



TRANSFORMING JAIL MINISTRIES  
INFLUENCE. INTEGRITY. INSIDE.

## Clergy Contact Visiting in Hamilton County

1. **Sign-In, Documents, etc.**
2. **Prayer**
3. **Preface:** We have not always had these privileges, nor do they exist everywhere.
  - a. Chaplain visits are often the most vulnerable times during an inmate's incarceration
    - i. We have the ability to be a strong support system for men and women who are suffering, grieving, and uncertain about their future
  - b. We serve them best when we know who we are, where we are, and why we are there.
4. **Why jail ministry?**
  - a. Transforming Jail Ministries was formed in 2007 because Hamilton County had a need for a strong central organization to manage religious services.
    - i. This ministry had previously existed under the Council of Christian Communities.
  - b. Hamilton County Justice Center is one of the 25 largest county jails in the nation.
  - c. We provide three basic services:
    - i. **Adult Jail Chaplains** – we have a little more than 30 men and women serving in corrections and treatment facilities in the county; they have the greatest level of access to inmates and are the ones who most often provide grief intervention and death notifications.
    - ii. **Worship Team Ministry** – we have more than 90 worship teams that provide regular worship services each month, generally on Sundays.
    - iii. **Clergy Contact Visit program** – Lastly, we have you men and women who are the ministers and faith leaders with the greatest relational connection to these men and women. Unlike other facilities, the CCV program allows you to visit at a table, face-to-face with your church members who have been locked up for various reasons.
    - iv. Other facilities require clergy to meet behind a glass window or via video phones.
      1. TJM provides access to local facilities for clergy
      2. We provide chaplains who can supplement your ministry
      3. We distribute bibles and literature as funding allows
  - d. We take seriously Jesus' call to ministry to outsiders and specifically to those who are incarcerated: Mat. 25:31-46.
  - e. We also take seriously Jesus' command to take the gospel to all people: Mat. 28.
5. **Rules for ministry in local facilities.**
  - a. The underlying philosophy of the Clergy Contact Visiting program is that we, the clergy, will do everything right as we exercise the contact visiting privileges granted to us in the Hamilton County jail facilities.
    - i. Even if we are granted opportunities outside what we are entitled to, we will not accept them, for the greater good of the program.
    - ii. This is not about what you can get away with. It is about what you know to be right, maintaining access for yourself and others in the future and safety and security in the present.



- iii. It is not helpful, nor a good witness, to reinforce ‘getting away with whatever you can’ to those in the jail.
- b. Dress Code: What + How = Witness
  - i. What you do and how you carry yourself will impact your witness to inmates and corrections officers.
  - ii. Dress: no shorts, jeans, t-shirts, cleavage, spaghetti straps, unprofessional attire
  - iii. Behavior/Attitude: do not respond negatively to staff or inmates.
    - 1. If you are considered to be a threat to the cohesion of the jail—meaning, if you do not follow orders, question the authority of the officers, or spread negativity about officers, then you will lose visiting privileges. It has happened in the past and I will support the Sheriff’s Department every time.
  - iv. What if I have a problem?
    - 1. If you have a problem with an officer or any other staff member, let me know, not the person you have an issue with.
- c. Take as little as possible into the jail with you.
  - i. Obviously, this means no guns or knives, including pocketknives and small penknives, etc.
  - ii. Leave purses and such in the trunk of your car.
  - iii. No cameras, cell phones or electronic devices (tablets, iPods etc.) of any kind may be taken into the secure areas of the jail facilities. If the call is that important, stay outside.
  - iv. Leave smoking materials in your car; pipes, cigarettes, and electronic smoking devices.
  - v. Staples, paperclips, and rubber bands etc. are not permitted to be given to prisoners in any form.
  - vi. Don't bring anything into, or out for, a prisoner. No food, drink, personal mail etc.
    - 1. Exceptions are religious materials within previous stated guidelines
- d. With each change in leadership and/or administration, new ways
  - i. Be prepared to allow Corrections Officers to inspect anything you are bringing in to give to prisoners
  - ii. You may not give anything to a prisoner if they are going to immediately return to work in the kitchen after your visit
- e. Bibles, Qurans, and other religious books for Hamilton County prisoners must be mailed directly from the publisher, or bookstore, to the individual.
  - i. These must be brand new.
  - ii. Because of a significant increase in drugs and other contraband found in these items we will no longer accept these items through any other method.
  - iii. If you would like to make a donation of these items for use by the jail chaplaincy program you may contact Transforming Jail Ministries. However, these items may not be directed toward a specific person.
- f. If you know, never reveal to an inmate when he/she will be taken out of the facility.
  - i. Security
  - ii. This includes: funeral visits, hospital visits, court, transport to prison, etc.



- g. Corrections Officers (not guards):
  - i. They Are:
    1. In Charge
    2. In Control
    3. On the Spot
  - ii. Ministry to Corrections staff: Your personal conduct and treatment of officers is no less important than your ministry to inmates.
- h. Limited Physical Contact with Inmates
  - i. NEVER hug an inmate; it makes you vulnerable and unsafe
  - ii. IF an inmate hugs you, end the hug quickly without being a jerk

**6. Jails and prisons are not the same.**

<b>Jail</b>	<b>Prison</b>
Railroad roundhouse / airline hub	Destination
Few privileges	More privileges
Almost no personal items	More personal items
Few, if any, programs	More programs
Generally, no contact visiting	Contact visiting if on approved list
Unknown outcome	Known sentence
Emergency Room / Hospital	Resolution

**7. Visiting FAQs**

- a. Who is where and how to enter the facilities
  - i. Hamilton County Justice Center
  - ii. 1617 Reading Rd.
  - iii. Woodburn Ave.
  - iv. River City Correctional
    1. To make arrangements for a Clergy Contact Visit at the River City Correctional Center, call the receptionist at 946-6800.
    2. Give the name of the person you wish to visit. You will, in turn, be given the name and phone number of the person's Case Manager.
    3. You will then need to call the Case Manager and arrange a time for your visit.
    4. You must wear your Clergy Contact Visiting identification badge when you visit.
  - v. Others: Men and Women's Adapt; Turning Point
  - vi. Juvenile Youth Center (aka 2020)
    1. Clergy Contact Visiting badges are recognized as part of the initial process for contact visiting by clergy in the Juvenile Youth Center.
    2. To make arrangements for a clergy visit at the Juvenile Youth Center contact Angela Alston at (513) 946-2648. If you cannot reach Ms. Alston call Ms. Vickie Brown-Smith at 946-2646.



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- b. Visiting: Who, When, Where & How Long
  - i. Who: You are permitted to visit only your church members, or by request of inmate, TJM, or the Sheriff's Department.
    - 1. NOTE: You may not visit any member of your family, including in-laws and step-relatives, through the Clergy Contact Visiting Program. When visiting a family member your visiting status is that of a private citizen (non-contact and during normal visiting hours). In this case your visit will count against the one allotted visit per visiting day.
  - ii. When: normal hours, between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.
  - iii. Where: Justice Center, 1617 Reading Road, Woodburn Ave., River City Correctional Facility
  - iv. How Long: Generally, visits should be under an hour. At times, under extenuating circumstances, it may be reasonable that your visit last longer. Do not abuse this privilege, but please do let the officers know if you will be a while.
  - v. Only in designated areas, never in court holding
    - 1. NOTE: Talbert House and River City are treatment facilities. Treatment takes precedence over everything else. You may attempt to call and arrange a time for your visit in advance. However, there is no guarantee this can be accommodated.

## 8. Other things of importance.

- a. Setting & keeping appropriate boundaries
  - i. You are a minister, not a best friend, family member, etc.
  - ii. Do not give your home address or personal contact information
  - iii. Limit and eliminate information that could be used to extort you, harm you, or harm others around you: this includes information that may seem harmless (i.e., I have "x" number of kids; I did "x"; I live in "\_\_\_\_\_"; etc.)
  - iv. Do not become intimate with an inmate; it has happened, and it is both illegal and un-Christian.
- b. Know who you are and what you are about
  - i. You are a minister.
  - ii. You are not a doctor, lawyer, etc.; if you happen to be a professional in one of those fields, know that your visit is still that of a minister.
- c. Do not visit any Corrections Facility with any alcohol on your breath or in your system.
  - i. Safety & Security
  - ii. Witness
  - iii. Appearance of substance abuse
- d. Jail House Religion, The Search & Condemnation
  - i. People search for something bigger than themselves when they are desperate
  - ii. All of us do this, do not criticize others when they do
  - iii. Depending on God during hard times is a part of depending on him at all times.



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- e. Mail, religious literature, etc.
  - i. You may take religious literature with you, including a personal bible.
  - ii. You may not provide more than a single sheet of paper to an inmate and it must be religious in nature.
    - 1. TJM volunteer chaplains will handle distribution of other materials
- f. Be careful how you help (Self-protection)
  - i. i.e., Call my wife, attorney, friend, etc.
    - 1. No. The wife may have a protective order; this becomes a felony.
    - 2. Others may not wish for contact either; it is ultimately not your business, nor appropriate for these communications to happen.
  - ii. Do not give out your home address and telephone number.
    - 1. If you give out your church name, phone, etc., notify the appropriate people at your church, temple, etc. you are doing so.
  - iii. To set up phone service for those in the Justice Center, call 866-230-7761 or go to [www.GTL.net](http://www.GTL.net) to set up account. For Reading Rd and Woodburn Ave. facilities call 877-570-4268. For The River City Correctional Center call 877-998-5678.
  - iv. IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO INTIMIDATE A WITNESS
    - 1. Another inmate
    - 2. Even if they are a fellow church member
  - v. Tell the truth if questioned.
- g. Death Notifications & Funeral Releases
  - i. Funeral releases take time and take into consideration previous record, the nature and number of current charges and where a person is in the legal process. Funeral Releases are much less likely if they involve crossing county lines. Social Services will assist the prisoner upon learning of the death of a loved one. The Public Defenders office will assist with a funeral release if a relative connection can be established.
    - 1. Call ASAP with: name and relationship of deceased to incarcerated, place to verify death (morgue, police, fire, funeral home), date and location of services.
  - ii. Social Services
    - 1. Mr. Leroy Kreimer North Building, Outlying Facilities A-M, except Mondays (946-6365). Ms. Karen Price South Building, Outlying Facilities N-Z, Re-entry Specialist (946-6357).

## 9. Staying up-to-date is up to you.

- a. To keep your Clergy Contact Visiting credentials current, you must successfully complete
  - i. A background check every 2 years and
  - ii. Attend the orientation session at least once every 4 years.
  - iii. Note: The expiration date on your ID will be determined by background check or orientation, which ever expires first.
  - iv. To avoid any lapse, we recommend that you begin this process at least 3 months before the expiration date listed under picture on your current Clergy Contact Visiting badge.
- b. Badges are produced by the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department at no cost to you.



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- c. 5 things needed to complete this application process:
  - i. Application
  - ii. Background check (request for security clearance)
  - iii. Verification of ordination status
  - iv. Orientation
  - v. TJM/HCSO Waiver Agreement
- d. After all 5 things completed, you will become eligible for identification badge.
  - i. You may call TJM at 794-9999 to check on status. We email you when everything is complete. We do not call you.

## 10. Requesting Your Help

- a. Just like your church or ministry depends on others in order to operate, TJM is no different.
- b. Running this organization is expensive. It requires personnel to process applications, maintain good standing between the sheriff's department and religious communities, and to provide reading glass, bibles, and literature.
- c. We need your help to do this.

## 11. Training Evaluation Forms

## 12. Important Addresses and Phone Numbers

Transforming Jail Ministries  
P.O. Box 198070  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219  
513-794-9999  
www.tjmi.org  
contact@tjmi.org

Hamilton County Jail Facilities  
Hamilton Co. Justice Center  
1000 Sycamore Street  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202  
North Building- (513) 946-6708  
South Building- (513) 946-6707  
Social Services- (513) 946-6357 or 946-6365

Talbert House  
1617 Reading Rd.  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202  
(513) 946-6750

Woodburn Ave.  
2605 Woodburn Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45206  
(513) 946-9553

River City Correctional Center  
3220 Colerain Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45225  
(513) 946-6819

Juvenile Youth Center  
2020 Auburn Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219  
(513) 946-2600