

Alaska Department of Corrections Correctional Officer Training Synopsis

Alaska Correctional Officer Job Description Overview

Correctional Officers are the first line of supervision for individuals housed in or received by correctional facilities. They provide direct management of housing units and look after the welfare of staff and the inmate population, as well as the safe operation of the facility. Correctional Officers work with the courts and judicial services to ensure incarcerated Alaskans are available for court, confined appropriately if convicted and sentenced, and released when required. Correctional Officers provide access to basic human rights such as ensuring inmates are provided recreation, telephone access, access to the courts, access to health care, basic hygiene, mail, visitation and facilitate many other elective requests such as commissary, access to continuing education and access to treatment services. A Correctional Officer could be described as part manager, part disciplinarian and part conflict resolution specialist. Correctional Officers are frequently required to interact with persons suffering from mental illness, personality disorders, or who are socially maladjusted, and get these individuals to voluntarily adhere to rules and regulations within the facility. At times Correctional Officer may be required to use lawful force to ensure safe operation within the facility when individuals become physically resistive or assaultive.

Alaska Department of Corrections Basic Correctional Officer Training

The Basic Correctional Officer training consists of a 6-and-a-half-week Academy totaling approximately 270 hours of training. The training is provided by senior Correctional Officers who are APSC certified Law Enforcement Trainers.

The Alaska DOC Training Academy for basic Correctional Officers covers the following subjects.

- **The Americans with Disabilities Act:** This curriculum focuses on what is covered under the act, and individual officer responsibilities.
- **Avoiding Offender Setups:** This curriculum covers staff and inmate boundaries, inmate setups and ways to identify and avoid manipulation and setups, and what to do if you discover you have become the target of manipulation or a setup.
- **Restraints:** This curriculum covers the authority to use restraint equipment, the different types of restraints used within the department, proper application and how restraints work and can be defeated.
- **Crisis Communication:** This is an eight-hour class with a focus on general communication strategies, communication strategies with people in crisis, verbal de-escalation, separation of ego and avoidance of an emotional based response.
- **Introduction to the Criminal Justice System:** This curriculum gives an overview of how the criminal justice system works and the role that the Department plays within it.
- **Use of Force:** This is an eight-hour class which covers constitutional use of force, Alaska Statutes, case law, and Department policy as well as duty to intervene and specifics for reporting use of force.
- **Report Writing:** This curriculum covers report writing content and policy requirements.
- **Sexual Harassment and Code of Conduct:** This curriculum focuses on a review of the Code of Conduct Policy for Department employees, as well as specifics for reporting of sexual harassment.

- **Incident Command and Emergency Plans:** This curriculum covers the NIC Incident Command system and relates it to the Alaska DOC and incident management. Institutional Emergency plans are also generally covered.
- **Search and Seizure:** This curriculum covers Constitutional and Statutory search authority as well as case law and policy requirements.
- **In Custody Care:** This topic covers recognition of conditions such as Excited Delirium and Agonal Breathing, In Custody Death as well as preventative action and follow up action.
- **Taser:** This curriculum certifies Officers in the use of a Taser by a certified Taser Instructor.
- **Disciplinary Hearing Advisor and Grievances:** This is an introduction to the requirements for performing Hearing Advisor Duties for an Inmate Disciplinary Hearing when an Officer is appointed to be a staff advocate. Also covered is an overview of the grievance process and an Officer's role within that process.
- **Institutional Security:** This topic covers institutional security requirements, security designations, proper use of security devices such as sally ports, tool control, key control and accountability, authorized access and other security specifics.
- **Civil Rights:** This is a class taught by an FBI adjunct instructor and covers civil rights and civil rights violations on the part of a government actor.
- **Public Corruptions:** This class is also taught by an FBI adjunct instructor and defines corruption as a government actor.
- **Oleoresin Capsicum:** This class certifies Officers in the use of OC and includes a mandatory exposure by the Officer to the chemical agent followed by performing a series of tasks including handcuffing a subject.
- **Contraband:** This curriculum defines contraband and provides Officers with an overview of how contraband enters a facility, means of hiding contraband and items commonly turned into makeshift weapons by prisoners within a facility.
- **Suicide Prevention:** This course is taught by a mental health professional and covers warning signs, the most at-risk periods and proper intervention, as well as policy requirements.
- **Hostage Situations:** This curriculum focuses on the lead up to hostage situations and tactics for surviving if you are taken hostage.
- **Direct Supervision:** This curriculum defines direct supervision and supervision strategies.
- **Trauma Informed Care:** This curriculum focuses on understanding trauma, on the job trauma and an awareness of trauma in others and resources for persons with trauma.
- **Mental Health First Aid:** This class is taught with support from Adjunct Mental Health Professionals and Officers with training to recognize mental health conditions, an awareness of mental health stigma and tools for interacting with persons suffering from a mental illness.
- **DOC Medical:** This class is taught by an adjunct Medical Professional and covers confidentiality, medical sharps, universal precautions, medication pass and "Keep on Person" medications as well as recognition of alcohol and drug detoxing and an Officer's role for reporting.

- **Domestic Violence:** This class is taught by a Public Safety Adjunct and focuses on staff reporting requirements for domestic violence, as well as impact and dynamics of domestic violence.
- **Time Accounting:** This curriculum is an overview of time accounting for prisoner sentences.
- **Logs and Records:** This curriculum covers required institutional logs and records, proper log entries, required entries and policy requirements.
- **One on One Control Tactics:** This is a 40-hour course which focuses on handcuffing techniques, techniques to gain physical control of a resistive subject, use of force considerations, and self-defense. This course requires completion of a graded practical skills test.
- **Reentry:** The Reentry class is taught by an adjunct instructor and focuses on offender reentry into the community and the challenges that persons releasing from jail or prison face, as well as services to assist reintegration into society.
- **Wellness:** This class focuses on physical health, proper diet and physical exercise.
- **Valuing Diversity:** This class is taught by an adjunct instructor and focuses on diversity considerations and discrimination.
- **Reality Based Training:** RBT training is scenario training focused on a specific event using actors and props with measurable performance objectives. This allows the Officer to apply learned skills in real time, in a controlled environment. This training is done several times throughout the Academy and a day is dedicated to scenario training in the final academy week.
- **K9 & Drug Recognition:** This class is taught by the Department K9 Handler and discusses drug identification, and considerations for interacting with a working dog, as well as the use and limitations of the K9.
- **Security Threat Groups:** This class is taught by the Department STG coordinator and focuses on identification of Security Threat Group (Gang) activity and proper reporting.
- **Cell Extractions/Restraint Chair Use:** This curriculum focuses on the reasons for cell extractions, de-escalation, use of the restraint chair and hands on restraint chair training.
- **Civil Law and Court Testimony:** This class is taught by an adjunct instructor from Department of Law. The focus of the class is the civil litigation process, avoidance of litigation and court testimony.
- **Basic Shotgun Course:** This is a 40-hour course which covers the use of a Remington 870 shotgun. The course covers proper storage, loading & unloading, engagement considerations, gun safety, tactics and movement. The course requires successful completion of a graded qualification course.
- **Mental Health Crisis Intervention:** This curriculum covers de-escalation strategies, as well as safety considerations, mental health referrals and use of force considerations.
- **Officer Survival:** This curriculum covers mindset considerations, officer safety tactics, institution as well as community considerations and Officer emotional health.
- **Career Survival:** This class is taught by an adjunct instructor and focuses on Officer emotional health and wellbeing and Officer trauma considerations and resources.
- **Officer Emergency Medical:** This curriculum focuses on emergency tactical medicine, tourniquet application, use of combat gauze and downed Officer recovery.

- **Hospital Correctional Officer (HCO):** This curriculum covers policy requirements for supervising offenders in a hospital setting.
- **Institutional Supervision:** This curriculum covers supervision strategies for managing offenders.

Additionally, Correctional Officers receive on the job training as part of their required Field Training Program. A Field Training Officer is assigned to train and evaluate the new Officers' on the job performance while they complete their certification process through APSC. Once certified, Correctional Officers are also provided in service training including recertification on Tasers, firearms, Medic 1st AID & AED and other ongoing training specified by their institution.

Correctional Officers can also participate in further training in topics such as Taser Instructor, Control Tactics Instructor, Medic 1st AID Instructor, Prisoner Transportation Officer, Auto Pistol certification, Range Officer, Fire Arms Instructor, Field Training Officer, Methods of Instruction, Pepper Ball and Armorer courses, Glock, Colt & Remington Armorer's course, Basic and Advanced Time Accounting, and Less Lethal Instructor.