* [↑](#footnote-ref-8)