



International Office Care Activities

INFORMATION
LEAFLET

Introduction

The International Office of the Dutch Probation Service (In Dutch: Bureau Buitenland) has developed new activities for detainees in care countries. This leaflet informs you of our activities.

Why develop new activities?

A prison sentence has adverse effects. It affects human dignity and detainees become isolated, because they are cut off from provisions, support and their social network. Being in foreign detention increases the risk, especially in countries where the circumstances of detention are difficult. There is often a lot of stress and tension, critical situations arise and the ties with the social network are affected.

The International Office has developed three activities that are aimed at the social network, namely:

- Post
- Return
- Information days for the home front

The International Office also developed three activities intended to reduce the detainees' tension and to keep an eye on their personal circumstances.

It concerns the following activities:

- Relaxation
- Extra Help during Detention
- Social Visiting

Below you will find more detailed information regarding these six activities.

Post

Post consists of three posters stimulating written contacts between the detainee and their social network. These posters discuss subjects from different points of view. Why is it important to stay in touch? Which obstacles may be encountered? What can be the results? A poster contains not only writing advices and tips, but also nice, stimulating assignments, inspiring and tempting detainees to maintain contact with their social network. One of the posters is aimed at maintaining contact with children.



For whom

There is a poster aimed at detainees themselves, one for contacts and other key persons in their social network, and also one for children.

The International Office will send Post to detainees (and their contacts) who have signed up for assistance using the International Office's registration form. Upon request, other persons from the social network can also receive the posters by mail.

Deployment of probation volunteers:

Detainees and their social network can start using the posters all by themselves. Detainees receiving visits from a probation volunteer will be encouraged to make use of the posters to maintain contact with their social network. During volunteer meetings and other contact moments with probation volunteers, the regional coordinators will pay attention to Post.

Return

Return is an information booklet preparing detainees and their family members step by step for the detainees' return to the Netherlands. The magazine provides information regarding social security and aftercare and also explicitly focuses on the detainee's own attitude and the role of the social network. Both parties are encouraged to formulate requests for help, to investigate obstacles, explore opportunities and come up with any possible solutions.



For whom

Return is aimed at all detainees in the care countries known to DCV-CA¹.

The regional coordinator will send Return to detainees (and their contacts) who have signed up using the International Office's registration form. Upon request, other persons from the social network may also receive Return.

Detainees who do not sign up for assistance from the International Office, can receive a copy through the embassies and the consulates.

Deployment of probation volunteers:

Detainees and their social network can start using Return all by themselves. Detainees receiving visits from a probation volunteer will be motivated to make use of the exercise book.

During volunteer meetings and other contact moments with probation volunteers, the regional coordinators will pay attention to Return. Return is accompanied by a teaching format that is offered to probation volunteers during the volunteer meetings. The format is supported by a short presentation and some exercises from the Return.

The probation volunteers can also make use of a manual, so that they can assist detainees on using the Return.

Information days for the home front

Several times a year, the International Office organises an information day for the home front. During these days, the regional coordinators provide information and advice. There are also guest speakers invited from DCV-CA, the department of International Transfer of Sentences (IOS), the Epafra Foundation and 'Gevangenzorg Nederland'. Most importantly, the International Office facilitates contact between people in the same situation. The information days for the home front offer the contacts the opportunity to meet other people who are in similar situation. Problems and experiences can be shared and people can support one another.

During the information days for the home front the regional coordinators include family members of former detainees. They share their experiences and offer support, making the attendants aware that they are all in the same situation.

1. DCV-CA: the Consular Affairs and Visa Policy Department. This is the department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs charged among other things with the assistance of detainees.

For whom

For contacts and other key figures within the social network.

Detainees' contacts who sign up for assistance from the International Office using the registration form will receive an invitation for the information days for the home front.

Deployment of probation volunteers

The probation volunteers visiting the detainees have been informed about the information days for the home front. They can draw the detainees' attention to these days so that the detainees can bring their relatives to seize this opportunity.

Relax

Relax is a magazine supporting detainees to gain an insight in the way they handle stress factors and tension. The magazine teaches the detainees to recognise and to reduce the causes and consequences of stress. The magazine counts on the detainees' own strength and how they can mobilise personal and surrounding sources to reduce stress factors.



The detainee is successively presented with several themes: what is stress, dealing with powerlessness, strategic thinking and acting, positive thinking, staying mentally and physically fit and safety. The magazine has expressly chosen to publish a lot of entertaining articles, in order to thus reduce stress. The magazine relates to the detainee's perception, so that they can instantly apply the advice and exercises for relaxation and coping with stress.

For whom:

The magazine is intended for all detainees in the care countries known at the DCV-CA.

The regional coordinator will send the magazine to detainees who have signed up using a registration form of the International Office. Detainees who do not sign up for assistance from the International Office, can receive a copy through the embassies and the consulates.

Deployment of probation volunteers:

Detainees can get started independently with Relax. Those who receive visits from a probation volunteer are stimulated to make use of Relax. During volunteer meetings and through other contacts with the probation volunteers, regional coordinators will pay attention to Relax. Relax is coupled with a working method that will be offered to probation volunteers during volunteer meetings. The working method consists of a short presentation and some exercises described in Relax by way of illustration.

Extra Help during Detention

Extra help during detention involves three extra visits from a probation volunteer to clarify or alleviate problematic situations the detainee is confronted with. Probation volunteers are deployed when a problematic situation arises. The probation volunteer supports, observes and reports, but does not get in contact with authorities. The contact is focused on emotional support, comfort and personal attention for the detainees.

The guideline is that the probation volunteer pays one to three visits within ten days. Such extra help is, for example, provided:

- Shortly after the arrest, when there is still a great lack of information regarding the detainee and his personal circumstances.
- When there are concerns about a detainee's health requiring supplementary observation to clarify the situation for the Embassy or Consulate General.

- When there are practical problems at the home front that need to be solved urgently, requiring information and agreement from the detainee, for instance organizing care for children left behind, housing problems, etc.
- When emotional support is required because something has occurred in the detainee's situation, for instance the death of a family member or a conviction carrying a heavy sentence.

In close collaboration with the case managers of DCV-CA, the International Office has drawn up a work process. This process will be initiated if the post, the ministry or the International Office receives a signal.

For whom:

Extra Help in Detention is aimed at detainees having registered for assistance from the International Office by means of a registration form. In case other detainees need extra help, they have to register first.

Deployment of probation volunteers:

During volunteer meetings and other contact moments with probation volunteers, regional coordinators will pay attention to the work process.

This work process is accompanied by a training that is offered to the probation volunteers during volunteer meetings. They are taught three different models of conversation, aimed at clarifying the substance of the problem, alleviating the emotion associated with the problem or offering practical support. They will pay their visits with a clear 'mission', which includes writing clear reports. Submitting clear reports is part of that.

Probation volunteers can make use of an instruction clip, which is a support for volunteers that have not yet attended the training.

Social Visiting

Social Visiting is aimed at detainees that will not return to the European Netherlands. This is a situation in which the International Office has fewer possibilities to intervene for the sake of return and social rehabilitation.

Social Visiting is a 'light' version of the usual assistance from the International Office. The problems these detainees are confronted with while in detention are identical to those of detainees that do return to the Netherlands. The assistance is no less needed, but there is a different approach to assistance. The probation volunteer visits are aimed at social and mental support, a 'peer contact.' The conversations are not aimed at social rehabilitation and return to the Netherlands.

For whom:

Social Visiting is aimed at detainees who do not return to the European Netherlands. They need to have signed up for assistance from the International Office using a probation form. For this purpose, a special probation form is available.

Deployment of probation volunteers:

During volunteer meetings and through other contact moments with probation volunteers, regional coordinators will pay attention to Social Visiting. Social Visiting is accompanied by a training that will be offered to the probation volunteers during volunteer meetings. Through a series of exercises they learn to set limits and they are taught to stimulate self coaching in detainees. Probation volunteers also have access to a fact sheet. The sheet explains the meaning of Social Visiting. To support volunteers that did not yet attend the training, an instruction clip is available.

