

L.I.F.E. AFTER LOCKUP

BAY COUNTY, FL JAIL GUIDE THREE.

Mini-Guides for men and women
returning to a post-pandemic world
after incarceration



Copyright 2023 T'N'T Publishing.

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

“Your past will always come back to haunt you.” ~ A Random Wise Man

On Tuesday, February 21, 2023, I traveled from my home in Baltimore, MD down to Panama City Beach’s Bay County Jail on Star Lane in Bay County, FL. to turn myself in. I was released on Thursday, March 23, 2023. I sat 30 days in jail!

Well, I knew that I would be traveling down for a court hearing in Leesburg, Georgia to finalize my divorce on the afternoon of February 21, 2023. So, I decided to kill two birds with one stone by resolving a legal issue: A warrant stemming from a 2005 conviction resulting in probation...and ultimately a violation 18 years later...

I chose to write this guide to give an up-to-date complete step by step manual of what the experience of an inmate at the Bay County Jail is from Reception to Release. The mission of this specific project is to create a product that is informational to inmates as well as to their family, friends, and support system; or even an employee/contractor who interacts directly with inmates. It is my hope that this presentation assists in the release of individuals from imprisonment, rehabilitation, re-entry, reacclimating back into society as productive members of the community, reuniting with family, and building positive relationships: REBOUNDING. Restorative Justice

My name is Robert Doctrie. I am originally from Albany, Georgia: a small southwest Georgia town with a population of somewhere around 70,000 people that sits in close proximity to Tallahassee, Florida and Dothan, Alabama. Panama City Beach is actually the closest beach to my hometown, which is a great fortune for me, because I love beaches, and Panama City Beach is one of the most beautiful and affordable beach destinations in the United States of America! Since I was just a little bitty boy, I have been taking the 3-hour ride down south to the Florida panhandle to enjoy the Panama City Beach experience which includes but is not limited to one of the most exciting College Spring Break venues in the U. S. of A.

<http://www.pcbeachspringbreak.com>

Unfortunately, the Panama City Beach jail is often packed to capacity during the Spring Break months when the Bay County Police are particularly vigilant in patrolling the community to keep all of the residents and guests safe. Because, with partying many times comes eating, drinking, games, music, and fun. And it is so easy to throw caution to the wind and get carried away during a vacation with friends! I encourage everyone reading this product to visit Panama City Beach! However, I urge you to be safe and adhere to the following:

<https://www.mypanhandle.com/news/local-news/panama-city-beach-spring-break-laws-in-effect/>

“Panama City Beach:

Come on vacation.

Leave on probation.

Come back on violation.”

This was me. Don't let it be you!

If you, a friend, or family member have the misfortune of facing a criminal justice issue in

Panama City, such as:

- AN ARREST
- AN UPCOMING COURT DATE
- A VIOLATION OF PROBATION

The information found inside of this guide will be of great assistance.

*For questions or concerns about the Panama City Beach jail, the court proceedings, or probation process contact me at turboneighbors@gmail.com. This is not legal advice 😊.

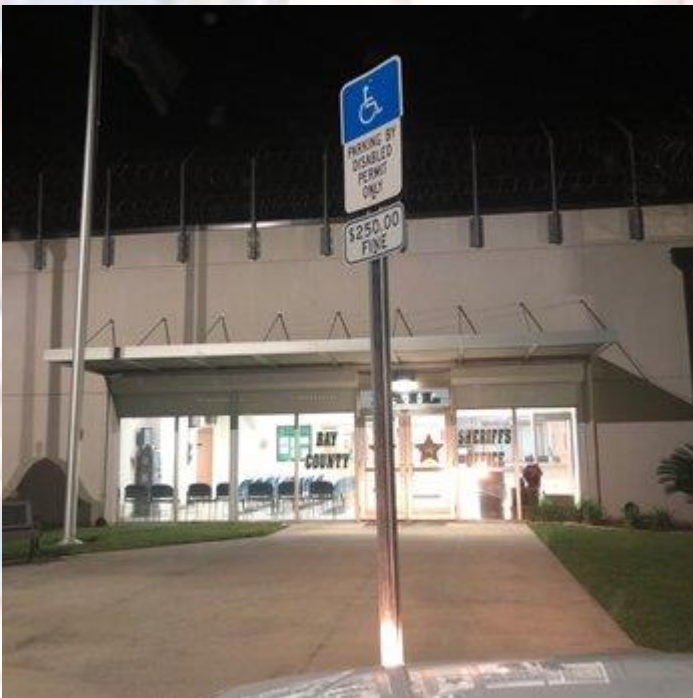
BOOKING



STAGE # 1

Booking into the Panama City Jail is a lengthy and extremely exhausting, three-stage process.

I turned myself into the Bay County Detention Center/Jail on Star Lane. The jail is located just outside of Panama City when you come into town on Highway 231. You turn off Highway 231 onto North Star Avenue and follow North Star Avenue as it wraps around, and you run into Star Lane. Star Lane is ducked off in the cut like a band-aid. There is a spacious parking lot with two entrances that sit at the foot of the parking lot; one door reads Sheriff's Department and the other says Warrant's Division. I, turning myself in on an outstanding arrest warrant, took the latter.



Stage #1 of the booking process was seamless. I provided the arresting officer with my photographed identification. He in turn confirmed that I did have a warrant for my arrest there in Bay County. I was informed of my

rights and the rules that I would be expected to adhere to, I answered a series of questions, and signed several documents. Then,

- All pockets are emptied.
- Personal items are removed from possession.
- A Receiving/Booking officer performs a thorough full-body pat-search of each inmate from head to toe.
- Inmate is handcuffed and transported to a more secure area in Reception.

The initial receiving officer at the Bay County Jail was professional. He treated me with dignity and respect as he performed his duties. He advised me with clear instructions and made certain that I understood them.

STAGE #2

Stage #2 of the process goes on down the production line just as fast as Stage #1 did. Stage #2 is an important station of intake, because this is where the classification part of booking really begins. The intricate details of each arrestee's present situation will be discussed and documented at this point; everything is recorded electronically as well as manually by paper.

- Shoes and clothes are removed and inventoried.
- All belongings (no matter how insignificant they may seem) are meticulously documented by hand onto paper AND electronically.
- Money is placed into a machine that counts it out and deposits it into the inmate account system. (The money will not be processed until the following day after each arrested individual attends an arraignment/"First Appearance" also known as a bond hearing. The money will show on the inmate account balance on available computers and kiosks. Inmates will then have access to their available funds.)
- Inmates will be given shower slides to place on their feet as no shoes or socks will be permitted past this point of entry into the Bay County Jail.
- Each inmate will be given another thorough pat-down search and taken through the intake area and placed in a holding cell/tank.

Inmates are escorted from this station deeper into the jail into an even more secure area where they are placed uncuffed in a holding tank, which is where the tough part begins...STAGE #3.

STAGE #3

Now, Stage 3 is the part that is back-breaking so to speak. This portion of the program normally lasts some 2 hours.

HOLDING CELL/"TANK"

Each inmate will be placed into a tank that contains a short metal bench, a two-fold toilet/sink contraption, and a free phone system. There will be only one individual in a tank at a given time. *It is North Pole cold inside of the tanks.*

If you made it to this point and you have some "funny money" or anything that could be perceived as contraband, consider yourself lucky and just go ahead, and flush it down the toilet.

FREE PHONE CALL

This is the ideal time for inmates to contact their loved ones and let them know their whereabouts and to make an arrangement to post bond, because *this will be the very last time that one will receive a free phone call.*

CLASSIFICATION

During the two hours that an inmate will spend sitting in intake, the receiving officers will be processing the inmate into the system. This is when each inmate will be categorized as a minimum, medium, or high security risk based on the crime that they are presently charged with along with their criminal history record. Similarly, medical and mental health conditions will be researched along with illicit drug addictions in order for the jail to determine which housing placement will suit the inmate being received. Details will be documented all the way down to an individual's diet to ensure that people are placed according to their needs.

BODY SCANNER MACHINE

Inmates will eventually be removed from their respective tanks to sign a series of papers, be photographed, and fingerprinted.

During this brief period, each inmate will be pat-searched once again before being placed on a scanner machine that is designed to detect metals, weapons, and electronic devices. This is not the x-ray system at the airport. It does not undress the individual or delve under their skin and into their body. The staff at the Bay County Jail are not performing intrusive, demeaning examinations. At every level, the staff is thorough and professional.

Next, inmate clothing is issued: one pair of long, white, tube-socks, one white t-shirt, one pair of white boxer-shorts, one black and white striped inmate top and bottom.

Then, the inmate is taken to a well-received (by most), steaming hot shower to thaw out before being placed into a different tank than they were initially received in.

*An inmate is never taken back to a cell that they have previously been held in.

**Cells are cleaned and inspected each and every time an inmate is removed to ensure that no contraband is being introduced into the jail or left for another inmate to smuggle in.

QUARANTINE



Panama City Beach is a tourist attraction town; A great percentage of the inmate population is from other places out of town. Infectious diseases find fertile soil in penal institutions. And so, the authorities at the Panama City Jail remain vigilant in protecting its staff and residents by adhering to the Covid protocols set in place by medical experts. Each inmate will be taken through a 10-day quarantine process.

Albeit, the focus of this chapter is QUARANTINE, please do not skip pass it just because the quarantine process is not of particular interest to you, because various topics from medication to “First Appearance” court dates are included in this chapter as they occur during the quarantine process.

Once booking into the jail is a done deal, inmates are issued a bedroll and escorted to the housing area of the jail. That specific area holds four dormitories. One dormitory is for inmates who have been sentenced to serve prison time in the Florida Department of Corrections; another dorm is for screened individuals whose level of custody is maximum (normally due to a criminal history of violence); then there are two dorms reserved for people who have been recently arrested.

Quarantine is a two-stage process that can take up to 10 days. I was booked into the Bay County Jail on a Tuesday night. It took me until Saturday morning to complete the first process.

DORM #1

I was taken to a dormitory in the wee hours of the morning and locked into a cell that already contained two inmates. I was given a “boat” to place onto the floor down by the toilet bowl where I made what my grandma called a “pallet” to sleep on.

I was locked in the cell for the vast majority of the next few days. At this stage of the quarantine process, inmates are only permitted 45 minutes to an hour outside the confines of their assigned cells per day. During these short spans, I chose to use my time taking a shower, making a telephone call, and accessing the computer system to check and send emails.

WARNING

Family and friends should be prepared: getting set up to communicate with and send money to an inmate can seem pretty complicated. There are

multiple phone numbers and different websites that will be used. But once set up, it's fairly simple to maintain!

SENDING MONEY

At this stage, inmates do not yet have access to any money they brought with them to the jail. As such, the first thing likely to be top of mind is to have someone send money in! The easiest way for an inmate to get money on their books is to have a family member or friend to send it online. At the time of this publication, Bay County Jail uses www.touchpaydirect.com for digital payments. Click "Make Payment" and then "Corrections Payments." You will need to create an account. Funds can be posted to the inmate's account immediately via this option. The inmate's control number will be needed as well as the facility ID number, which is 15733. Inmate control numbers can be located via the inmate lookup portion of the TouchPay site or via the Bay County Jail website. Alternatively, funds can be deposited via the kiosk machine located in the lobby of the Bay County Jail Facility or submitted via money order in-person or by mail. Be sure to include the inmate's name and control number on the money order, as well as the purchaser's name and address.

WORTH NOTING:

The kiosk in the housing units have virtual visit capabilities, but because during QUARANTINE inmates are locked inside of their assigned living quarters, friends and family must call into the Detention Center at least 20 minutes prior to the scheduled visit, to confirm the appointment so that the correctional officer on duty can release the inmate who is scheduled for the visit.

Once per week, an inmate may order up to \$125 from the "Commissary" via the kiosk/computer system in the housing unit. Inmates have access to these machines during their daily allotted 45 minutes to an hour of "Recreation" time.

COMMISSARY

- The loved ones of inmates can purchase ICARE packages, which is not to exceed \$125. The ICARE packages often contain products and deals that cannot be obtained by the inmate through the jail commissary. (For instance, the ICARE packages contained Irish Springs soap and Colgate toothpaste, but the inmate commissary only sells off-brand products like "Mr. Freshly".)

There are several different ICARE packages for loved ones to choose from! A person DOES NOT have to spend \$125 to make a purchase. There are actually some decent deals. There are some packages that contain meats, cheeses, and a nice mix of assorted snacks for \$30-\$40 per package. iCare packages are updated occasionally, but there is typically also a large package available with tons of items for approximately \$89.99.

The bottom line: An inmate can spend \$250 total on commissary per week; Family and Friends of the inmate can order \$125 worth of the packages of their choice, and the inmate can order up to \$125 of the items of their choice from the kiosks in the dormitories where the inmate resides.

CALLS

Once an inmate departs BOOKING, the telephone system limits inmate access to one 15-minute call per hour.

Inmates are able to place collect calls but may also use the funds on their account. **They are limited to 5 phone numbers to call during their incarceration**, but every blue moon an inmate can update their contact list. Family members and friends can place money on inmate accounts to receive calls by calling VIA Path Technologies at 877-650-4249 or online at <https://sso.gtlconnect.com>. You can use the same credentials used to sign in to GettingOut.com.

At the time of this publication:

- Local calls are a little over \$1.00 for 15 minutes.
- Long distance calls are just under \$4.00 for 15 minutes.

VIRTUAL VISITS & MESSAGING

Currently, Bay County Jail uses the GettingOut app for messaging and virtual visits. Inmates are able to use kiosks to access messaging and visits. With available funds, inmates must transfer money from their inmate accounts to the telephone and computer system.

Family members and friends will need to download the application on their devices and/or visit gettingout.com. It works best on mobile devices. Once the individual downloads the application, and registers, it is important to note that verification is necessary. If not visible on the app, they should go to gettingout.com and click on verification. An ID is required to be

submitted. It is highly recommended, that after 24 hours have passed, the individual should call GettingOut to check the status of their verification, otherwise they may never get verified and never get to communicate with the inmate! 866-516-0115.

Setting up the video-messaging system is a lot like setting up a FaceTime call on Facebook.

Below is an example of setting up a video call on Facebook:

1. One of the two parties must send a Facebook friend request.
2. The other must accept it for them to begin messaging.
3. Etiquette then dictates that a friend sends a message requesting a video visit before just calling.
4. The person receiving the request may then use their option of accepting the invitation.
5. The call is made and received.

Similarly, below is how to set up a virtual visit on GettingOut:

1. One of the two parties must add the other as a contact.
2. The other must accept it for them to begin messaging.
3. One of the parties must then schedule a visit.
4. The person receiving the request may then use their option of accepting the invitation.
5. The visit begins once both parties have signed on.

FYI: Family and friends can always see when the inmate is logged in.

There is a fee for communication. At the time of this publication:

- Inmates must pay to send AND to read messages at the rate of \$0.03 per minute.
- Family and friends pay \$0.25 to send messages, but there is no fee to read received messages.
- Pictures can be sent for \$0.50 each.
- Virtual visits are \$9.00 for 30 minutes.
- Family and friends can deposit money to pay for communication directly within the GettingOut app.
- Also note that family and friends can choose to have YOU pay for the virtual visits if you have funds available! At the time of your visit, the system will give them this option.

Specific to video visits, individuals are able to schedule visits same day or for a future date. The inmate must accept the visit in order for it to move forward. The inmate can also schedule visits and family and friends must accept the visit on their end. While in quarantine, your family member or friend will need to call the jail at least 20 minutes prior to the scheduled visit so that jail staff can let you out for the visit.

WORTH NOTING: Bay County Jail staff are typically cordial when calling in. Once you select the reason for your call, a human actually answers the phone!

FIRST APPEARANCE



So, I turned myself in to the Warrants Division at the Bay County Jail late Tuesday around midnight and this is how it went: I made it to my assigned cell in the inmate quarantine housing unit probably around 2:30 AM., Wednesday morning. I was allowed into the dayroom of the dormitory Wednesday morning at about 8:AM for a little less than an hour. It was at that time when I was able to utilize the kiosk machines to order food, personal care items, access the law library, attend video calls with family and friends, manage my money on my account, transfer funds for phone

calls, etc. I was locked back into my assigned cell at 9:00 AM. I was released from the cell at 1:45 PM by a correctional officer who took the 20 or so of us who had been arrested the day before to the front part of the jail where we stood one at a time before a Judge at a virtual FIRST APPEARANCE court hearing, which is also known as a BOND HEARING. FIRST APPEARANCE is held at 2:00 PM every day for recent arrestees.

Many people were given bond. A few people bonded out rather quickly that very same day. Others were out of there in the next day or so... probably long enough to scrape up bail money. But perhaps 15 of the original 20 stayed until an official court date to face the charges that we were being held on. We had to stay for various reasons: Some of us just did not have the money to make bond; There were people like me who were being held by the Probation or Parole Boards for warrants stemming from technical violations of their government supervision; There were people in my group who had open/pending criminal court cases in their respective cities, arrest warrants in other states, etc.; There was one guy who had absconded from house-arrest in years past in an incident that had nothing to do with his present legal situation: It was a shit-storm. We were stuck like Chuck.

I was given an hour out of my cell Thursday and Friday. Saturday morning, I packed up my belongings and moved to the housing dormitory building that was side by side with the building where I was first placed in quarantine.

WORTH NOTHING: There is no time out of the cell for inmates in Dorm #1 of quarantine on the weekends. Inmates held in Dorm #1 of quarantine will be confined in their cells throughout the weekend.

WORTH NOTING: Sack lunches will be served for the morning and evening meals on the weekends. The one hot meal will be served at lunch.

TIP FOR INMATES: When assigned to a quarantine cell, go in, make up your bed, lay down and go to sleep. Nobody is happy to go to jail, so your roommates are more than likely in a bad mood. You may be placed into the cell with someone who is detoxing or coming down off of some substance. My advice is to kick back, and to be as still and as quiet as possible. There will be little to no access to reading books in Dorm #1; nor will there be any opportunities to catch any television shows/programs.

Dorm #2

Okay, so, after being locked up tight in that cock-sucking cell for several days, inmates are always excited to go next door to Dorm #2. Now, the second dorm looks exactly like the first. The difference is that the inmates are not locked inside their assigned cells as much. As a matter of fact, inmates are out most of the day from early in the morning to late in the evenings. The only time that the inmates lock down during the day are during those pre-established times when the institution performs the various head-count security checks.

In Dorm #2, inmates have access to the showers at any time during the day when the cells are unlocked. Whereas in Dorm #1, the inmate can only take a shower during the 45 minutes to an hour that they are allotted to use the day room.

Inmates can use the phone to contact family and friends throughout the day in Dorm #2, which is much better(!) because they could only get one call per day in the first QUARANTINE dorm.

It is easier to schedule video visits at more convenient times in Dorm #2. And the loved ones of the inmate do not have to call the jail staff for them to release the inmate to the video visit as the inmate will already be out. Plus, remember, loved ones can always see when an inmate contact is on-line the same way that you can see when a contact is on Facebook or Instagram! (Which is the ideal time to send messages or ON DEMAND video visit requests.)

There is a library of reading books for inmates in Dorm #2 of QUARANTINE that the inmates can request to loan from, there are 2 televisions, table board games, etc.

Let me be completely frank and honest, the quarantine part of the jail really sucks ass. It is extremely uncomfortable. An inmate does not have a change of clothes. Oh, and don't expect any gourmet meals. However, each inmate IS issued a small bar of soap like the hotel bars of soap used to be "back in the day", a one-inch toothbrush, a tiny tube of generic toothpaste, a fine toothed comb, and a squeeze pack of deodorant that is the size of a mustard pack at McDonalds. (I don't think that the deodorant is PH balanced for my skin, because it makes me smell like a freshly peeled raw onion.)

I chose to wash my underclothes by hand every time I took a shower. I hung them out to air dry on a rail in my assigned cell.

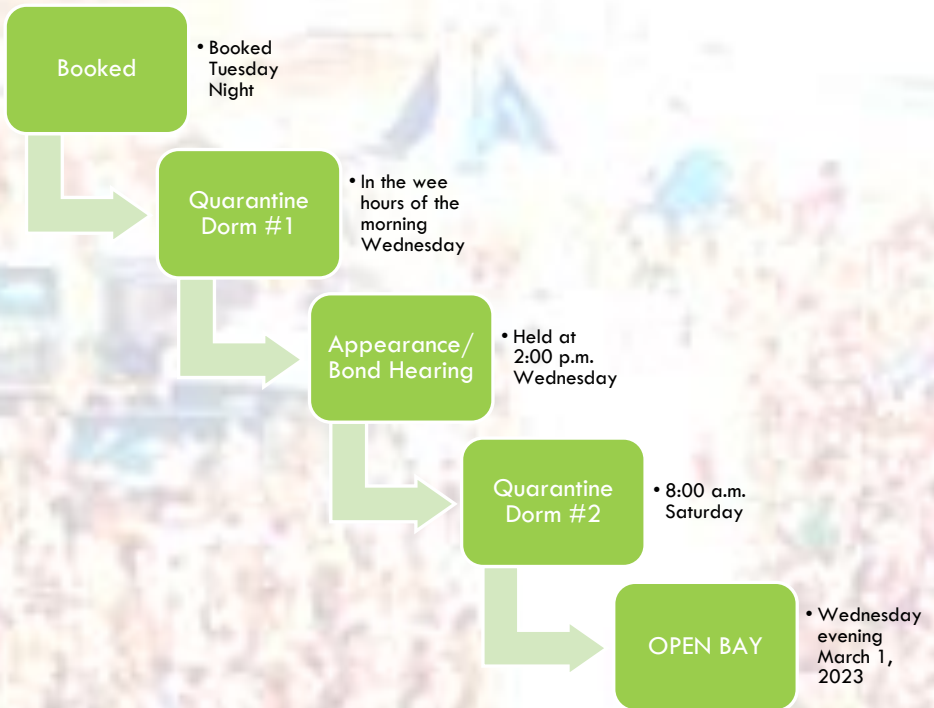
It is relatively easy to obtain tissue, soap, and other personal hygiene items from the guards if an inmate runs out.

Panama City is a small predominantly Christian town. The staff at the jail reflect it. The staff were professional and courteous, not the mean and hateful bunch that can be found... and even be typical of so many other jails.

Just like the emergency room and convenient cares found around the nation, there is a process for inmates who experience health complications and emergencies, but I must say that the Bay County Jail's medical and dental health care is superior to the average jail or prison, and I would rate the Bay County Jail's Health Care Center higher than many civilian Hospitals and Doctor's offices.

OPEN BAY





I was escorted along with 10-12 other guys to a regular housing unit. We all went to open dorms: there are no enclosed cells, 10 rows of bunk beds, a big bathroom directly in the center with toilet and shower stalls that have dividers between them for a measure of privacy, tables for inmates to eat meals and play tabletop and board games, two televisions, a great many phones and several kiosk machines, and ample space to walk around or exercise.

OPEN BAY was perfect for me because I was never locked in a cell! In OPEN BAY I was able to access the law library where I could research my case almost any time that I wished, I could reach out to my attorney as well as my family at hours that were most convenient for them, and then BAM(!): they brought tablets into the dorm!!!

In this section of the book (PART 3) we will give you information about the tablets that were just recently installed into the OPEN BAY housing units, sanitation, safety, sending and receiving mail, laundry exchange, ARRAIGNMENT court hearings, washing clothes, outside recreation, and the available inmate access to religious services and rehabilitation programs.





COMMISSARY

I got in the OPEN BAY dormitory on a Wednesday evening. The main thing on my mind was “when will the commissary be delivered(!)?” Okay, so let me explain:

I turned myself in on Tuesday. The next morning, I was released from my assigned cell for my 45 minutes to an hour of “recreation” time. At that time, I ordered a survival package of items that I would need to get me by: soap, deodorant, toothpaste, food, coffee, pain medicine, writing supplies, etc. from the inmate commissary. The lists must be turned in the Sunday night to receive the order the following week. Well, each housing unit has their own assigned day to receive commissary. The QUARANTINE unit gets their delivery on Fridays, but the OPEN BAYs get theirs on Thursdays. I had my fingers crossed that my things would be delivered to me that Thursday since I had been transferred to the OPEN BAY.

The guys that transferred along to the dorm with me, and I, didn’t get our commissary until that Friday afternoon, but our orders were completed properly for the most part. And in my experience, when there is any discrepancy, the ladies who deliver the commissary do a good job making corrections and substitutions.

SENDING AND RECEIVING MAIL

There are 3 or 4 mailboxes at the front door of every dormitory. Each box is labelled. One box is for handwritten inmate requests and inmate grievances, another is for legal mail, the last is for regular postal mail that inmates send out to their family and friends. Mail goes out and is delivered Monday-Friday except on holidays. Inmates can put mail in the box at any time in OPEN BAY dorms.

Every weekday a little old white lady delivers legal mail, approved magazines that come straight from the publisher, and approved books that come directly from a reputable company.

I ordered several books and received numerous legal documents through the postal mail service while I was there. The mail is always delivered promptly and on time: the mail lady does not play! Let me give you an example,

I ordered 4 books on this one occasion: Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follet, Column of Fire by Ken Follet, Dopefiend by Donald Goines, and Whoreson by Donald Goines. Well, when she dropped the mail off that day, she only gave me the 2 books written by Ken Follet. And so, I asked her if that was all that she had for me, and I told her that I was expecting the Donald Goines books. (My girl had already told me that the website showed where all the books had been delivered by Amazon to the jail.) She asked me for my name, and I gave it to her. Next, she looked up as if in search of the answer to my question on the ceiling briefly, before dropping her head down to glance thoughtfully at the floor with her right hand placed on her chin. Then, she had it all right in her head; she said "The Donald Goines books Whoreson and Dopefiend were rejected for inappropriate content by the Chaplain, but I have a package from the Musca Law Firm that I need to have you sign a form for" ... I'm only 43, and I can't tell you things that happened 5-10 minutes ago! I forget where I put my keys and other things all the time! I was so very impressed at the way that she was able to recall all those specific details when she had a cart full of books and legal mail that she was passing out that day and every day!

Legal mail is picked up throughout the week. Not only do they grab the mail in the box; they come into the dorm and scream at the top of their lungs: "LEGAL MAIL!" Then, they give everyone sufficient time to gather their belongings and have their business tended to. Many days, the police picking up the legal mail will walk around the dormitory or sit down at a table in the day room and answer questions to kill time for individuals who may be in the shower, using the restroom, or asleep to get their mail out. Legal mail is inspected for contraband by the officer, sealed by the inmate, and stamped as special legal mail by the officer before being delivered to the mailroom.

All other postal mail is mailed to Phoenix, MD, scanned there, and placed on the kiosks where inmates have access to written correspondence and letters; no paper mail comes into the jail other than the above-mentioned legal mail, magazines, and books.

OUTSIDE RECREATION

The weather is beautiful in Florida! It is recommended that inmates go outside and get some fresh air and maybe play basketball or get in a little exercise to relieve a bit of the stress that comes along with being in jail. Well, it boils down to how busy the jail is and staff availability, but at least once a week, inmates are allowed to go outside to the Recreation Yard where there is a fenced in basketball court and plenty of room to walk around, do push-ups, or get some cardio.

LAUNDRY EXCHANGE

Twice a week the Bay County Jail has a uniform exchange. The Bay County Jail issues a two-piece black and white striped jail uniform for inmates housed in OPEN BAY. If my memory serves me correctly, Tuesday and Thursday are the change out days. Inmates will undress at the front door and be given a clean top and/or bottom for the used pair that they take off.

WASHING CLOTHES

In QUARANTINE, inmates are allowed to have one pair of socks, one pair of boxer shorts, one t-shirt, and one uniform (top and bottom). But once admitted into OPEN BAY, each inmate will be issued 3 pairs of brand new socks, boxers, and t-shirts. However, inmates may have only one uniform (shirt and pair of pants).

Once per week, the jail picks up labelled laundry bags of soiled clothing early in the morning and returns it late that same afternoon. I never took advantage of this arrangement; reason being, inmates are only issued one laundry bag: that one laundry bag is used by most (I one of the most) to store their commissary items. Also, many of the laundry bags issued to inmates are worn and they contain holes where small items like socks could be lost. I chose to take a fresh change of clothing to the shower with me, and I washed the underclothes that I wore to the shower by hand there in the shower. I hung my clothes out to air dry on my bunk bed.

SANITATION

Inmates at the Bay County Jail do have access to sanitation supplies. The floors are swept and mopped a couple of times daily. The tables in the day room where people play games are cleaned after each meal. The bathrooms are cleaned out periodically by inmates responsible for such duties.

*The showers have concrete flooring and stalls. Really, everything in the dorms is concrete and steel. And, I must say that the dorms could be pressure washed and use a good coat of paint.

TABLETS

A week or so after I arrived in the OPEN BAY dormitory, tablets were implemented to the inmate kiosk/computer system. The new tablets can do everything that the kiosk could, but they are much more convenient! The tablets cut out arguments and altercations that were a constant due to the long lines of inmates waiting for an available phone, because inmates can now make phone calls from the tablets. Video visits from loved ones are also received through the tablets. Music, books, and video games can be accessed on the tablets. Inmates can make requests to staff and the courts on the tablets. Commissary can be ordered on the tablets. Postal mail is scanned along with pictures and can be viewed on the tablets.

The tablets are free of charge, and they come with a free pair of headphones. There are many free services available on the tablets, but there is a fee for music, movies, video games, calls and messaging.

SAFETY

The staff at the Bay County Jail are some of the best trained in the country. THE COUNTRY; not the county, region, state... the country! At the Bay County Jail, those in a position of authority have conceptual skills. The culture of the way they apply law enforcement promotes an environment of peace.

Inmates serving time in the Bay County Jail

Panama City is a small, closely knit Christian town. Almost the entire inmate population practices their Christian beliefs in jail. It is a site to see. Let me give you an example:

There are pre-established times when the jail takes inventory of its human equity every day: HEADCOUNTS. Inmates are to be sitting on top of their bunks while the officers count each inmate in the jail. Once the count is confirmed and “cleared”, inmates are allowed to resume whatever it is that they were doing. There was one night where inmates were moving about during the “HEAD-COUNT” time. The police had counted everyone, but the count had not been confirmed and “cleared”.

Find out the
HEADCOUNT times

Plan out daily
activities around the
HEADCOUNT schedule

Be careful to schedule
virtual visits around
the HEADCOUNT
schedule

Schedule showers and
even potty breaks
around HEADCOUNT

Exercise, cup of
coffee, bowl of soup,
no matter what the
task is...HEADCOUNT
should be considered

WORD TO THE WISE

The one thing that an inmate can do to get on the police's bad side: Interrupt the HEADCOUNT. Do not talk during the portion of the HEADCOUNT where the police are actually counting! Try not to even move while the police are in the building. They will only be there for a second. Be dressed. Sit straight up on the bunk bed. Do not have any clothes hanging to air-dry from the bunks.

*My advice is to read a book during the HEADCOUNT. If a person does not like to read or does not feel like reading that day, they should hold the book up and pretend to read. To read a book is the PERFECT thing to do during the HEADCOUNT! People have manners in Panama City; A person is not likely to say something to a person who is reading.

The police lady gave the culprits a piece of her mind. In turn, an inmate took that opportunity to try to calm the nerves of everyone while his ultimate goal sounded like he was trying to make a disciple out of the correctional officer. The inmate told her, "What we all need is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Her response to him was that she didn't believe in Jesus; and woe ho ho, that is when things went hay wire...

An inmate screamed, "MY Father!"

Then, a chorus of voices cried out in unison, "OUR Father!"

And a thunder of voices boomed the Lord's Prayer with military precision.

During the prayer, a Senior Officer entered the dorm and witnessed the scene. At the end of the prayer, he called out, "Good night, fellas!" To which all the inmates called back in one voice, "Good Night Sarge!". And then, everybody went right to sleep.



The sergeant had every right to discipline the inmates for disrupting the HEADCOUNT, but he chose to use his wisdom and discretion to tell them:

“Now, I let you all get away with this. You won. So, lay your butts down and go to sleep, and I don’t want any more trouble out of you all tonight. And as a matter of fact, I don’t wanna hear another peep out of you all tonight.”

And, he was able to communicate that along with a measure of respect to the men with three simple words:

“Good night fellas.”

~ Sarge



STEALING

There is very little violence at Panama City's Bay County Jail. I saw no bullying, extortion, etc. Panama City is a tourist attraction area. Its locals are accustomed to meeting and dealing with people from other places. The character of the town of Panama City is defined by Southern Hospitality. The inmate population at the Bay County Jail is a product of this.

As anywhere else there will be thieves in jail. However, all one must do is point out the theft. Let me give you an example:

An inmate stole a pair of socks from the foot of the bed of another inmate. The inmate who was being robbed blind in his absence must have sensed a thief lurking, because he was posted in the poll position to catch the thieving scoundrel in the act...

The inmate was a young white guy active in the daily prayer calls amongst the inmates. He decided to take a shower stall that provided a vantage point for him to set up surveillance while he was away washing his behind. Just as he suspected (before he could wash under his arm pits, good) a young black guy who was known to have sticky fingers swiped his socks.

The young white guy hollered, "Hey, put my socks back! Thief! Your stealing!"

And that sealed the deal for the young black guy. Several of the black guys jumped up out of their sleeps straight up and in the air to get a gander of the young black guy holding the socks like a smoking gun. He got caught red-handed.

One middle aged black guy went to the bunk of the young black guy who was guilty of stealing; the middle-aged black guy proceeded to pack the young thief's things and carried them to the front. Another mature 29-year-old black guy told the young thief, "Old school is going to pack all your stuff for you; you may as well go on and walk up to the front door and let the police know that you can't live in here anymore. We don't steal in here, Bro."

The young thief said: "I'm sorry, man. I'm not gonna do it no more."

The mature 29-year-old black guy told him: "Rules are rules: We don't steal in here. There was a white guy who we just ran out of here for stealing; Fair is fair: You gotta go."

There are no lockers in the housing units. Nobody wants to have to watch, wonder, and worry all day long that someone may steal their belongings! Even for people who are rich, there is no option to buy more. The rolling store only rides once per week. The moral to the story is: Stealing is a big no-no, and everybody stands on the business in enforcing that rule.

What I was very impressed with at the Bay County Jail is that when an inmate takes his belongings and goes to the door with them, the police don't give them a hassle removing them from that dangerous environment. This reduces the risk of violence.

At most places where I have unfortunately been jailed and imprisoned, there was a much more predacious environment. Only the strong survived; an inmate had to be willing to die for his peanut butter sandwich. That was not at all the case at the Bay County Jail. It reminded me a great deal of an old western movie or cowboy and Indian novel: even the rougher sort stood on principles that were customary in their culture. The Bay County Jail takes the rehabilitation approach to law enforcement as opposed to pure punishment. The staff take the lead in establishing an environment that is conducive to a civil, pro-social lifestyle/ The inmates follow in line by acting like they have some sense and an upbringing in an upstanding community.

PROTECTIVE CUSTODY

The one thing that I saw at the Bay County Jail that I am not used to seeing at jails is that inmates were placed into dormitories with co-defendants and other inmates who they provided assistance to the government to ensure that person's conviction to lighten their own punishment. Placing people in an enclosed environment with an enemy is risky business!

But what I saw in the Bay County Jail whenever this happened, left me flabbergasted and just as shocked as I was that the jail would try to house such individuals together in the very same housing unit! Let me give you an example:

One day, I walked in a young white guy in his mid-20s who wore a body of tattoos covered from his ankles all the way to his bald head. The young guy spoke to several other young white guys when he entered the door; he appeared to be quite popular. But, by the time he made it to the back of the dorm to dress his bunk, he was recognized by a young Haitian American black man in his 20s; the young white guy had worn a wire under his clothes and done a "controlled buy" of Cocaine from the young black guy just a few weeks prior, which was the present criminal case that the young black guy was being held in jail about.

The young Haitian American black man quickly exposed the young white guy by making an announcement to the dorm, "He's a snitch! He is the rat that set me up!"

Before the young white guy could unpack, at least 9 different people had walked by him and mouthed the words, "you gotta go."

Welp, it is a good thing that he didn't unpack; therefore, it only took him a minute to haul his stuff right back to the front door, out the same way that he came in.

I was so very shocked by the way that situation was handled at the Bay County Jail, because there would have been immediate and intense violence anywhere else that I have been incarcerated. However, the Bay County Jail has cameras EVERYWHERE, the door is surrounded by clear glass windows so that correctional staff can see everything going on at any given time, and the correctional guards are attentive. At the Bay County Jail, the correctional officers hold over the head that they will charge and prosecute to the fullest extremities of the law anyone that purports violence in their

Detention Center. This is a big deterrent! ***There is very little violence at the Bay County Jail: little to none.***

The police swarmed right in and got the young white guy out of the dormitory and took him to protective custody, unscathed. Albeit, headed to a portion of the jail where the housing area provides less convenience and freedoms.



RELIGIOUS SERVICE

The Chaplain makes himself available to the inmate population; he may be seen walking in and out of the housing units numerous times a day interacting with different inmates. He is responsive to inmate requests that are submitted to him by way of handwritten forms that are placed into a mailbox at the front door of the housing units by inmates, and inmates can reach out to the Chaplain by electronic requests through the inmate kiosk computerized system.

Noteworthy is the way that the Chaplain familiarizes himself with the personality and character traits of each inmate in order to assist inmates in their rehabilitation efforts. He personally delivers religious reading materials to those who ask for them. Also, he interviews each inmate who shows interest in studying the bible in a structured program that is housed in a more controlled housing unit.

REHABILITATION

The Bay County Jail provides inmates with opportunities to turn their life off around with services, training, and resources that are set into place to address a slew of issues from mental health to substance abuse to anger management problems. All inmates housed in the Bay County Jail have access to these services.

INMATE WORK DETAILS

One of the leading causes of recidivism is a lack of employment that pays a living wage. The Bay County Jail provides inmate work details for inmates who volunteer. These details provide on the job training in food service for inmates who apply for a position in the kitchen, dry cleaning for inmates working in the Laundry Department, warehouse/stocking for inmates working in Commissary, custodial maintenance for inmates who work as "orderlies", and a host of other positions where an inmate can increase their skill set to gain employability for once they are released back into society.

**Inmates who are sentenced to serve time in the county jail can have their sentence greatly reduced by volunteering for an inmate work detail.*

ATTORNEY VISITS

Attorney visits, phone calls, and legal mail are things that the staff at the Bay County Jail take very seriously. Inmate rights to counsel and communication with counsel are extended to the inmate population in abundance.

Even in the virtual First Appearance/Bond Hearing, the judge was thorough in explaining my rights and making sure that I understood them. A very many of those who attended that initial hearing the day after my arrest were granted a court appointed attorney right there on the spot who they were able to speak with at length about their legal predicaments.

Almost all attorneys reach out to their clients by mail AND travel out to the jail for an initial consultation. Inmates are escorted to the front of the jail's intake area to meet with their attorney in an enclosed room that provides the privacy where one can talk about a personal matter outside of ear range where "birds can pick up seeds" so-to-speak: eavesdrop; Attorney/client conversations should always be kept confidential.

IN CLOSING

I would like to extend a warning to the wise: Hire an attorney.

If you are like me, not a resident of the state of Florida. Let me forewarn you, the laws are more than likely very different in Florida than your home state. I'm not saying that they are worse (or better for that matter); what I am saying is that they are very different. *Different* can oftentimes equate to *confusing* and *tricky*.

My probation officer recommended that the judge sentence me to 5 years in the Florida State Department of Corrections Prison System and the State's Attorney agreed, whole-heartedly. I almost fainted when I learned that! I went on to diligently pursue resolutions, to no avail. I wrestled with my dilemma for over 2 years before I traveled south to turn myself in, hoping that my willingness to face my fate would count for something. Still, they would not budge: They were determined to throw me in the slammer (and throw away the key).

I shopped around for quotes in hopes of finding legal representation to afford me what I sought as justice. The prices that I found ranged from thousands of dollars to tens of thousands of dollars. Eventually, I was gifted with a stroke of luck: I contacted associates at the **MUSCA Law Firm** in Panama City, Florida. And, what I purchased THERE was **a quality product at a competitive price**. There, I got way more bang for my buck.

I was assigned to a legal assistant who went by the name of Debbie Crayton, and I was represented by Russell Ramey. I still can't wrap my mind around how fortunate I was!

During an initial consultation that I was given just a day after confirmation of reception of my retainer fee payment, Mr. Russell Ramey came out to hear from the horse's mouth the intricate details of my case. He patiently allowed me to put it all out on the table, and he went on to convey to me his objective with my case along with a plan of action.

At every stage of the Criminal Justice Procedure, the MUSCA Law Firm informed me what was going on. I was kept abreast as motions were filed on my behalf and throughout the plea negotiations stage. I am very happy with the service that I received from them.

Now, I must admit that I walked into the courtroom with knees that were shaking like the leaves of a tree during a windstorm. I was an extremely uncomfortable black man in a courtroom where all the people whose skin color and facial features resembled mine. Like me, these individuals were facing prosecution; and our loved ones were there in court to either testify on our behalf or provide moral support. The other side of the courtroom was lily white: The Judge, the State's Attorney, the lawyers for the defense, etc. There may be diversity in the law enforcement community there in Panama City, but I didn't see it that morning. But Mr. Ramey, after reviewing my file, told me that he was very proud of the Social Justice work that I was doing and the way that I had transformed myself, and that he was confident that if released I would go on to continue contributing to the community. He gave me his word from the very beginning that he would be my advocate and voice for Justice. Mr. Russell Ramey's word is as good as gold and oak solid.

I was sentenced to "time-served" and granted termination of my Florida State Probation. I went home a free man with no strings attached; my debt to society served.

Mr. Russell Ramey is an old school seasoned trial court attorney. He has been one of the best in the business in Florida's pan handle since the 1980s! He has worked on both sides of the aisle: both for the State Attorney's Office as well as a court-appointed criminal defense attorney (and a defense attorney in private practice). Russell Ramey knows his way around a courtroom; he possesses the knowledge and experience that proves invaluable to his clients.

The State of Florida
Department of
Probation
recommended 5 years
to be served in prison.

The Florida State's
Attorney
(Prosecutor's Office)
doubled down on
the Probation Dept.
recommendation.

**THE PROOF
IS IN THE
PUDDING:**

I was told by locals
who had
experienced similar
situations that I
could expect to be
reinstated to 5 years
of probation.

I went home (instead
of prison), and my
probation was
terminated (as
opposed to be
reinstated for an
additional 5 years of
probation).

AUTHORS



TURBO JAMES

Author & Entrepreneur

Turbo James is the Founder of TurboJames.co, an author, and criminal justice reform advocate. After spending years in the criminal justice system, he has dedicated his life to advocating for those who need it most.



TAMEIKA SCOTT, MS, MPS, SHRM-SCP, SPHRI

Author, Entrepreneur, & Employee Advocate

Tameika is the founder of Employee of Choice, Inc. and the MyZolve - HR's Alter Ego brand. MyZolve is an online platform and mobile app that connects employees with truly, independent Employee Advocates to discuss and resolve workplace concerns. An HR expert and professor, Tameika is committed to supporting the world's most vulnerable citizens to live, work, and play in inclusive & equitable environments across the full spectrum of life.

NEIGHBORS

Neighbors are a group of individuals from different upbringings, races, ages, religious faiths, educational backgrounds, political affiliations, financial dispositions, social statuses, and geographic locations all over the United States of America. These individuals have all landed in a Federal Bureau of Prisons residential drug abuse recidivism reduction based program where a modified therapeutic community has been placed directly inside a maximum security active gang land United States Penitentiary in the mountains of Pennsylvania for the roles that they played in the violation of various laws of the land that govern the country in separate towns and cities across the nation.

These inmates who have all been exposed to violence and whose histories are plagued with substance abuse tell their full, open, and honest stories to heal themselves, each other, and the country collectively. A revolutionary community as a method process of justice is used for delivering treatment that includes accepting and owning responsibility for crimes, accountability and making amends, attitude adjustment, identifying character flaws and thinking errors, correcting criminal behavior, maintaining sobriety, repairing broken relationships, effectively reacclimating back into society as contributing members of their respective communities who obtain and retain gainful employment that pays a living wage; and staying out of jail.

**Visit www.turbojames.co for updates on the
NEIGHBORS series and the latest release.**



**C
H
A
R
A
C
T
E
R**

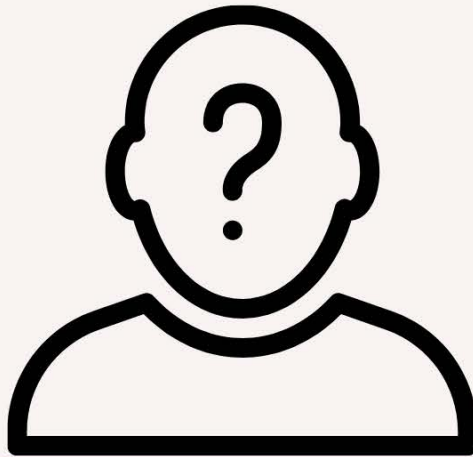


TURBO JAMES

CHARACTER

(The word character is defined as the complex of mental and ethical traits marking a person)

Your character is a sum of your personality and disposition. Other inherited traits received genetically by way of DNA, and LEARNED BEHAVIOR from family upbringing, personal experience, culture, religion, education, skills training, work history, ethical regulations associated with business, and the law of the land. The leading cause of recidivism is a lack of character. How does one strengthen their character?



Visit www.turbojames.co for updates on the CHARACTER series and the latest release.

STAY CONNECTED

For periodic updates and other resources, please visit us at turbojames.co

T'N'T Publishing

Direct Inquiries to:

**Turbo James Co.
www.turbojames.co**

turboneighbors@gmail.com