

Bureau of Prisons, Justice

§ 548.16

Opportunities for religious activities are open to the entire inmate population, without regard to race, color, nationality, or ordinarily, creed. The Warden, after consulting with the institution chaplain, may limit participation in a particular religious activity or practice to the members of that religious group. Ordinarily, when the nature of the activity or practice (e.g., religious fasts, wearing of headwear, work proscription, ceremonial meals) indicates a need for such a limitation, only those inmates whose files reflect the pertinent religious preference will be included.

(c) The Bureau of Prisons does not require an inmate to profess a religious belief. An inmate may designate any or no religious preference at his/her initial team screening. By notifying the chaplain in writing, an inmate may request to change this designation at any time, and the change will be effected in a timely fashion.

§ 548.11 Definition.

For purposes of this subpart, the term "religious activity" includes religious diets, services, ceremonies, and meetings.

§ 548.12 Chaplains.

Institution chaplains are responsible for managing religious activities within the institution. Institution chaplains are available upon request to provide pastoral care and counseling to inmates through group programs and individual services. Pastoral care and counseling from representatives in the community are available in accordance with the provisions of §§ 548.14 and 548.19. The chaplain may ask the requesting inmate to provide information regarding specific requested religious activities for the purpose of making an informed decision regarding the request.

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§ 548.13 Schedules and facilities.

(a) Under the general supervision of the Warden, chaplains shall schedule and direct the institution's religious activities.

(b) The Warden may relieve an inmate from an institution program or

assignment if a religious activity is also scheduled at that time.

(c) Institutions shall have space designated for the conduct of religious activities.

§ 548.14 Community involvement (volunteers, contractors).

(a) The institution's chaplain may contract with representatives of faith groups in the community to provide specific religious services which the chaplain cannot personally deliver due to, ordinarily, religious prescriptions or ecclesiastical constraints to which the chaplain adheres.

(b) The institution's chaplain may secure the services of volunteers to assist inmates in observing their religious beliefs.

(c) The Warden or the Warden's designee (ordinarily the chaplain) may require a recognized representative of the faith group to verify a volunteer's or contractor's religious credentials prior to approving his or her entry into the institution.

§ 548.15 Equity.

No one may disparage the religious beliefs of an inmate, nor coerce or harass an inmate to change religious affiliation. Attendance at all religious activities is voluntary and, unless otherwise specifically determined by the Warden, open to all.

§ 548.16 Inmate religious property.

(a) Inmate religious property includes but is not limited to rosaries and prayer beads, oils, prayer rugs, phylacteries, medicine pouches, and religious medallions. Such items, which become part of an inmate's personal property, are subject to normal considerations of safety and security. If necessary, their religious significance shall be verified by the chaplain prior to the Warden's approval.

(b) An inmate ordinarily shall be allowed to wear or use personal religious items during religious services, ceremonies, and meetings in the chapel, unless the Warden determines that the wearing or use of such items would threaten institution security, safety, or good order. Upon request of the inmate, the Warden may allow the wearing or use of certain religious items