

**Rulebook on treatment, treatment program, classification and additional
classification of prisoners**

„Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia" No. 72/2010.

Rulebook on treatment, treatment program, classification and additional classification of prisoners (further in the text Rulebook) stipulates treatment, treatment program, classification and additional classification of prisoners (Art 1), bearing in mind that the treatment of a prisoner implies application of all anticipated activities, planned methods and techniques of treatment by which the purpose of punishing prisoners is achieved. The aim of the application of treatment is that the prisoner adopts socially acceptable system of values and masters skills for successful inclusion in the community so as to prevent them from committing criminal acts (Art.6) in future.

Implementation of treatment is done through several phases: definition and realization of treatment program, classification, additional classification and preparation for release. However, although Article 3. of the Rulebook states that treatment program is individual adjustment of the treatment for individual prisoner depending on risk estimation, prisoner's capacity and prisoner's needs, speaking about the content, needs of female prisoners are not specially given in the provisions of some articles of the Rulebook and care is not taken about them within the treatment program, estimated capacities and needs. That is why it is necessary, aimed at defining treatment program within Article 11, to estimate special needs of female prisoners, and to, besides offering psychological, psychiatric, medical and social assistance, include the following:

- Counseling on family planning and use of contraceptives,
- Care about sexual and reproductive health of female prisoners (respect for partner selection, sexual experience without coercion, discrimination and violence, freedom of decision making in prison conditions on continuation of/ or permitted abortion, etc.)
- Measures for the protection of high risk sexual behavior that may increase the possibility of sexually transmitted infections and transmission of these infections to children,
- The introduction of screening programs in the standard procedure as a preventive health

care for the most common malignancy in women (breast cancer, cervical cancer),

- Special measures to protect women from self-injuring and suicide, and provide psychological and psychiatric help to vulnerable women.

The Rulebook in Article 11, point 6, anticipates that prisoner needs include special protection from all forms of psychological, physical, sexual threats, or any other form of discrimination. In the case of prisoners who have been victims of violence before coming to prison it is important to provide that protection programs should be gender sensitive and adapted to the specific difficulties and traumas of victimized women.

It is noteworthy that the content of treatment programs (Article 13) in the framework of preparation for release (point 8) should include socio-economic education of women just before release from prison, as well as a series of activities aimed at being well versed in freedom, especially if a female prisoner spent long time in prison and during the sentence was not regularly in contact with the family.

For classification of a prisoner specific criteria are provided in the Regulations based on which the classification is made: length of sentence; way of coming to serve the sentence; relation to criminal offense and penalties; type and severity of the offense, previous convictions, criminal proceedings or other punishment, psychological, pedagogical, social characteristics, security risks and needs of the prisoner; behavior during an earlier criminal sanctions serving in an appropriate institution, and other facts relevant to the classification and provided by a separate questionnaire for prisoners (Article 16).

Specific criteria used for classification of female inmates are not provided for in the Regulations. Therefore, it would certainly be within the internal classification or classifications to introduce such methods relating to gender-specific needs and circumstances of female prisoners to ensure proper and individual planning and implementation of early rehabilitation, treatment and reintegration into society. In determining the gender-sensitive risk assessment and classification of female inmates, the following should be considered:

- That a smaller number of women makes the population of prisoners, that most frequently they committed minor offenses or the offense occurred as a result of defense

against violence,

- harmful effects due to the isolation for which reason they should be placed in an open institution or open departments (pavilions)
- Living conditions of women before coming to serve the sentence - most women before coming to prison were exposed to various forms, especially domestic violence, some were using drugs or alcohol or have poor physical and mental health, many of them have children to care about;
- That women have poor health because of which they have special health needs;
- That female prisoners who are pregnant, breastfeeding or have children or are in the menopause have special needs.

Treatment Program is established and applied by a professional team (Article 12). The Rulebook does not emphasize professions of people who make up a professional team, but, given their assignments, it is clear that these are psychologists, pedagogues and sociologists. To work with convicted women members of the professional team would have to have a general training, which refers to identifying the specific needs of women in different generative stages (pregnancy, childbirth, postnatal period, menopause), and special training for working with women who are victimized, with mental problems (depression, neurosis, psychoneurosis, anxiety, etc..), are prone to suicide and self-injuring or substance use.

The content of treatment programs referred to in Art. 13 point 6 should be amended so as to, in addition to cooperation with external institutions and organizations in the implementation of treatment programs, by adding the cooperation with NGOs, which would be engaged to help establish contacts between female inmates and their family members and successfully navigate female inmates after release from the Penitentiary .