



March 03, 2021

FRIEDA MARTSELOS  
MLA, THEBACHA

**Oral Question 568-19(2): Inmate Rehabilitation**

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Question you raised on February 23, 2021 regarding inmates at the Fort Smith Correctional Complex (FSCC) and their ability to participate in programming outside of the facility as part of their rehabilitation and reintegration back into the community. I have looked further into the matter and I am pleased to provide you with this update.

The Department of Justice's Corrections Service offers a range of programs and services in NWT Correctional facilities designed to assist inmates to reintegrate back into their communities. When there is a community program outside of a facility that inmates could benefit from, Corrections seeks to identify suitable inmates who could participate through a temporary absence program. Inmates are also informed of their right to apply for a temporary absence to participate in programs outside of the facility, which may include educational and employment related activities.

All case plans consider an inmate's suitability for temporary absences. However, to ensure the safety of victims and the public at large, we must assess an inmate's suitability using the following established criteria before a temporary absence is granted:

- Public safety.
- Inmate risk.
- Likelihood of escape or non-compliance.
- Inmate security classification.
- Consideration of victim proximity and safety; and
- Length of sentence served.

Only inmates who are deemed to be at low risk based on these criteria may be granted temporary absences. Presently, there are no inmates participating in the temporary absence program at FSCC, but can assure you that as part of case management, staff continually work with those inmates who might meet the criteria to seek their interest in being outside of the facility. Should an inmate not be granted temporary absence, they are informed of their rights to appeal the denial of their temporary absence application to the Director of Corrections.

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Thank you for your question and interest in this matter. If you require further information, please contact my office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R.J. Simpson', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

R.J. Simpson  
Minister, Justice

- c. Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
Deputy Minister, Justice  
Legislative Coordinator, Executive and Indigenous Affairs