

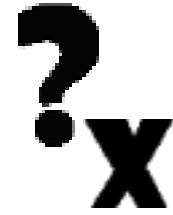
Religion and Police Custody

Bitesize training for schemes

Objectives

- To give a basic overview of the main religions in the UK.
- To consider what these religions mean in terms of rights and entitlements in custody and the appropriate storage of religious items.
- To give ICVs a grounding in what to look for and report on in regard to treatment for detainees of varying faiths/no faith.

Summary of Religions and Beliefs



Agnosticism

- Agnosticism is the view that the truth of metaphysical claims regarding, in particular, the existence of a god or gods, or even ultimate reality, is unknown and may be impossible to know. One can be an agnostic as well as an atheist or religious believer.

Atheist

- Atheism describes a state of having no theistic beliefs; that is, no beliefs in gods or supernatural beings.

Summary of Religions and Beliefs

Buddhism



- A way of living based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama. The Five Precepts are the basic rules of living for lay Buddhists – refrain from harming living beings; taking what is not given; sexual misconduct; harmful speech; and drink or drugs which cloud the mind.

Christianity



- Based on the teaching of Jesus Christ. Christian groups differ in their interpretation of his teaching, life, death and resurrection, but these matters are at the heart of the way of life of all of them.

Summary of Religions and Beliefs

Hinduism



- An ancient tradition of related beliefs and practices that developed in the Indian subcontinent. Core ideals and values shared by most Hindus would include respect for elders; reverence for teachers; regard for guests and tolerance of all races and religions.

Islam



- Revealed in its final form by the Prophet Muhammad. The essentials of Muslim practice are summarised in the five pillars of Islam – declaration of faith; ritual prayer; welfare; a month of fasting during Ramadan and pilgrimage.

Summary of Religions and Beliefs

Judaism



- Based around the Jewish people's covenant relationship with God. Jews believe they are challenged and blessed by God. Love of one's neighbour is the great principle of social life and the founding inspiration of the Jewish community.

Sikhism



- The religion founded by Guru Nanak in India in the 15th Century CE. There is one God, people should serve by leading a life of prayer and obedience. Sikhs believe their soul then passes through various existences and will become one with God.

What does PACE Code C say regarding religious practice in custody?

- PACE at present does not cover this issue specifically however, the Notice of Rights Entitlements given to all detainees under PACE contains the following:

Faith Needs

- *Tell the police if you need anything to assist you to practise your religion whilst at the station. They can provide religious books and other items, as necessary.*

Religious and cultural needs – What does the APP say?

Additional provisions in custody

- Custody managers should consider providing a separate room for use as a prayer room, or for detainees to receive official visitors such as local faith leaders.

Forces should make arrangements for providing:

- Copies of religious texts
- Advice to Muslim detainees on the direction of Mecca (e.g., a compass or mark applied to the eastern cell wall of one or more cells)
- Halal, kosher, vegetarian and vegan meal alternatives.
- Custody staff should facilitate any reasonable requests wherever possible.

What does good practice look like for suites in terms of storage of religious items?

- Ensure that if the suite records religion, that the force has looked at this detainee data and has the most used texts available.
- Where a text is not available for a particular faith, the suite should have a contact in the community where a text can be sourced, from a local faith group or similar.
- Texts from **all faiths** should be stored on a shelf, **at the same level**, with no text stored higher than any other, and no texts from varying faiths on top of one another.

What does good practice look like for suites in terms of storage of religious items?

- **All texts should be wrapped**, in clear plastic or similar, (not leather), and handed to the detainee wrapped, (the wrapper can be removed for risk purposes once the detainee has unwrapped the text).
- Texts should be stored in an area for this purpose, and not stored with other items such as shoes, personal property or toiletries of any sort.
- Prayer mats should also be stored alongside other religious items and not in piles.
- Prayer mats should be wrapped and given to the detainee in this way, (the wrapper can be removed for risk purposes once the detainee has unwrapped the text).

Food in custody:

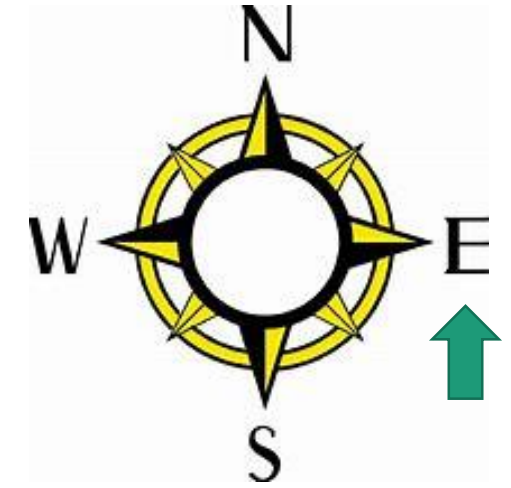
A good range of meals should be offered in custody, or local arrangements possible to cater for the following dietary requirements:

- Halal
- Kosher
- Vegetarian
- Vegan



What should ICVs look for?

- Are the texts all stored in the same way?
- Are all texts and prayer mats individually wrapped?
- Does the appearance of how the texts and mats are stored look neat and respectful?
- Does the cell have an indicator of which way is East?



What should ICVs look for?

- Has the detainee got washing facilities in cell, if not, have they been able to wash prior to prayers?
- Has the detainee been able to eat food in custody that meets their religious dietary requirements?
- In you are checking the custody record, does it record any details of arrangements for worship made?

What should ICVs look for?

- Has the detainee been offered a chance to have a visit from a faith leader, in particular when detention lasts longer than the 24 hour period or falls on a day where the detainee would normally attend a place of worship?
- Does the custody suite have a separate prayer room for detainees to use?
- If the suite has the above, has the detainee been able to use it?

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Any questions?