

# QUICK FACTS

## STRUCTURED INTERVENTION UNITS

### SUMMARY

Structured intervention units (SIUs) are used when inmates cannot be managed safely within a mainstream inmate population. In SIUs, inmates receive targeted interventions, programs and healthcare with the goal of returning to a mainstream inmate population as soon as possible. Inmates in SIUs have the opportunity for a minimum of four hours a day for time outside their cell, including two hours a day of interaction time with others. Inmates in SIUs are subject to independent external oversight, under specific circumstances.

### WHAT ARE INMATES PROVIDED WITH IN AN SIU?

When an inmate is transferred to an SIU, they will:

- be offered the opportunity to spend a minimum of four hours a day outside their cell;
- be offered the opportunity for interaction time with others for a minimum of two hours a day as part of their daily minimum of four hours outside their cell;
- receive opportunities in a safe and secure environment for structured interventions and programming tailored to address their specific needs in relation to the behaviours that led to their transfer;
- have a parole officer to assist them in addressing the factors or behaviours that led to their transfer and assist in facilitating their

- return to a mainstream inmate population;
- receive daily shower time;
- be visited daily by a registered health care professional without a barrier, have access to essential health services and reasonable access to non-essential health services;
- have access to an Elder/Spiritual Advisor and Chaplain, as well as to cultural or spiritual practices, where reasonably possible;
- have access to their legal counsel;
- have the right to engage legal counsel or assistant, to attend the Structured Intervention Unit Review Committee (SIURC);
- have access to organizations, including but not limited to the Office of the Correctional Investigator (OCI), Citizen Advisory Committees, Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and John Howard Society;
- receive inmate pay for participating in their assigned programs, have leisure time and visits; and
- have access to their personal property.

### WHERE ARE SIUS LOCATED?

SIUs are multi-level security units within an institution, which means that inmates with different security levels can be accommodated in the same SIU. There are SIUs at ten men's institutions as well as at all five women's institutions.

### **Pacific Region**

Kent Institution  
Fraser Valley Institution for Women

### **Prairie Region**

Bowden Institution  
Edmonton Institution  
Saskatchewan Penitentiary  
Stony Mountain Institution  
Edmonton Institution for Women

### **Ontario Region**

Millhaven Institution  
Grand Valley Institution for Women

### **Quebec Region**

Donnacona Institution  
Port-Cartier Institution  
Regional Reception Centre (Special Handling Unit)  
Joliette Institution for Women

### **Atlantic Region**

Atlantic Institution  
Nova Institution for Women

## **WHO IS TRANSFERRED TO AN SIU?**

A designated staff member, other than the Institutional Head, may authorize the transfer of an inmate to the SIU if:

- the inmate has acted, has attempted to act, or intends to act in a manner that jeopardizes the safety of any person or the security of a penitentiary, and allowing the inmate to be in the mainstream inmate population would jeopardize the safety of any person or the security of the penitentiary;
- allowing the inmate to be in the mainstream inmate population would jeopardize the inmate's safety; or
- allowing the inmate to be in a mainstream inmate population would interfere with an investigation that could lead to criminal charges or serious disciplinary charges under section 41(2) of the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act*.

## **HOW DO TRANSFERS WORK?**

Before a transfer is authorized, a good deal of effort goes into working with offenders, including interventions and finding alternatives to the SIU. SIUs are meant as a temporary measure to help inmates adopt more positive behaviours to keep them, and the institution as a whole, safe and secure.

If there are no alternatives, an inmate is authorized for transfer to an SIU by:

- the Assistant Warden of Interventions (AWI), during regular business hours;
- in the absence of the AWI, the Assistant Warden of Operations (AWO), during regular business hours; or
- the Correctional Manager outside regular business hours.

Where the correctional manager authorizes the transfer, the AWI (or AWO in absence of the AWI), must either confirm or cancel the transfer authorization on the next working day.

The AWI will continue to review the inmate's case, in consultation with the case management team, to determine if a reasonable alternative exists. If an alternative is identified prior to the Institutional Head review, the transfer authorization will be cancelled.

The Institutional Head where the inmate is incarcerated will either approve or not approve an inmate's transfer to an SIU no later than five working days from the day the SIU transfer authorization was given.

Any decision to transfer an inmate to an SIU will include consideration of their health needs.

Not all institutions have SIUs. If an inmate at a men's non-SIU institution is authorized for a transfer to an SIU, the inmate will be transferred to a designated restricted movement cell until the transfer to an institution with an SIU is facilitated. The transfer of

an inmate to an SIU must be completed no later than five working days after the day on which the transfer was authorized. Until the transfer is completed, restrictions may be imposed on the inmate's movement.

While on restricted movement, the inmate has the same rights and entitlements as an inmate who is in an SIU, including the opportunity to be out of cell for a minimum of four hours daily, and interactions with others for a minimum of two hours daily if circumstances permit. The inmate's conditions of confinement may be reviewed by an IEDM pursuant to the CCRA's prescribed circumstances.

For more information refer to [Guidelines 711-1 – SIU Transfer Procedures - SIU sites](#) and [Guidelines 711-2 – SIU Transfer Procedures – Non-SIU sites](#)

## ARE VICTIMS NOTIFIED ABOUT A TRANSFER TO AN SIU?

CSC will continue to notify registered victims when inmates are transferred to a different institution. If the inmate is at a non-SIU institution and is transferred to an institution with an SIU, CSC will disclose to registered victims the new name and location of the institution where the inmate is serving their sentence (after the transfer has occurred). Registered victims will not be notified that the inmate is transferred for the purpose of a transfer to an SIU.

If the inmate is transferred to an SIU located at the same institution, no victim notification will occur.

## WHAT DOES AN AVERAGE DAY IN AN SIU LOOK LIKE?

CSC has an obligation to make multiple genuine offers of opportunities to inmates to leave their cell. When an inmate is transferred to an SIU, they will be offered opportunities to leave your cell to:

- interact with correctional officers, primary workers, and correctional managers;
- meet with a parole officer;
- engage with health care staff;
- participate in correctional programs and

interventions;

- attend individual counselling sessions with Elders/Spiritual Advisors or a Chaplain;
- work with an Indigenous liaison officer or volunteers;
- engage in indoor/outdoor exercise;
- participate in activities as arranged by social program officers;
- interact with other inmates; and
- shower

Specific routines will vary site-by-site, which is based on, in part, the number of inmates in the SIU.

## DO INMATES HAVE ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES IN AN SIU?

Continuity of care is fundamental to safe, quality care and this includes inmates in the SIU. When an inmate is transferred to an SIU, they continue to have access to essential health services and reasonable access to non-essential health services consistent with their level of health care need. They will receive daily health care visits by a registered health care professional without a barrier who will observe and speak to them directly to review their physical and mental health. Health professionals will monitor and address health care concerns and administer medication or other treatments as required.

CSC supports the professional autonomy and the clinical independence of registered health care professionals, including their ability to exercise, without undue influence, their professional judgement in the care and treatment of inmates. Consistent with the requirements of professional health regulatory colleges, the role of health care professionals includes a patient advocacy function for the provision of care that advances health and well-being. CSC fully supports health care professionals meeting their obligation to provide patient centred care.

CSC has enhanced health services for inmates to provide additional health professional resources,

including psychiatric services to support integrated health care and the early assessment and diagnosis of mental illness. These enhancements direct inmates with mental illnesses to the right pathway of care so that they can receive appropriate and timely treatment.

Health services are also responsible for directly responding to inmate complaints and grievances on health care matters.

## HOW IS COVID-19 IMPACTING INMATES IN AN SIU?

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, CSC has implemented infection prevention and control measures at all its sites, including in SIUs, to protect inmates, staff and visitors. Prevention measures include:

- masks and other personal protective equipment;
- physical distancing;
- frequent hand hygiene;
- offering the vaccine to all inmates;
- active screening of all persons entering the site, including staff and visitors;
- testing of inmates and staff; and
- enhanced cleaning and disinfection.
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Outbreak control measures due to positive cases include:

- medical isolation of inmates who test positive or who have a high risk exposure;
- mass testing for inmates and staff;
- modified institutional routine to minimize close contacts;
- suspended in-person visits; and
- use of additional personal protective equipment.

CSC implements control measures according to an established risk-management framework when there is an active COVID-19 outbreak at an institution or based on the impacts of COVID-19 in the

surrounding community. CSC is continuously working to provide inmates with as many opportunities as possible to spend at least four hours outside of their cell and have at least two hours of interaction time. These include working with volunteers and community organizations and providing workshops, art and social activities. CSC has also encouraged our Citizen Advisory Committee members, volunteers and other support personnel to connect with inmates through phone and video visitation.

To ensure inmates can stay in touch with their family and community, CSC has significantly increased access to video visitation during the pandemic. Inmates are encouraged to speak with CSC staff to learn about all the options available to them at their SIU site.

## WHO REVIEWS AN INMATE'S TIME IN AN SIU?

Any decision to transfer an inmate to an SIU will first include consideration of their health needs. An inmate's health will be assessed within 24 hours of being authorized for a transfer to an SIU and every 14 days thereafter. A mental health assessment will also be completed within 28 days of the inmate's transfer.

If, at any time, a health care professional believes that, for health reasons, an inmate should not remain in the SIU or that conditions of confinement should be altered, the health care professional will make a recommendation to the Institutional Head (IH). The Institutional Head must make a decision on whether an inmate should remain in an SIU or if conditions of confinement should be altered as soon as practicable. If the IH does not implement the recommendation, the Health Committee, which is chaired by the Assistant Commissioner of Health Services, will review the inmate's case and if the health care recommendation is again not implemented, an Independent External Decisions Maker (IEDM) will review the case and make a decision.

Several levels of reviews will take place once an inmate is transferred to an SIU.

First, a Structured Intervention Unit Review Committee (SIURC) will review the case no later than 20 calendar days from the date of the transfer authorization to the SIU. SIURC's are at every SIU site and make recommendations to the IH or ADC (as applicable) on whether an inmate should remain in or be removed from an SIU and/or if conditions of confinement should be altered.

The SIURC will continue to review an inmate's case every subsequent 20 calendar days from the date of a designated authority's decision until the inmate is transferred out of the SIU and before each duration-based IEDM's decision.

Following an SIURC's recommendation, the IH must make a decision no later than 30-days following an inmate's transfer authorization to an SIU if the inmate will remain in an SIU. If the IH determines that all legal requirements are met and the inmate must remain in the SIU, the SDC will review the case within 30- calendar days and then within every 60-days thereafter for as long as the inmate remains in an SIU.

In addition to the IH and SDC reviews of a case, the Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Correctional Operations (ADCCO), will also review an inmate's case within 45 calendar days of the SIU authorization to transfer and within 30 calendar days of each of their previous review. The ADCCO can only make recommendations after reviewing a case as only an IH, the SDC or an IEDM can order an inmate's removal from an SIU.

In addition to the above, the IH can complete an ad-hoc review at any time during an inmate's stay in an SIU to make a decision that the inmate should not remain in an SIU any longer and should be transferred to a mainstream inmate population. Finally, in addition to all these internal reviews, an IEDM will review an inmate's case if:

- the inmate has not been provided or has not taken the opportunity to be out of their cell for a minimum four hours daily for five consecutive days or for 15 out of 30 calendar days or if the inmate is not interacting with others for the minimum two hours daily for five consecutive days or 15 out of 30 calendar days;
- following a review of the above where the IEDM has determined that CSC has taken all reasonable steps to provide an inmate with opportunities to be out of their cell for four hours daily and to interact with others for a minimum of two hours daily, but for 10-consecutive days after this finding, the inmate has not met the minimum time out of cell or are not engaging in interaction time; and
- within 30 days of the decision made after the SDC.

An IEDM will also review an inmate's case if the inmate was authorized for a transfer to an SIU four times in the last 180 days. The IEDM's decisions are binding.

If any of the reviews determine that an inmate should not remain in an SIU, an alternative to an SIU will be identified. Alternatives may include a transfer to the mainstream inmate population at the same institution or a transfer to another institution at the same or a different security level.

## **IS THERE ANY EXTERNAL OVERSIGHT OF SIUS?**

The Minister of Public Safety has established an external [SIU Implementation Advisory Panel](#) (SIU IAP) and appointed Independent External Decisions Makers ([IEDMs](#)).

The renewed SIU IAP monitors, assesses and reports on issues related to the ongoing implementation of the SIUs. The renewed Panel will reflect a diverse spectrum of perspectives, knowledge and experience related to federal corrections and the unique needs of federal inmates.



For more information about the [SIU IAP](#), visit the Public Safety web site.

IEDMs have been appointed to provide external oversight of decisions to maintain inmates in SIUs as well as their conditions of confinement. In addition to reviews conducted by CSC at regular intervals, IEDMs will review cases of inmates transferred to an SIU in specific circumstances. IEDMs can determine that the inmate should not be in an SIU or that their conditions of confinement should be altered in accordance with the recommendation of a registered health care professional. These decisions are binding.

There are twelve IEDMs and they are independent of CSC. CSC must adhere to the decision of the IEDM, however decisions are also subject to judicial review. IEDMs are located in each of CSC's five regions and do site visits as required to complete their work. For more information about the [IEDMs](#), please refer to the Public Safety web site.

## ARE THERE SIUS AT WOMEN'S INSTITUTIONS?

All five women's institutions have an SIU and follow the same policy as men's institutions. If it is decided that an inmate is to be transferred to an SIU at a women's institution, they receive the same opportunities for interaction time, interventions and programming and are subject to the same review requirements as men's institutions.

In addition to the SIU, there are Enhanced Support Houses (ESHs) at each women's institution. The goal of the ESH is to provide a short-term living environment if an inmate requires more direct support, interventions and programming. It can be used as an alternative if their risk is deemed manageable, with additional interventions, within the mainstream inmate population.

Inmates in the ESH will continue to attend programs and work as part of the mainstream inmate population, and there is no change to conditions of

confinement. They will receive additional staff support and greater access to individualized interventions in a supportive environment.

If at any time, their presence in the ESH no longer presents an assumable level of risk, all other alternatives will be explored, which may include a transfer to an SIU.

## DO INMATES GET THEIR ALLOTTED TIME OUT OF CELL EVERY DAY?

Inmates in an SIU will be provided with the opportunity for their four hours of daily time out of a cell, including two hours of interaction time between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., unless:

- They refuse to avail themselves of the opportunity;
- If, at the time that the opportunity is provided, they do not comply with reasonable instructions to ensure their own safety, or that of any other person or the security of the institution; or
- Circumstances such as natural disasters, fires, riots and work refusals under section 128 of the *Canada Labour Code* occur, and their time out of cell must be limited to what is reasonably required for security purposes.

If the inmate refuses the opportunities for daily time out of cell entitlements, CSC will continue to encourage the inmate to take the opportunity, and will not consider one refusal as an indication that the inmate will not participate for the entire day.

## HOW IS CSC TRACKING INMATES' REQUIRED DAILY TIME OUT OF CELL?

Accurately documenting an inmate's daily activities in the SIU is critical to ensuring we are addressing their specific risks and needs. You are key to recording this information.

CSC is using a technological solution called the LTE-SIU application to track inmates' time out of their cell

and participation in activities including interventions; programs; interactions with Elders/Spiritual Advisors and Chaplains; group leisure activities; Health Care visits; community supports and professionals. It also issues an alert when an IEDM is required to conduct a review with respect to the inmate's conditions of confinement.

A radio-frequency identification (RFID) tag has been installed outside every cell on each SIU range, so that when an inmate is transferred to an SIU, the inmate is assigned a cell that is associated with the RFID tag within the application. Anyone interacting with the inmate must use a portable device to scan the RFID tag to initiate the recording of information about any interaction or enter it manually using the desktop application. The data collected through the device, or entered on the desktop application creates a narrative of each inmate's time in the SIU. This data is shared nationally for daily operations, oversight, and compliance management and will be shared with external bodies including the Structured Intervention Units Implementation Advisory Panel and the IEDMs.

## HOW IS INTERACTION TIME WITH OTHERS DEFINED?

Interaction time with others is the opportunity for human contact that is conducive to building rapport, social networks, or strengthening bonds with family or other supports. CSC has an obligation to support interaction time with others through the provision of programs, services, interventions, cultural, religious and spiritual practices, community partners such as volunteers, and family contact, including through video visitation.

Inmates are provided with opportunities each day to engage with others through the activities identified above.

## WHAT PROGRAMS ARE IN MEN'S SIUS?

Inmates transferred to an SIU are provided with the opportunity to continue or start correctional

programming, interventions and services that will address their specific risks or behaviours that have led to the transfer.

### ***Correctional interventions:***

The following correctional interventions are available for delivery to all inmates who are transferred to men's SIUs:

- Motivational Module - Structured Intervention Unit (MM-SIU); and,
- Motivational Module - Structured Intervention Unit-Indigenous (MM-SIU-I).

The objectives of these interventions are to help participants safely reintegrate into the mainstream inmate population, at the earliest possible time, as well as to provide skills that can be used to help the participants remain in the mainstream inmate population.

### ***Education programs:***

Teachers are in SIUs to deliver education programs based on education assessments, needs, and objectives.

### ***Social programs:***

Social programs for SIUs help reinforce the skills acquired in correctional programs, promote the positive use of leisure time and assist with reintegrating into the mainstream inmate population as early as safely possible.

Social program activities and programs include: recreational activities, arts and crafts, cultural and developmental activities, social events, parenting skills training, and the community integration program.

## WHAT PROGRAMS ARE IN WOMEN'S SIUS?

The SIU and ESH focus on the provision of women-centred interventions to address individualized risks and needs.

For inmates in an SIU or ESH in a women's institution the focus is on interventions which include:

- Daily living skills
- Anger management
- Boundary setting
- Stress management
- Nutrition and health
- Fitness and recreation activities
- Effective communication
- Positive relationships
- Balancing thoughts and emotions
- Peer support
- Continuation of social and correctional programs, education, cultural, and spiritual interventions

## **WHAT PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE FOR INDIGENOUS INMATES?**

A thorough Indigenous Social History review is completed and identified social history factors are considered in all decision-making processes related to their needs.

While in an SIU, Indigenous inmates continue to have access to Elders/Spiritual Advisors, Indigenous liaison officers, and traditional and spiritual practices. They will also continue to receive opportunities to engage in spiritual and cultural activities and ceremonies including smudging and, as permitted, attending sweat lodges.

For Indigenous inmates in men's SIUs, there is a correctional program module, which is culturally specific. This includes ceremonies and teachings adapted to Indigenous culture. All modules represent an aspect of the Medicine Wheel and Elder/Spiritual Advisor participation is mandatory in sessions.

For Indigenous inmates in women's SIUs, they will be provided with individualized and culturally appropriate interventions through their interdisciplinary team, which includes Elders/Spiritual Advisors and Indigenous liaison officers.

## **HOW LONG DO INMATES STAY IN AN SIU?**

When an inmate is transferred to an SIU, their time there must end as soon as possible.

They will be expected to work with staff to address the reasons that led to their transfer and be engaged in their SIU correctional plan. Their behavioural and personal progress will be assessed and management will be kept informed of their case.

There will be ongoing reviews to ensure that they are returned to the mainstream inmate population at the earliest possible time as long as it does not jeopardize the safety of any individual or the security of the institution.

For men's and women's institutions, an inmate who is approved to transfer out of an SIU will be transferred to a mainstream inmate population.

## **WHAT IF AN INMATE REFUSES TO LEAVE AN SIU?**

When an inmate is transferred to an SIU, their time there must end as soon as possible.

There are inmates who refuse to leave an SIU even though the decision maker determines that their return to the mainstream inmate population is safe. Reasons for refusal to leave SIU are varied and include:

- wanting to manage their sentence;
- belief they are incompatible with mainstream population; and
- Being in debt to other inmates.

When an inmate refuses to leave the SIU, the refusal will be discussed with the inmate in order to determine reasons for refusal and a plan will be developed to support their reintegration into the mainstream inmate population at the current site.



## **CAN INMATES GRIEVE THEIR TRANSFER TO AN SIU?**

If an inmate disagrees with the decision for their transfer, the reviews and recommendations, the conditions of confinement, access to interventions and programming, daily visits from health services professionals and being provided with time out of cell they have the following options:

- discuss with their case management team;
- contact the OCI;
- file a grievance; and
- submit written or verbal considerations to the IEDM for one of their reviews (CSC must provide these to the IEDM).

They may also request access to their legal counsel and will be given the opportunity to contact counsel, without delay, in a private area outside of their cell in the SIU.

### ***MORE INFORMATION***

More information is available in [Commissioner's Directive 711 – SIUs](#), [Guidelines 711-1 – SIU Transfer Procedures – SIU Sites](#) and [Guidelines 711-2 – SIU Transfer Procedures – Non-SIU Sites](#)