

# Indigenous

GETTING STARTED



10

# **This is Booklet 10 in the Getting Started Series.**

## **Getting Started is a guide for people leaving prison.**

### **Booklets**

- 1** The First Week
- 2** Housing
- 3** Identification
- 4** Alcohol and Other Drugs
- 5** Centrelink
- 6** Community Corrections & Parole
- 7** Employment
- 8** Returning to Family
- 9** Women's Transition
- 10** Indigenous

### **Information Sheets**

- a** Money Matters
- b** Emergency Relief
- c** Getting Support
- d** Rights and Legal Assistance
- e** Health

This Booklet was last updated in September 2010. If any information has changed or you notice an error please contact Corrections Victoria on (03) 8684 6600 or email: [corrections@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:corrections@justice.vic.gov.au)

## Contents

Family .....	2
Community .....	3
Culture .....	3
Naidoc .....	3
Some Practical Advice .....	4
Indigenous Services .....	5
Prison Aboriginal Wellbeing Officers .....	6
Indigenous Community Corrections Officers .....	6
Konnect .....	7
Community Organisations .....	7
Education .....	12
Housing and Accommodation .....	13
Women .....	14
Health .....	15
Family .....	16
Medicare .....	19
Centrelink .....	19

This booklet is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people getting out of prison. The other books are still important and you will need to use them. This book describes the extra services available to Indigenous people.

Getting out is an important time to get things right. It is a good chance to start over and reconnect with family. It will help if you think carefully about your first steps after prison.

## **Family**

Staying connected to your family is important. Especially when you are returning home from prison. Talk to them about how you are feeling and tell them if you are worried about anything.

Find a spiritual activity that you can draw strength from together. This could be listening to music, writing poems, walking or Koori Art. This will help you feel more connected to your family, community and culture.

## Community

Your community will hold cultural and community events throughout the year. You can attend and be a part of them.

Visit your local co-op to find out what's going on in your community. Co-ops are also a place you can ask for support.

Speak to the Elders in your family or community if you need someone to talk to.

## Culture

Stay connected with your culture. Practice your culture, which could be through dance, song, music and art. It's important to look after your spiritual wellbeing at the same time. Your culture has been passed onto you through life's journey. It is with you always. Draw upon your cultural beliefs for strength and courage. You may need to go 'back to country' to start your journey.

## NAIDOC

NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) is a celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

It takes place over the second week of July every year.

There are NAIDOC community events across Victoria that you can attend.

*You can also attend events while you are in prison. Being with your people will give you a real sense of belonging.*

### **Some Practical Advice**

- Keep any appointments you are given from community organisations or government departments.
- Follow up any letters you are sent from community organisations or government departments.
- Get yourself a support person - this could be a family member or good friend.
- Eat well, drink plenty of water and eat lots of fruit and vegies.
- Have plenty of rest.
- Seek medical attention if feeling unwell.

## **Above all – STAY STRONG AND BE PROUD!**

There are always people around who can help but you need to ask for it. The services listed in the other Getting Started booklets can be used by anyone. You should look at the other booklets, but there are additional services you can access if you identify as Indigenous.

### **Indigenous Services**

There are Indigenous services like the co-ops or the **Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service** that provide services only to Indigenous people. There are also Indigenous services within other mainstream agencies.

Some organisations offer extra or different supports for Indigenous people. Some government departments have Indigenous workers. This includes the Department of Justice.

If you identify as Indigenous you can ask for an Aboriginal worker or someone who understands your culture.

## **Prison Aboriginal Wellbeing Officers (AWO) or Aboriginal Liaison Officers (ALO)**

Make contact with the AWOs or ALOs while you are in prison. They can give you information or link you in with community services.

There is an AWO or ALO covering each prison. They can provide you with support.

## **Indigenous Community Corrections Officers**

There are 6 Indigenous Community Corrections Officers (ICCOs). These are Indigenous specific Officers. Their role is to improve the department's response to Indigenous people and can give advice across the state.

There are ICCOs in these locations:

Morwell .....	(03) 5150 1500
Bendigo .....	(03) 5440 6100
Broadmeadows .....	(03) 9302 8555
Mildura .....	(03) 5021 6100
Shepparton .....	(03) 5820 3400
Warrnambool .....	(03) 5564 1000

## **Konnect (Indigenous Transitional Support Program)**

Konnect is a program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leaving prison. The program is designed to assist men and women to prepare for their release and to help them return to family and community.

You need to be referred or refer yourself to the program at least 3 months before release. You will be assessed for the program at the prison.

To find out more about the KONNECT Program ask your case worker or the AWO/ALO to contact the Program Coordinator.

## **Community Organisations**

It is a good idea to make contact with your local Aboriginal co-op or Community Organisation. They do a lot of things for the local community and can tell you about support services in your area.

**Aborigines Advancement League**

(03) 9480 7777

2 Watt Street, Thornbury, VIC 3071

**Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-op**

(03) 5331 5344

5 Market Street, Ballarat, VIC 3350

**Batdja Aboriginal Corporation**

(03) 5831 5479

44 Edward Street, Shepparton VIC 3630

**Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-op**

(03) 5442 4947

13-15 Forest Street, Bendigo VIC 3550

**Dandenong and District Aboriginal Co-op**

(03) 9794 5973

62 Stud Road, Dandenong, 3175

**Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-op**

(03) (03) 5150 0760

37-53 Dalmahoy Street, Bairnsdale, 3875

**Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Corporation****(03) 5381 6333**

143–145 Baillie Street, Horsham, 3400

**Gunditjmara Aboriginal Corporation****(03) 5559 1234**

Harris Street Reserve, Warrnambool, 3280

**Kirrae Whurrong Aboriginal Corporation****(03) 5567 1003**

Kirrae Avenue, Purnim, 3278

**Mildura Aboriginal Co-op****(03) 5022 1852**

120 Madden Avenue, Mildura, 3500

**Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health****(03) 5136 5100**

Cnr Buckley and Collins streets, Morwell, 3175

**Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place****(03) 9725 2166**

3 Croydon Way, Croydon, 3136

**Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation****(02) 6024 7599**

21 Hovell Street, Wodonga, 3689

**Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-op****(03) 5026 3353**

87 Latje Road, Robinvale, 3549

**Ngwala Willumbong****(03) 9510 3233**

93 Wellington Street, St. Kilda, 3084

**Njernda Aboriginal Corporation****(03) 5480 6252**

84 Hare Street, Echuca, 3564

**Ramahyuck Aboriginal Co-op****(03) 5143 1644**

117–121 Foster Street, Sale, 3850

**Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-op****(03) 5820 0000**

20 Toolamba Road, Mooroopna, 3629

**Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op****(03) 5277 0044**

Lot 62 Morgan Street, North Geelong, 3215

**Western Suburbs Indigenous Gathering Place****(03) 9318 7855**

200 Rosamond Road, Maribyrnong 3032

**Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation****(03) 5527 2051**

21 Scott Street, Heywood, 3304

**Victorian Aboriginal Community Services****(03) 9416 4266**

Association Limited (VACSAL)

171 Smith Street, Fitzroy 3065

**Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS)****(03) 9419 3888**

6 Alexandra Parade, Fitzroy, 3065

## Education

### **Deakin University**

(03) 5227 2538

Institute of Koori Education (IKE)  
Pigdon Road, Waurin Ponds, 3217

### **Kangan Institute**

(03) 9279 2357

Indigenous Education Centre  
Pearcedale Parade, Broadmeadows, 3047

### **Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE Koori Services Centre**

(03) 9269 1339

77-91 St Georges Road, Preston, 3072

### **Swinburne University of Technology**

(03) 9726 1561

Indigenous Programs Office

### **Chisholm TAFE Course Information Centre**

1300 244 746

### **Worawa Aboriginal College (Youth)**

(03) 5962 4344

Po Box 1250, Healesville, 3777

## Housing & Accommodation

### **Aboriginal Housing Board of Victoria**

**(03) 9403 2100 or 1300 724 882**

125–127 Scotchmer Street, Fitzroy North, 3068

To apply for Aboriginal Housing you need to fill in an application form. Ask the AWO for forms or to speak to the Customer Service Office.

### **Bert Williams Aboriginal Youth Services**

**(03) 9484 5310**

21 Normanby Avenue, Thornbury, 3071

### **George Wright Shelter**

**(03) 9419 8648**

66 George Street, Fitzroy, 3065

### **Galiamble Men's Recovery Centre**

**(03) 9534 1602**

66 Grey Street, St Kilda, 3084

### **Percy Green Men's Recovery Centre**

**(03) 5826 5217**

985 Toolamba Road, Mooroopna, 3629

## Women

### **Elizabeth Hoffman House**

**(03) 9482 5744**

Po Box 167, Fairfield, 3078

### **Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service (FVPLS)**

**(03) 9244 3333**

Level 3, 70-80 Wellington Street,  
Collingwood, 3066

### **Margaret Tucker Hostel**

**(03) 9482 1161**

113 Perry Street, Fairfield, 3078

### **Winja Ulupna Aboriginal Women's Recovery Centre**

**(03) 9525 5442**

14 Charnwood Crescent, St Kilda, 3084

## Health

### **Aboriginal Sobering Up Centre – Northcote**

**(03) 9481 2666**

150 Separation Street, Northcote, 3070

### **Bunnerong Health Service**

**(03) 9794 5933**

3 Carroll Street, Dandenong, 3175

### **Murray Valley Aboriginal Health Service**

**(03) 5026 3353**

87 Latje Road, Robinvale, 3549

### **Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)**

**(03) 9419 3350**

5-7 Smith Street Fitzroy, 3065

### **Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS)**

**(03) 9419 3000**

186 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy, 3065

## Family

### **Aboriginal Community Elders Service (ACES)**

**(03) 9383 4244**

5 Parkview Avenue, East Brunswick, 3057

### **Koorie Heritage Trust**

**(03) 8622 2600**

Koorie Family History Service Unit  
295 King Street, Melbourne, 3000

### **Link-Up Victoria**

**(03) 9470 3666**

34 Wurruk Avenue, Preston, 3072

Link-Up Victoria help Indigenous people to trace and reunite with their family if they were adopted, placed in foster care or an institution, or forcibly removed.

### **Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)**

**(03) 9388 1855**

139 Nicholson Street, East Brunswick, 3057

### **Victorian Aboriginal Health Service**

**(Family Counselling Service )**

**(03) 9403 3300**

279 High Street, Northcote, 3070

## **Yappera Child Care Centre**

**(03) 9416 8787**

2B Watt Street, Thornbury, 3071

### **Family History Services**

The Koori Heritage Trust has a Family History Service that aims to provide a true history of the practices and effects of the policies that resulted in the taking away of Indigenous children in Victoria. Taking children from their families has resulted in many Indigenous people not knowing who they are and where they come from.

The Koori Family History Service helps individuals to trace their families, rebuild family connections and reconnect the Stolen Generations of Victoria with their history, heritage and people.

They do this by:

- Helping people access records and individual case files.
- Recording Indigenous family trees.
- Recording the stories of the Stolen Generations, their families and those involved in their removal.

**Koori Family History Service Unit**

(03) 8622 2600

295 King Street Melbourne VIC 3000

**Connecting Home**

8679 0777

14 Gipps Street, Collingwood, 3066

Connecting Home has taken over the services delivered by Stolen Generations Victoria.

Connecting Home provides support and addresses the needs of people affected by the practices and policies of removing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from family, community, country and culture.

If you want to trace your family ask your AWO/ALO to get the forms for you to fill out. You might need help from family to complete the forms.

## Medicare

If you haven't got a Medicare card, talk to the AWO/ALO or the prison program staff. You will need to fill in an application form but you may not need ID. If you don't have ID you will need a referee who has known you for more than 12 months and is in a position of authority.

*For more information call the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access line on 1800 556 955.*

## Centrelink

Centrelink offers support to Indigenous people and communities through the Indigenous Services Units. They are located throughout Victoria.

*For information on your local Indigenous Services Unit and its staff go to your local Centrelink Office or call the Indigenous Call Centre on 13 63 80.*





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