

Religious Diets in Correctional Facilities:

Legalities/Religious Requirements;
The Legal and Church Perspective.

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Constitutional Rights

- Amendment I (1791)
 - **Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;** or abridging the freedom of speech, or the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for an address of grievances.

Religious Liberty

- The First Amendment of the Constitution gives even a secular importance to religion in the lives of men. One should find easy agreement that especially in state institutions inmates should be granted basic religious rights; i.e. diet, clothing, and behavioral.

Why is Religious Liberty Important?

- Religious liberty is the mother of all true freedom. It denies any person or government the right to come between God and man.

Definition of Religious Liberty

- *“Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.”*

(Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Article 18)

MDOC Policy on Religious Rights

- MDOC as a governing body allows for religious freedom to be displayed in many venues. Religious services on a weekly basis are the main activity by which religious activities are exercised. Another important venue for participation in religious activities is the religious dietary rights.

Three Main Types of Religious Diets

- **Kosher Diet**
 - The main diet of Jews.
- **Strict Vegetarian Diet (Vegan)**
 - The main diet of Buddhists and some Seven Days Adventists.
- **Ovo-Lacto Vegetarian Diet**
 - The diet for individual inmates who want to sustain from meat.

Procedure for Prisoners to Place on Religious Diets.

- “A prisoner who wants to participate in Religious Meal Program must submit a written request to the Warden or designee (Chaplain) for approval. The request shall include a statement as to his/her religious beliefs which necessitate a Religious diet.”
 - MDOC Operating Procedure 05.03.150A

Procedure for Prisoners to Place on Religious Diets.

- Questionnaire and Interview given by the Chaplain
 - 3 questions asked to each prisoner signing up for this program
 - Briefly explain the major teaching of your designated religion?
 - Why is a religious diet required by this religion?
 - How does this diet differ from the normal food provide by this institution?

Procedure for Prisoners to be Removed from a Religious Diet.

- The Prisoner has changed his Religious affiliation.
- The Prisoner is seen eating from the main line.
- The Prisoner is seen eating food that are not in his Religious diet.
- The prisoner is seen possessing food that are not in his Religious diet.

	KOSHER		Vegan		OVO-LACTO VEGETARAIN
Level	Upper Pen	Lower Pen	Upper Pen	Lower Pen	
Level 1	Chippewa	Carson City Parnall Scott		Brooks Macomb Scott	All Facilities
Secure Level 1	Hiawatha	Florence Crane			All Facilities
Level 2	Newbery	Carson City Scott Ionia Lakeland Muskegon	Kinross	Brooks Lakeland Macomb Ionia Scott	All Facilities
Level 3	Chippewa	St Louis			All Facilities
Level 4	Chippewa	Carson City Scott St Louis		Brooks Macomb Oaks Scott	All Facilities
Level 5	Alger	Ionia Scott Standish	Baraga	Ionia Scott Standish	All Facilities

Kosher Meal Counts				Vegan (Strict Vegetarian)	
Facility	Regular Kosher	Vegan Kosher		Facility	# of Prisoners
Alger	9			Baraga	12
Carson City	18	4		Brooks	22
Chippewa	10			I-Max	7
Crane	6	3		Kinross	16
Hiawatha	6	3		Lakeland	12
I-Max	6			Macomb	23
Lakeland	16	2		Oaks	2
Muskegon	18			Standish	2
Parnall	21	2			
St. Louis	9				
Standish	9	1			
Alger					
TOTALS	128	15			96