

Condoms to Be Distributed in San Francisco County Jail

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San Francisco Sheriff Michael Hennessey announced on July 13, 1989, that condoms would be distributed to county jail prisoners under the direction of Department of Health jail medical staff. The condom distribution program is part of a comprehensive, long-term AIDS education policy instituted by Hennessey in the county jails.

The first condoms were issued on Friday, July 14, 1989, at the Department's jail facilities at the Hall of Justice in San Bruno.

The San Francisco Sheriff's Department became the first county jail system in California to distribute

condoms to its inmates and the fifth correctional agency in the nation to do so. The other agencies are the Vermont Department of Corrections, New York City's Rikers Island facility, the Mississippi Department of Corrections, and the Philadelphia Prison System.

The condom distribution policy was developed in conjunction with the Department of Health, which will provide condoms for prisoners requesting them. Responses to requests for condoms will include AIDS information counseling. Written materials will accompany each condom. The condoms were purchased by the Department of Health.

In his statement, Sheriff Hennessey noted, "Our continued efforts to educate the highly concentrated at-risk population in the county jail take a new turn today, as we join with the Department of Health in the

distribution of condoms to those in our custody.

"The historic struggle against AIDS has created responsibilities for jail and prison administrators far beyond the traditional mandates to run humane facilities and prevent escapes. The specter of AIDS also makes us accountable on public health issues involving life and death for millions of Americans.

"Every individual we reach with the message of AIDS prevention impacts dozens of other men and women as the fight continues."

For more information, contact Ray Towbis, San Francisco County Sheriff's Department, at (916) 554-7225. ■

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