

A day in the life of a Community Corrections Officer (CCO)

What does a CCO do?

A CCO works with people who have been convicted of a crime, pre and post sentencing, who are required to participate in community supervision. A CCO supports and encourages the person to change their behaviour and works with individuals to address the factors that contribute to reoffending behaviour and helps them to reintegrate into the community.

While there is no “typical” day for a CCO – as each day will have its own rewards and challenges – here’s an example of what a CCO’s day could look like:

Find out more about
Community
Corrections here



8:30am - Starting the day

I get to the office, greet my colleagues and Team Leader (TL), and settle at my desk. I check my emails and review my calendar which lists my work tasks and appointments for today. There’s an email from a local service provider listing available Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) programs. I make a mental note to talk with Matthew, whose **case plan** I completed yesterday as he is eligible for referral to this program.

*A **case plan** is a live document that a CCO develops with a person on a supervised order, which outlines their individual risk factors, goals and how the CCO will support them to consider behaviour change.*

I then discuss with Greg, our Aboriginal Community Engagement and Culture Officer (ACECO) about how best to engage and support Roy, a 23-year-old Aboriginal man who is new to my caseload and due to meet with me today. Drawing on Greg’s advice, I spend a few minutes preparing for a supervision interview with Roy. Today I’ll be working with him to build rapport, explain what my role is, and see who else is in his life that can support him to achieve the goals we will set.

9:30am - Sentencing Assessment Report (SAR) interview

Andrew arrives for a **Sentencing Assessment Report (SAR)** interview. I explain the process to him, before taking him through an intake form to gain information on his background and current circumstances. We complete **offence mapping** and talk through how his current offence happened, to better understand what was going on in his life at the time.

*The court considers a **Sentencing Assessment Report (SAR)** when determining an appropriate sentence for an individual. SARs are prepared by CCOs in community offices and in parole units in correctional centres.*

*A person creates an **Offence Map** with their CCO during the SAR or supervision period. It looks at the pathway which led to their offence, including background factors (lifestyle, beliefs, attitudes, etc.), the build-up, and the events immediately beforehand.*

Andrew lives with his mum who is his closest support. Before I end the interview, I ask for her contact details her so I can call her and conduct a **third-party check**.

*A **third-party check** is done to verify information and is usually done by contacting a relative, employer, friend, co-resident or service provider.*

10:30am - Administration

After the interview, I return to my desk and prepare a **case note** on **OIMS** recording details from the interview with Andrew. This captures the discussion and offence mapping exercise, as well as my general observations about how Andrew presented (e.g., on time, well dressed, with a positive outlook). I also make a case note from my discussion with Greg, the ACECO.

*CCOs are required to document interactions such as interviews, phone calls in **case notes**. Corrective Services NSW uses **OIMS (Offender Integrated Management System)** as the platform to record all information related to the cases being managed*

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12:00 - Lunch break

1:00pm - Supervision interview

Roy arrives for his supervision interview on time. As the ACECO suggested, I take him into an interview room, which is decorated with Aboriginal art and feels more informal. We have a yarn and I ask how things are going generally. I make sure he's comfortable before I ask about more personal background information. Roy has disconnected from his family since starting drug use and crime and doesn't know how to change this. I talk to Roy about my role and how I can offer support to assist him with his goals of remaining drug free and reconnecting with his family.

I take Roy through a worksheet which helps to identify people in his life and supports he may have. I give Roy a copy of the sheet and ask him to think about anyone else he can list such as family, kin, and social supports. Roy has no community supports and agrees to a referral for counselling; he prefers a referral to an Indigenous service. I commit to finding a local Aboriginal counselling service to refer him to.

1:45pm - Scheduled home visit

I check in with my Team Leader and provide them with a **home visit** running sheet for my visit to Sally's house. I drive to Sally's house and chat with her mum who says Sally quit her job recently, isn't answering her phone and hasn't been home for several nights. I committed to following this up by calling Sally and local Police to see if they have had any recent contact with her. Before I go, I give Sally's mum my contact details so she can contact me if Sally returns home.

*In regional locations, CCOs may be required to travel long distances to conduct **home visits**, attend interviews at correctional centres or interviews at reporting centres in remote communities.*

2:30pm - Unplanned incident in the office

Upon returning to the office, I hear a commotion at the front counter. Rick is highly agitated and yelling at admin staff about being kicked out of his accommodation. There are other people in the waiting room and his CCO is not in today which he is also anxious about. I know Rick, and I intervene to try to de-escalate the situation.

I greet Rick and provide him a drink of water, convincing him to have a chat with me in an interview room. He vents his frustration and I stay with him until he has calmed down, and make sure he has a plan for tonight. He thinks his brother might be able to put him up for the night, so I arrange a phone call to his brother.

His brother is supportive and says Rick can stay at his place temporarily until he finds something more permanent. I tell Rick that I will let his usual officer know what has happened today and she will call him in the morning.

CCOs often support absent staff members by covering their appointments. CCOs may deal with conflict and altercations in their role. CCOs are provided with training on safety, security, and motivational interactions.

3:00pm - Administration, follow up and planning

I update Matthew's case plan with a new step referral to the AOD program I saw in my email this morning. I make a note in my calendar to follow up with a call to the program contact officer for more information and to call Matthew this week to discuss a referral.

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I create a case note on my home visit to Sally's house as a failure to report. I add a third-party case note to record her mums' concerns and information raised. I try to call Sally and her phone is off so case note this as no contact. I make a time in my calendar tomorrow to try to contact Sally again. I will also call local police or her employer to see if there have been any recent interactions with her.

I record my unplanned interaction with Rick as two case notes: one for the interview with him, and another for the third-party contact with his brother. I also email his usual CCO and reference the case note I have entered for her to action.

4:15pm - Prepare for tomorrow

Just before I finish for the day, I spend a few minutes reading over all relevant information for my first supervision interview with Jackie at 9am tomorrow morning. I look at her criminal history, police facts for her current offence, and the details of her new order. Jackie has previously been supervised by Community Corrections, so I make sure I review her most recent case notes as well.

4:30pm - Leave work for the day

Professional development as a CCO



CCOs are required to attend Corrective Services New South Wales Academy (CSNSWA) to undertake Primary Training, followed by on the job training and assessments in the workplace to attain the Certificate IV in Correctional Practice qualification.



Training and developmental opportunities

Training pathways and resources are available for CCOs in community and custodial settings to develop broad and specific skills to support career pathways.



Variety - No two days are the same!

CCOs get exposure to a wide range of people, services, and tasks at a variety of work locations which can include CSNSW and Department of Communities and Justice community offices, parole units and correctional centres, courts and reporting centres, all within Sydney Metropolitan and NSW regional locations.

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Each day as a CCO includes an ever-changing mix of key tasks

Approximately 20-30% of the role consists of report writing and administration tasks, while the remaining 70-80% consists of communication with people on their caseload and other key parties to implement case plans.

Writing assessment reports to:

- Various courts advising of a person’s suitability for a community sentence
- Releasing authorities recommending for or against release
- Assess the risk of an individual’s environment, associates, and likelihood of re-offending behaviours
- Document key events, actions, and decisions through case notes

Communicating with relevant stakeholders:

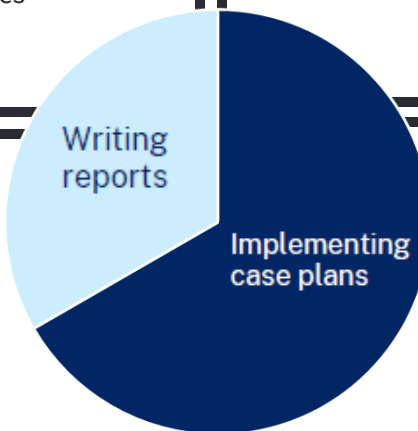
- Visit people under community supervision and their families
- Talk to significant others such as family, employers and service providers and Police
- Work with community agencies to facilitate access to services
- Notify courts and releasing authorities of breaches of orders
- Give evidence to courts/releasing authorities

Preparing individuals for release from custody:

- Ensure they understand their obligations
- Develop/maintain case plans
- Encourage positive behaviour change and attitudes through discussion based on cognitive behavioural therapy
- Problem solve and refer to appropriate services and programs
- Monitor their progress to make recommendations for non compliance with orders
- Support individuals to integrate into community life without supervision

Overseeing administration of community service work:

- Induction and allocation to community service work
- Engage community agencies to provide work for community service projects



Preparing individuals for release from custody:

- Engage with them in correctional centres, and with their families/support networks, to develop pre-release plans
- Liaise with custodial and programs staff in relation to management of individuals prior to release
- Undertake home visits to risk assess their proposed home environment and assess supports in this environment