

## **Church of Hope Visitor Information:**

Expect the following:

- All volunteers must show a valid driver's license or picture ID and be cleared at the front desk or window before entering the prison.
- Bring as little as possible into the prison. Bibles are okay.
- Wallets, purses, brief cases, etc. are not allowed.
- Do not bring money inside.
- Cell phones are never allowed under any circumstances.
- Never bring tobacco products, lighters, matches, or any type of medication into the prison.
- All volunteers go through a security check when they enter the prison.
- Do not take anything into or out of the prison without permission. Every person is subject to search at any time while on prison property.
- If a volunteer is found with contraband, he/she may be disallowed from entering the prison ever again. (Contraband is defined as any item not permitted into the prison or not on the clearance list.)
- Dress code. Before you go to the prison be sure you are dressed appropriately; otherwise, you will not be allowed to enter.
  - o Tight or revealing clothing is not allowed. Don't wear sleeveless shirts/tops, bare midriffs, tank tops, short skirts or pants, low necklines, see-through fabrics, open-toed/open-heeled shoes, or flip flops.
  - o Avoid metal in your attire as it will set off the metal detectors. A watch and/or wedding ring is okay.
  - o No clothing or attire with offensive slogans is ever allowed. Any attire that may be considered gang-related is not allowed.
- Avoid excessive makeup, heavy perfumes, or any type of clothing that draws undue attention. As volunteers, we are there to lift up Jesus Christ and we don't ever want to distract from that goal.
- Visitor restroom facilities are usually provided in the prison entry area. Ask a prison staff person about restrooms and water fountains that may be available near the area where you are going inside the prison.
- Volunteers are given identification tags so it is clear they are authorized visitors.

- Volunteers are normally escorted along corridors, through doors and buildings either by a pink tag or an officer.
- Volunteers are allowed only in areas where their event or program is being held. Stay with your group and do not go anywhere else.
- Be natural, be yourself. Take time to get to know the ladies by listening and asking good questions. Prayerfully listen for opportunities to demonstrate God's grace and hope. Your attitude of humility and your genuine desire to serve are highly important.
- Remember it is God's harvest. Learn to walk alongside the ladies as they search for the truth in God's Word. Never push anyone to make a decision for Christ.
- Treat inmates and staff with respect. Act as if you have just entered someone else's house. Remember that prison officers and staff spend a considerable amount of time at the facility, and inmates live there, so it is their residence.
- Even if you disagree with prison personnel, always submit to their authority. By doing this, you set a good example for prisoners who are watching. Remember you are a guest at the facility and can be asked to leave at any time. For your safety, follow all the rules and do exactly as you are told. Be sure to thank officers and staff for their assistance.

*NOTE: This list of guidelines does not cover all prison rules and regulations. Church of Hope volunteer training provides more in-depth instruction.*