

This letter is for:

- Winnipeg Remand Centre Superintendent
- The Minister of Justice
- The Manitoba Ombudsman
- The Southern Chiefs Organization



This letter is concerning our desire to transfer our range group of friends from the Winnipeg Remand Centre to headingly Correctional Centre. The following will express our concerns, desires, and reasons why we should transfer institutions as well as our current treatment here at the Winnipeg Remand Centre.

The first point we would like to bring up would be the fact that we do not have proper access to any educational programs. The Winnipeg Remand Centre does not have any teachers, class rooms, or computers. A large majority of our range doesn't have a level of education past the grade nine level. We currently have several residents with a strong desire for a proper education. Education is a prominent factor in the rehabilitation process. Education will help us get proper jobs when we re-integrate back into the community, or better yet, lay a foundation for those who want to continue their studies at the post-secondary level. We currently have a resident that is being denied the opportunity to continue his education at the university level, due to the lack of support the Winnipeg Remand Centre offers. The current policies that the Winnipeg Remand Centre follow does not allow residents to have books brought in, computer access, and regular contact with a professor via e-mail. This resident completed his first year of university at a different institution (Prison) prior to being transferred to the Winnipeg Remand Centre five months ago.

In that time, he could have finished a semester's worth of work. The Winnipeg Remand Centre is not a proper place for people who want to better themselves educationally and that's the point we are trying to prove. We currently have several residents who have been making an honest effort in obtaining an education, but due to being housed at the Winnipeg Remand Centre, their desire to obtain a high school diploma has been **thwarted** due to the policies and regulations implied here at the Winnipeg Remand Centre.

The second point we would like to bring up would be the lack of access to programming. In Headingly, there are dozens of programs that residents could take that could help them prepare for the community. The benefits associated with these programs are awesome. Programs that target alcoholism, relationships/parenting, substance abuse, and anger are extremely beneficial for us, but for whatever reason, are not being fought for us here at the Winnipeg Remand Centre. A majority of our current population have yet to experience the benefits that Headingly Correctional Centre has to offer.

Religion and spirituality are also very important to all of us here. The Winnipeg Remand Centre does have a aboriginal care giver, but it is very difficult to see him, several requests must be put in and even then, it is never a for sure thing, He does great work here, but we are looking for a consistent support that can help us with finding our identity. The Winnipeg Remand Centre does not offer sweat lodge ceremonies, Pipe

ceremonies, or even regular smudging. We know that these services are offered at Headingly Correctional Centre and we would like to take advantage of that. In our culture healing is a form of rehabilitation. We believe that ceremonies, smudging and a proper understanding of our culture is the best way to heal the soul. Our souls are damaged and we need to heal. The Winnipeg Reformatory Centre does not give us the opportunity to heal our selves. A lot of us feel as if we are losing our culture; due to where we are - currently being housed. Headingly Correctional Centre offers a program called, "Culture Awareness Program", and it would be great if we had the opportunity to take that program. We lost a lot of our culture already. We don't want to lose anymore.

Access to recreation equipment and fresh air (daily) is also among our concerns. On average, we get roughly 35 minutes per day, 3 times a week (7-day week) to enjoy fresh air and work-out equipment. That isn't enough time for us to de-stress and keep our selves healthy. Our health is very important to us and we are not getting any healthier sitting around all day playing cards and watching television. Not being able to move around daily puts a strain on us mentally. Exercise is a form of therapy which is very beneficial for us.

Space has been a problem for us for a long time. Our current range can only house 10 people at a time. We have 8 rooms and only 2 of them are double-cells. For the last year,

We have averaged 14-16 residents at a time. Currently, our count is at 16 and has been for the last 2 months. For the people who do not have the luxury of sleeping on a bed, they are limited to sleeping on the floor. Just a side note: we got ^{recently} 6 hours out of our rooms per day. Due to such a population, access to the phones are limited. There is never enough time for people to communicate with their loved ones on a daily basis. We've tried addressing this issue with the management here by asking to see a general population policy and a segregation policy. So we can see how much time we are allowed out of our rooms (for the record, we are listed as a general population unit). Our requests to see these policies have been met with lies ("There are no policies"). It is clear they do not want us to see those policies.

Currently, several of our residents are sentenced. The Winnipeg Remand Centre can not facilitate programs, education programs and employment options. These residents voiced their concerns in regards to this letter and they wanted us to mention the fact there are no institutional jobs available for them here at the Winnipeg Remand Centre. Since these residents are not doing school work, they would like to be productive and earn an income for themselves. Being employed by the institution offers many positive attributes for the residents as well as the institutions. Being productive, earning a legal income, and learning valuable job skills is essential in the rehabilitation process.

We have been displaying good behaviour over the last year and plan on maintaining that good behaviour while we are under supervision. We have a **strong** desire to re-connect with our culture, excell in our studies, and do what ever we can in order to stop creating victims and committing crimes. The Winnipeg Remand Centre is not a place for individuals who want to do better themselves. It is simply a place to house individuals who are on remand status.

If we may shift your attention to the "Treatment" part of this letter: Over the last year, we have been doing everything we possibly can to make our stay at the Winnipeg Remand Centre comfortable and productive. The hoops the guards make us jump through are unnecessary. Our requests (for the most part) don't even get to their intend readers. They are shredded by the floor staff and simply ignored. We caught on to this and now ask for copies of our request with the dates included. That request was answered with this statement: "We do not photo copie request". We tried using our social skills to get our point across and recieved disrespect and arrogance in return. Some residents on our range have been verbally abused on many occasions. Some residents experience racism too. Personal grudges and favouritism is making the Winnipeg Remand Centre a toxic place for us. We need to leave this place and go somewhere we can do good for our selves. The abuse of authority needs to stop. They (The guards) also try to pit us against eachother. We are currently trying to open the whole range with the residents on the bottom tier. We have been working with them for months and have a great relationship

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