

Corrections Management (Snake Handling – Alexander Maconochie Centre) Operating Procedure 2025

Notifiable instrument NI2025–87

made under the

Corrections Management Act 2007, s14 (Corrections policies and operating procedures)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Corrections Management (Snake Handling – Alexander Maconochie Centre) Operating Procedure 2025*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after notification.

3 Operating Procedure

I make this operating procedure to facilitate the effective and efficient management of correctional services.

4 Revocation

This instrument revokes the *Corrections Management (Snake Handling – Alexander Maconochie Centre) Operating Procedure 2022* [NI2022-196].

Leanne Close APM
Commissioner
ACT Corrective Services
14 February 2025



OPERATING PROCEDURE	Snake Handling – Alexander Maconochie Centre
OPERATING PROCEDURE NO.	24
SCOPE	Alexander Maconochie Centre

PURPOSE

To provide the requirements and instructions for safe capture and release of snakes within the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) and its surrounding grounds.

PROCEDURES

1. Appointment of snake handlers

- 1.1. The Assistant Commissioner Custodial Operations (ACCO) will determine the number of snake handlers required at the AMC facility.
- 1.2. Prior to being appointed as a snake handler, successful applicants will be required to complete a snake handling training program and have a current first aid qualification.
- 1.3. Appointed snake handlers will be retrained in this program at least every two years.
- 1.4. Appointed snake handlers will undertake the role according to, and within the bounds of their training and will be appointed for the term of the currency of their qualifications and license.

2. Licensing and compliance

- 2.1. The ACCO must apply for a snake handling licence on behalf of AMC snake handlers every 12 months. ACT Corrective Services will be responsible for all costs associated with training and licensing and provide the required equipment for workers to safely undertake this role.
- 2.2. Where licensing has not been renewed, snake handlers will not be permitted to capture and release snakes within the AMC precinct.
- 2.3. Licensing only permits snake handlers to capture snakes within the AMC precinct. This licence and any records required to be kept, must be made available for inspection by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna or any Conservation Officer on request.

3. Reporting

- 3.1. All snake encounters must be reported through the ACTPS Safety Portal (Safety Portal) by the staff who saw the snake.
- 3.2. Where a snake handler captures and releases a snake, the snake handler must record in the Safety Portal report the date and duration of captivity, purpose of relocation, where the snake was located, where it was released, the species, and number of snakes.

- 3.3. The snake handler must also record in the Safety Portal report any deceased animals including location, species, and reason for death, if known.
- 3.4. Upon receiving information on the location or capture of a reptile that is non-native to the ACT region, the snake handler must immediately notify a conservation officer within Licensing and Compliance, or the relevant ACT Parks and Conservation Service (PCS) district, and follow the officer's instructions regarding that animal.
- 3.5. Contact for conservation officers are as follows:
 - a. PCS South - 6207 2087
 - b. After hours call Access Canberra 13 22 81 and ask for wildlife ranger.
- 3.6. Where a Code Blue occurs, such as due to a snake bite, all staff present must complete an Incident Report.

4. Capture and release of a snake

- 4.1. When a snake is sighted on the AMC grounds, a snake handler must be notified immediately.
- 4.2. The area in which the snake is located must be cleared of all detainees where operationally possible. Staff must maintain a safe distance from the snake.
- 4.3. The snake handler must don all required PPE and respond with a snake handling kit that contains two pressure immobilising bandages.
- 4.4. When attending the specified area to remove a snake, the snake handler must have a second person with current first aid training in attendance.
- 4.5. The snake handler will capture the snake in accordance with all licencing guidelines and training.
- 4.6. Once the snake is captured, the second person must walk ahead of the handler to clear the pathway and prevent injury or incident on the walk to the release location.
- 4.7. The second person assisting the handler must pick up a red AMC fire key from the Gatehouse to access the primary release location. If a red AMC fire key cannot be obtained, the snake may be released at the secondary location.
- 4.8. The primary release location for captured snakes is outside the external perimeter, using the fire gate on the southern perimeter.
- 4.9. A secondary release location is at the furthest eastern perimeter of the AMC property, near the storm water swale. Snake handlers are provided maps of these areas and may contact Facilities Management for information if necessary.
- 4.10. The snake handler must release the snake as soon as possible and at the latest within two hours of the snake being captured.
- 4.11. Where a captured snake is found to be injured and may need to be euthanised to alleviate suffering, the snake handler must contact an appropriate service for responding to injured wildlife and request their attendance to collect the snake. If no other options are available, the snake handler may transport the snake to a veterinary service as per relevant training.
- 4.12. Relevant services for responding to injured snakes include:
 - a. Access Canberra – 13 22 81 (24 hours) and ask for a wildlife ranger
 - b. RSPCA ACT – (02) 6287 8100 (business hours)

c. ACT Wildlife – 0432 300 033 (24 hours).

4.13. Should a bite occur, the second person will:

- a. call a Code Blue
- b. keep the bite victim calm and still
- c. apply pressure bandage
- d. administer any other appropriate first aid in accordance with first aid training
- e. maintain security of the area, ensuring other workers and detainees are at a safe distance
- f. monitor the location of the snake and maintain a safe distance.

5. Snake handling kits and Personal Protective Equipment

5.1. The following items of personal protective equipment (PPE) must be kept in snake handling capture kits, which will be placed around the AMC facility, and which must also contain a first aid kit. All items of PPE must be used by the snake handler when attending to the capture and release of snakes.

5.2. All snake handling capture kits must contain:

- a. snake bite resistant gaiters
- b. one (1) catching bag with two (2) clamps
- c. two (2) hooks
- d. one (1) set of snake tongs
- e. at least two (2) snake bite bandages.

5.3. Snake handling capture kits will be placed within the following buildings across the AMC precinct:

- a. Specialist Community Centre (SCC)
- b. Women's Community Centre (WCC)
- c. Operations Building
- d. Gatehouse
- e. Transitional Release Centre (TRC)
- f. Facilities Building.

5.4. Additionally, snake handlers must at all times wear leather boots, long trousers and a long sleeve shirt when attending to the capture and release of snakes.

6. Snake handling gloves

6.1. All snake handling capture kits must contain at least one set of thick leather gloves as an additional form of PPE, to be used at the discretion of the snake handler. Snake Handlers should use snake handling gloves when forced to physically handle juvenile snakes.

7. Environmental management

7.1. To reduce the suitability of the environment for snake populations, good housekeeping practices should be implemented. These include but are not limited to:

- a. prompt disposal of rubbish (e.g. food scraps)
- b. keeping external doors to buildings closed
- c. maintaining grass at low level
- d. removing ground cover plants near walkways
- e. controlling rodent populations.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Licensing and Compliance, Territory and Municipal Services, ACT Government: Snake Handling Licence and Compliance requirements
- Code Blue (Medical Emergency) Operating Procedure
- Safety Portal
- Incident Reporting, Notifications and Debriefing Policy
- AMC Snake Release Location

James Taylor-Dayus
Acting Assistant Commissioner Custodial Operations
ACT Corrective Services
11 February 2025

Document details

Criteria	Details
Document title:	<i>Corrections Management (Snake Handling – Alexander Maconochie Centre) Operating Procedure 2025</i>
Document owner/approver:	Assistant Commissioner Custodial Operations, ACT Corrective Services
Date effective:	The day after the notification date
Review date:	5 years after the notification date
Responsible Officer:	Assistant Commissioner Custodial Operations, ACT Corrective Services

Criteria	Details
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Compliance: This operating procedure reflects the requirements of the *Corrections Management (Policy Framework) Policy 2024*

Version Control			
Version no.	Date	Description	Author
V2	February 2025	Revised and Updated	E Gregor
V1	January 2022	First Issued	S Leedham