



# COMMISSIONER'S DIRECTIVE 708

Controlled Version 2023-10-06

In Effect: 2023-XX-XX

Due for Review: 20XX-XX-XX

## Special Handling Unit

<b>CORE RESPONSIBILITY</b>	Care and Custody
<b>OFFICE(S) OF PRIMARY INTEREST</b>	Correctional Operations and Programs Sector
<b>ONLINE @</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://thehub/En/collections/policy-legislation/CommissionersDirectives/708-cd-eng.pdf">http://thehub/En/collections/policy-legislation/CommissionersDirectives/708-cd-eng.pdf</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://lehub/Fr/Collections/politiques-lois/DirectivesDuCommissaire/708-cd-fra.pdf">http://lehub/Fr/Collections/politiques-lois/DirectivesDuCommissaire/708-cd-fra.pdf</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/acts-and-regulations/708-cd-eng.shtml">http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/acts-and-regulations/708-cd-eng.shtml</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/lois-et-reglements/708-cd-fr.shtml">http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/lois-et-reglements/708-cd-fr.shtml</a></li> </ul>
<b>AUTHORITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><i>Corrections and Conditional Release Act</i></a> (CCRA), sections <a href="#">3</a>, <a href="#">3.1</a>, <a href="#">4</a>, <a href="#">15.1</a>, <a href="#">26</a>, <a href="#">28</a>, <a href="#">29</a> and <a href="#">87</a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><i>Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations</i></a> (CCRR), sections <a href="#">11</a>, <a href="#">12</a>, <a href="#">13</a>, <a href="#">14</a> and <a href="#">15</a></li> </ul>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To establish a framework for the proportionate and measured use of the Special Handling Unit for inmates who pose an ongoing risk to the safety of staff and inmates and to the security of the institution</li> </ul>
<b>APPLICATION</b>	Applies to all staff involved in the case management, review and transfer of inmates to and from the Special Handling Unit

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## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **National Headquarters**

1. The Senior Deputy Commissioner will:
  - a. establish a National Advisory Committee and identify an executive from National Headquarters as the Senior Advisor
  - b. make the final decision on whether to transfer to, maintain at, or transfer inmates from the Special Handling Unit (SHU) at [case review meetings](#) and ensure the inmate is notified of the decision, as outlined in the timeframes listed in [Special Handling Unit: Procedures](#)
  - c. chair the [administrative meetings](#) of the National Advisory Committee
  - d. take into consideration and document an inmate's state of health and health care needs, as well as their Indigenous social history, if applicable, when making a decision to transfer to, maintain at or transfer an inmate from the SHU
  - e. in collaboration with the national, regional and institutional Health Services, ensure all reasonable efforts have been made to initiate treatment prior to the decision on the transfer when it appears that an inmate has mental health needs requiring essential mental health care at the time of the preparation of their case for transfer to the SHU.
2. The Assistant Commissioner, Correctional Operations and Programs, will perform the SHU-related duties of the Senior Deputy Commissioner in their absence.
3. The National Advisory Committee will:
  - a. conduct an interview with inmates who are referred to the SHU or admitted to the SHU, upon their request, prior to the case review meeting, as outlined in the [Special Handling Unit: Procedures](#)
  - b. suggest alternate management strategies, if applicable
  - c. make recommendations to the Senior Deputy Commissioner at the case review meetings on whether to transfer to, maintain at, or transfer inmates from the SHU.

4. The Senior Advisor appointed by the Senior Deputy Commissioner will:
  - a. provide advice to the Senior Deputy Commissioner regarding inmate SHU decisions as well as the SHU procedures
  - b. ensure that the Senior Deputy Commissioner's decisions on whether to transfer to, maintain at, or transfer inmates from the SHU are adhered to by the Institutional Heads
  - c. approve the agenda for the administrative meetings of the National Advisory Committee.
5. The file manager will:
  - a. organize case review meetings, inmate interviews and administrative meetings, as well as provide administrative support
  - b. maintain communication with and provide subject matter expertise to institutional, regional and national staff involved in the SHU referral/review process.

#### **Regional Headquarters**

6. The Regional Deputy Commissioner of the sending region will:
  - a. review and either support or not support the referral for a transfer to the SHU by an Institutional Head
  - b. identify Regional Headquarters staff who will participate in the SHU transfer process.
7. Regional Headquarters staff identified by the Regional Deputy Commissioner will:
  - a. participate in case conferences with the sending institution for inmates referred to the SHU
  - b. offer alternatives to a transfer to the SHU, when appropriate.

#### **Sending Institution**

8. The Institutional Head of the sending institution will:
  - a. ensure alternatives to the SHU have been explored prior to making a transfer recommendation
  - b. make the initial determination as to whether or not an inmate's behaviour warrants consideration for a transfer to the SHU
  - c. ensure processes outlined in [Commissioner's Directive \(CD\) 784 – Victim Engagement](#) are respected with regard to an inmate's transfer or movement

- d. implement the decision of the Senior Deputy Commissioner, as required.
9. A [mental health professional](#) at the sending institution will complete the [mental health assessment](#) in accordance with the [Content Guidelines for Mental Health Assessments for Transfers to the Special Handling Unit](#).
  10. The Manager, Assessment and Interventions, at the sending institution will:
    - a. organize a case conference with [Case Management Team](#) members and other appropriate individuals from the sending institution (e.g., Assistant Warden, Operations, Correctional Manager, Security Intelligence Officer, and Chief Psychologist or delegated mental health professional, Indigenous Liaison Officer, Elder and other staff as deemed necessary) to determine if a referral to the SHU is appropriate
    - b. consult with the Manager, Assessment and Interventions, at the SHU and other appropriate staff at Regional Headquarters
    - c. facilitate, in collaboration with the file manager, the inmate interview(s).
  11. The Parole Officer at the sending institution will:
    - a. present the inmate's case during the institutional case conference and the regional consultation
    - b. present the inmate's case to the National Advisory Committee for review and decision
    - c. complete the Assessment for Decision, as outlined in the [Special Handling Unit: Procedures](#).

### **Special Handling Unit**

12. The Institutional Head of the SHU will:
  - a. establish and chair the [Correctional Intervention Board](#) at the SHU, and ensure it consists of the Manager, Assessment and Interventions, Parole Officers and other members (e.g., Elder, Indigenous Liaison Officer, Correctional Program Officer, mental health professional, Correctional Manager, Security Intelligence Officer), as deemed necessary
  - b. ensure processes outlined in [CD 784 – Victim Engagement](#) with regard to an inmate's transfer or movement are respected
  - c. implement the SHU transfer decisions of the Senior Deputy Commissioner
  - d. support the intake assessment process, the development of the Correctional Plan, and the determination of the inmate's security classification and penitentiary placement for cases that are admitted to the SHU directly after sentencing.

13. The Correctional Intervention Board at the SHU will examine the recommendations put forth by the Case Management Team for every case and document them in the CSC Board Review/Decision screen of the Offender Management System.
14. The Manager, Assessment and Interventions, at the SHU will:
  - a. attend the Correctional Intervention Board and note any dissenting opinions
  - b. request [security confirmation](#) from the receiving Institutional Head/Executive Director
  - c. participate and provide advice in discussions with sending institutions and the file manager regarding potential referrals to the SHU
  - d. inform the file manager and the receiving institution of any new information that could impact an inmate's transfer from the SHU
  - e. organize, in collaboration with the file manager, the inmate interviews.
15. The Parole Officer at the SHU will:
  - a. update the inmate's Correctional Plan, pursuant to [CD 710-1 – Progress Against the Correctional Plan](#)
  - b. complete the intake process for inmates who were admitted directly to the SHU after sentencing
  - c. complete the assessment related to a decision to maintain at, or transfer from, the SHU, as outlined in the [Special Handling Unit: Procedures](#)
  - d. present the inmate's case to the Correctional Intervention Board
  - e. present the inmate's case to the National Advisory Committee and provide relevant updates.
16. A mental health professional at the SHU will:
  - a. complete the mental health assessment, no later than 25 [working days](#) following the inmate's arrival, for:
    - i. [emergency transfers](#)
    - ii. inmates convicted of any terrorism offence where the initial security classification is maximum
    - iii. inmates transferred from provincial custody directly to the SHU

- b. complete a review of the inmate's mental health status, in consideration of their general mental health as well as the impact of the SHU placement on their mental health, one year after the arrival to the SHU and every year thereafter. A shorter timeframe can be put in place when deemed necessary by a mental health professional, a member of the National Advisory Committee and/or the Senior Deputy Commissioner.

### **Receiving Institution**

17. The Institution Head/Executive Director of the receiving institution and/or Regional Treatment Centre will:

- a. review the case, support or not support an inmate's transfer from the SHU to the institution, and:
  - i. if the transfer is supported, prepare a [management plan](#) and document it in a Memo to File, as outlined in the [Special Handling Unit: Procedures](#)
  - ii. if the transfer is not supported, document the reasons they do not support the transfer in a Memo to File
- b. provide the security confirmation to the Manager, Assessment and Interventions, at the SHU, when requested
- c. provide an update to the National Advisory Committee on the inmate's reintegration, following their transfer from the SHU, upon request.

### **ENQUIRIES**

18. Strategic Policy Division  
National Headquarters  
Email: [Gen-NHQPolicy-Politi@CSC-SCC.GC.CA](mailto:Gen-NHQPolicy-Politi@CSC-SCC.GC.CA)

Commissioner,

Anne Kelly

## ANNEX A

### CROSS-REFERENCES AND DEFINITIONS

#### CROSS-REFERENCES

[CD 001 – Mission, Values and Ethics Framework of the Correctional Service of Canada](#)

[CD 081 – Offender Complaints and Grievances](#)

[CD 566-6 – Security Escorts](#)

[CD 701 – Information Sharing](#)

[CD 702 – Indigenous Offenders](#)

[CD 705-3 – Immediate Needs Identification and Admission Interviews](#)

[CD 705-6 – Correctional Planning and Criminal Profile](#)

[CD 705-7 – Security Classification and Penitentiary Placement](#)

[CD 706 – Classification of Institutions](#)

[CD 710-1 – Progress Against the Correctional Plan](#)

[CD 710-2 – Transfer of Inmates](#)

[CD 711 – Structured Intervention Units](#)

[CD 750 – Chaplaincy Services](#)

[CD 784 – Victim Engagement](#)

[CD 800 – Health Services](#)

[Special Handling Unit: Procedures](#)

#### DEFINITIONS

**Administrative meeting:** a meeting chaired by the Senior Deputy Commissioner and attended by the National Advisory Committee, other relevant CSC staff and/or external stakeholders to discuss the SHU processes and procedures.

**Case Management Team:** the individuals involved in managing an offender's case, which include at a minimum the Parole Officer and the offender, and in institutions, the Correctional Officer II/Primary Worker.

**Case review meeting:** a meeting chaired by the Senior Deputy Commissioner and attended by the National Advisory Committee and other relevant CSC staff, where inmates' cases are reviewed and a decision is made on whether they will be transferred to, maintained at or transferred from the SHU.

**Correctional Intervention Board:** a multidisciplinary team that approves interventions and contributes to recommendations or decisions for complex cases. The Interdisciplinary Mental Health Team is considered a component of the Correctional Intervention Board.

**Emergency transfer:** the transfer of an inmate on an involuntary basis when there is immediate risk to the public, staff or inmates that cannot be managed within the current institution.

**Management plan:** a summary of information that may result in the identification of a potential threat to the safety of the staff, the inmate, other individuals or the security of the institution and a strategy developed by the proposed receiving institution to address or manage the specific risk the inmate represents.

**Mental health assessment:** an evaluation of a person's mental, emotional and social functioning, inclusive of any additional factors that may be influencing institutional adjustment. The assessment process may include, but is not limited to, the gathering, integration and interpretation of psychological data through the use of tests, interviews, case studies, behavioural observations, collateral information, and file review, and specifically designed devices and measurement procedures. The type and nature of assessment are guided by the referral question and the needs of the offender. If the referral question involves security reclassification, the assessment will focus on the offender's functioning as it pertains to mental health and institutional adjustment and will identify those factors that can impact their adaptation and/or integration into a less structured environment.

**Mental health professional:** CSC staff and contractors who offer services for the purposes of improving an offender's mental health and are registered or licensed in Canada, preferably in the province/territory of practice. Individuals will operate within their scope of practice and competence. Examples include Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Physicians, Nurses, and Clinical Social Workers.

**Security confirmation:** a confirmation from the Institutional Head of the receiving institution and the Director, Preventive Security and Intelligence, that no new security information exists since the decision to transfer was made, that would have an impact on the safe reintegration of an inmate into a maximum security institution.

**Working day:** a day of the week that is not a statutory holiday or weekend.