

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Job Title:</b>	Probation Officer
<b>Group:</b>	Corrections Services
<b>Reports to:</b>	Lead Service Manager
<b>Location:</b>	Regional
<b>Date:</b>	December 2007 ( Reformatted November 2016)

## ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

At the Department of Corrections our goal is to reduce re-offending, and underlying this is a strong commitment to public safety.

Our people care about our communities and want to make New Zealand a safer place to be. We do this by helping people lead crime-free lives, which means fewer victims and safer communities.

Corrections' core role of managing the custodial and community-based sentences imposed by the Courts gives us the opportunity to change lives and shape futures. Of the 8,000 people who work at Corrections, the majority work directly with offenders in a variety of roles including probation officers, corrections officers, case managers, programme facilitators, nurses, community work supervisors, instructors and psychologists.

The Department of Corrections manages 18 prisons located from Northland to Invercargill and 160 Community Corrections sites in towns and cities across New Zealand where probation staff manages people serving non-custodial sentences and orders such as community work, home detention or parole.

The vast majority of the offenders the department works with live in the community, and most of those sentenced to a term of imprisonment will be released at some stage. Therefore it is in all our interests to ensure that when people leave Corrections they have the support and skills they need to live a crime-free life. We do this through targeted rehabilitation and reintegration, treatment, education and trade-training opportunities for offenders that will reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

You can help change lives and shape futures too.

For more information go to [www.corrections.govt.nz](http://www.corrections.govt.nz).

## ROLE PURPOSE

The role of the Probation Officer is to protect the public and reduce re-offending by bringing about positive change in offenders' lives. A Probation Officer provides Courts with recommendations to inform sentencing decisions and manage offenders lives on community-based sentences and orders. The work is carried out in Courts, Prisons, Community Probation Offices and in the community.

Probation Officers are appointed to a generic role with a Community Probation Area. The job holder may initially be assigned to a specific area of probation work, but will be expected to rotate through the full range of duties over time. In addition Probation Officers may carry out specialist duties such as providing professional supervision to colleagues, staff training, or prosecuting defended breaches and recalls.

## KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

### Key Accountability Areas:

#### **Carry out Pre-sentence Assessments in Order to Provide the Court with Relevant Information to Inform Judges in their Sentencing Decisions**

- Complete screening assessment for offenders remanded for sentencing to determine risk of reconviction and identify any relevant mental health, drug or alcohol issues.
- Determine whether a same day remand is required for the offender.
- Conduct the structured assessment interview and gather and review other background information.
- Complete assessments as appropriate and prepare sentencing recommendations for court.
- In situations where a reparation or emotional harm is required, investigate the offender's financial means, attitude to reparation and the victim's reparation expectations, and provide the court with an appropriate recommendation.

#### **Plan and Manage Community Based Sentences and Orders, Including Home Detention, Intensive Supervision, Supervision, Community Detention, Community Work, Release from Prison on Conditions and Parole with or without Residential Restrictions.**

- Induct offenders into sentence or order to ensure they understand their responsibilities, rights and the consequences of non-compliance.
- Complete the post sentencing assessment interview on offenders as appropriate and in accordance with operational policy.
- Develop sentence plans appropriate to the sentence management regime, which address the offender's identified rehabilitation and safety needs.
- Manage sentence or order in accordance with Community Probation requirements and the sentence objectives.
- Monitor progress against the plan, revising goals and activities as appropriate and in accordance with sentence phases. Conduct regular sentence plan reviews.
- Work with Kaiwhakahaere to engage whanau involvement with specified offenders.
- Ensure all interview, assessment, and sentence management documentation is complete and up-to-date in the offender management information system and in offender files
- Ensure judicial monitoring updates are completed as necessary.
- Take appropriate and timely enforcement action (breach, review, recall, variation or cancellation) where an offender fails to comply with the requirements of the sentence or order.
- Complete pre-termination interview and report, providing feedback on offender's progress and reintegration needs.
- Review sentence/order monitoring reports and take appropriate actions where irregularities are identified.
- Ensure that everyone involved with the offender has all of the relevant information to allow for the consistent and integrated management of that offender.

#### **Oversee Community Work Projects and Placements**

- For offenders sentenced to community work, assess suitability for agency or centre placement, and match offender to an appropriate agency or work project.

### **Key Accountability Areas:**

- Actively seek out opportunities with community groups and agencies for new work projects.
- Assess suitability of proposed work projects, ensuring that the organisation qualifies to be a community work agency, health and safety obligations are met and resource requirements are acceptable.
- Monitor progress of project, addressing any problems as they arise effectively managing their relationship with the agency.
- Plan, prepare and manage the service centre roster.
- Provide on-the-job supervision to Community Work Supervisors, supporting the completion of CWS competencies and providing the Service Manager with feedback on performance and training requirements.

### **Assist with the Development and Maintenance of Key Relationships with Key Stakeholders**

- Assist key stakeholders to understand Corrections' business and priorities.
- Represent the Department of Corrections in a positive and constructive relationship with key stakeholders including Courts' staff, police, Iwi, other government and social services agencies.

### **Build and Maintain Relationships with the New Zealand Parole Board**

- Apply a thorough understanding of the working standards, requirements and expectations of the Parole Board and achieve competence in preparing and filing applications.

### **Contribute to a Safe Working Environment**

- Report any hazards, accidents or near misses that occur.
- Adhere to safety standards and processes set down in by Corrections aimed at preventing harm, including but not limited to the home visit policy.
- Participate in health and safety programmes as required, including own rehabilitation should the job holder sustain a work injury.

## **GENERAL ACCOUNTABILITIES**

### **Code of Conduct and Department Policy**

- Familiarity and compliance with the Department's Code of Conduct and related documents; and with Department policy and procedures relating to the functions of the position held.

### **Health and Safety**

- Help maintain a safe working environment within Corrections by adhering to Department policy and procedures relating to the position held.

### **Other Duties & Responsibilities**

- All employees are expected to perform other such other duties as can reasonably be regarded as incidental to their job description, and other such duties that fall reasonably within their experience and capabilities as may be assigned from time to time to meet business requirements.

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Direct Reports:**

- Nil

### **Key Working Relationships:**

The following relationships are critical to the overall success of this role:

#### **Internal:**

- Area Managers
- Senior Probation Officers
- Probation Officers
- Senior Community Work Supervisors
- Administration Officers
- Operations Helpdesk staff
- Regional Corrections Staff (i.e. Prisons Staff)
- Psychologists and Senior Psychologists
- Programme Facilitators

#### **External:**

- Offenders
- New Zealand Parole Board
- Community Groups and Agencies
- Court staff
- Lawyers
- Iwi Groups
- Electronic Monitoring Service Providers
- Service Providers and Suppliers
- Members of the public

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

To be successful in this position you will need:

### **Knowledge, Skills and Experience**

#### **Developing and Maintaining Relationships / Communication**

- Ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with a wide range of people including external stakeholders to facilitate the accomplishment of work goals.
- Ability to be flexible and adapt behaviour to reflect diverse situations and people, and deal positively with difficult situations and people.
- Exhibits well-developed communication skills that enable clear, relevant and appropriate presentation of ideas, opinions, views and recommendations.
- Produces written communication that is clear, concise and logical, and of a high standard that is easily understood by the reader.
- Uses verbal communication that is respectful, non-threatening, delivered in a manner appropriate for the audience and appropriate for a learning context.
- Effectively uses technology to improve communication

#### **Problem Solving**

- Analyse, evaluate and solve detailed problems and make well-reasoned decisions, based on reliable data and information.

- Recognises the need for and is able to make appropriate recommendations to improve systems and processes based on sound logic, analysis and reasoned argument.
- Applies knowledge of policies and procedures and practical experience when developing solutions to field problems.
- Knows when to seek guidance from others on matters of operational policy and procedure.
- Recognises and appropriately escalates issues for wider consideration and national implementation.

### **Technical Knowledge**

- Contribute to building a practical understanding of business needs through participation in projects.
- Capable of understanding and applying Service business rules and policies.
- Able to understand and apply relevant legislation.
- Understand the importance of working cross-culturally and with Maori offenders and whanau.
- Understand and effectively use assessment, sentence planning and sentence management.

### **Self-Management/ Planning Skills**

- Able to identify opportunities and take responsibility for making things happen.
- Able to plan and organise at a detailed level to ensure the most effective utilisation of available resources.
- Effectively manage time and workload, taking responsibility for learning and development, while maintaining a balance between work and personal life.
- Open to the assessment of own skill levels and seeks opportunities for skill development and enhancement.
- Demonstrate an awareness of own limits.

### **Teamwork**

- Participate in team activities and contributes to the achievement of team goals.
- Makes suggestions for achieving team goals, involves others in decisions and actions and keeps relevant people informed.
- Maintain strong communication links with other Community Probation staff and managers.
- Able to effectively pass on knowledge and benefit of experience to others.

### **Supporting Organisational Values**

- Endorse and support the Departmental mission and values, and actively work to achieve them, behaving with the highest levels of professionalism and integrity towards colleagues and the community.
- Demonstrates an attitude supportive of Departmental directions in offender management and a commitment to work with the Department to make improvements in service delivery.
- Actively supports the team to ensure service delivery is managed at the highest levels.
- Demonstrates an awareness of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and their relevance to the work of the Department.

### **Qualifications**

- Probation Officers must hold a current drivers' licence.
- A tertiary qualification in a related discipline is preferred but not essential.