

# Preparing For Your First Visit



**2022 Annual Conference**

*Presented by the PVS Training Committee*

# Goals

- To provide guidance on preparing for and engaging in first visits.
- To share our experiences in visiting and notice the different ways our conversational styles and personalities might affect our approach.
- Ensure every Visitor is as prepared as possible for their initial visit (ever or with a new person)

## Pre-Visit Checklist: 2 Weeks Before Visit

- ❑ For any new prisoners who have never had a PVS Visitor, send an introductory postcard or letter.
- ❑ Coordinate your visit and request an entry memo with your contact at the prison, often the Reentry Affairs Coordinator. Sometimes, the Local Coordinator (or whoever is fulfilling that role for your facility) will do this for all Visitors, sometimes each Visitor will take on this responsibility.
- ❑ Send post cards or letters to every person you plan to visit with the date and approximate time they should expect to be called to the visiting room.

## Pre-Visit Checklist: Week of Visit

- ❑ Address any unique needs you may have, such as medications you need to bring with you or documentation of metal prosthetics.
- ❑ Triple check that your government issued identification is up to date!
- ❑ Check your prisons dress code for outside visitors and plan to dress accordingly. If you are not sure if something is acceptable to wear, err on the side of caution.

# What (Not) to Wear?

Every facility is going to have their own rules,  
but in general avoid:

- Khaki
- Watches
- Shoes with open toes or backs
- Plain white shirts
- Sleeveless, cropped, see-through, or otherwise “revealing” clothing
- Profanity or other suggestive material
- Political statements
- Anything with a hood
- Headwear (with religious exemptions)
- Dresses, skirts, or shorts above the knee

**This is not an  
exhaustive list – be  
sure to check your  
facilities page on  
the BOP website.**

**If you are ever not  
sure, do not hesitate  
to contact the  
office.**

# Pre-Visit Checklist: Day of Visit

- Plan to arrive early – and be ready to patiently wait
  
- Bring with you:
  - Government issued photo ID
  - A copy of your entry memo or letter
  - Clear plastic bag with small bills \*
  - Note paper \*\*
  - Pen or pencil \*\*
  - Proof of Covid vaccination \*\*\*
  
- A smile



**Remember to  
RELAX and  
BREATHE!**

# Entry Process

- Identify yourself to the front desk office. You can ask them for a locker if you need it.
- Fill out a “Notification to Visitor Form” (BP-A0224)
- Give the front desk officer your ID
- Leave everything you are not bringing into the visiting room in your locker – that means your cell phone, watch, car keys, purse, and anything else you have in your pockets. ONLY bring the items from the previous slide.
- Pass through the metal detector
- Understand you may be subject to random topical drug tests.
- Sign the logbook
- Get stamped
- Be escorted to the visiting room

# In The Visiting Room

- Identify yourself as PVS to the VR officer and let them know if you will be seeing more than one person; ask that they be brought down separately if possible.
- You will likely be directed to where they would like you to sit.
- Wait patiently for your visitee to arrive.
  - If it is taking an inordinate amount of time for them to come down, you can inquire at the VR desk how callout is progressing.



# Things to Cover

- Introductions: “Here is a little about me...”  
“Tell me about yourself...”
- How much time you have together
- Visits are confidential EXCEPT... (three emergency situations)
- PVS mission
- What will happen if you are unable to make it to the visit
- Establish boundaries

# Potential Ice Breakers

- Tell me about yourself.
- How did you find out about PVS? Why did you request a visit?
- What have you heard / what do you know about PVS?
- How do you spend your time?
- Do you take classes? Have a job? Engage in hobbies?
- How has Covid affected the prison?



# Role Play #1



# Role Play #2



# Breakout Rooms

We are going to go into breakout rooms for 15 minutes.

**Please share with your group your reactions to the two role plays.**