

Govt beefs up access to correctional centres

Security at all correctional services facilities has been improved with staff now required to wear identification cards to access centres.



(Image: GCIS)

Correctional Services Minister S'bu Ndebele launched the access security identity cards for all the department's 42,000 staff members in Pretoria on Wednesday.

Speaking at the launch at the department's headquarters, Ndebele said society expected the department to secure it from those that the courts have found to have transgressed against its laws.

"For us, security refers to all those services, rendered by the department aimed at ensuring the provision of safe, and healthy, conditions consistent with human dignity for all persons under our care while providing protection for our personnel, security for the public as well as ensuring the safety of persons under our care.

"The balance between security, control and justice is the responsibility of all correctional officials and managers," Ndebele said.

The minister said while the implementation of the policy on ID cards will go a long way in minimising security breaches at all Correctional Centres, the cards will not guarantee security of anyone.

"It is the majority of our officials who detect crime and corruption who will ensure that these cards continue to improve safe custody of offenders," he said.

The new Correctional Services ID Cards feature the photograph of an official, designation, work station, and the official's personal number.

They will, among other things, enable the department to know who entered the building and at what time, according to the department's Chief Operating Officer Nonsikelelo Jolingana.

She said the rollout of the cards will start in Gauteng and thereafter move to all the department's facilities throughout the country. The necessary technology had already been installed in all the department's facilities.

She explained that the cards will be issued to permanent staff members only.

"Our work does not only focus on inmates, we also focus on the public as well. The department deals with sensitive issues that need to be secured, therefore it is imperative that we tighten our security," she said.

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