



County of Santa Cruz

Sheriff-Coroner

Santa Cruz County Jail, 259 Water Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Custody Alternatives Program

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CUSTODY ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is CAP?

CAP is Custody Alternatives Program. It encompasses Sheriff Parole (Procedure #4-33), Work Release and Electronic Monitoring Programs. It is managed by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office. Once a person is sentenced and qualifies for alternative sentencing, they could possibly participate in either program.

What is Work Release?

Work Release is a program where a sentenced inmate works at a designated county site as assigned by the CAP officer. The work performed is unpaid, but it is in lieu of doing time in the County Jail. The participant can continue to work or go to school and complete his/her sentence by working on his/her days off (i.e. weekends). Participants are monitored while working by a site supervisor.

Who can do Work Release / CAP ?

Once an individual is sentenced, an appointment will be set up to go over the qualifications for Work Release. Disqualifiers to participate in the Work Release Program are: Current restraining order, weapons possession convictions, domestic violence convictions, any violent crimes or sex-related crimes, amongst others. (There might be exceptions on a case-by-case basis). Also, if you are under PRCS (Probation) you are NOT eligible for a Program. You must inquire with Probation.

How much does Work Release cost?

At no cost to qualify participants.

How many hours per day is the typical Work Release work day?

When you are assigned to the Work Release, you are assigned to a worksite, and you are given a start time. For the most part, they start at 7:00 AM or 8:00 AM and you can expect to be there for at least 7 hours. Your lunch breaks are taken at the worksite, so you must bring your own lunch as you are not allowed to leave the worksite.

If I don't like the work site I was assigned to, can I choose another one?

No. Unless there is some kind of conflict of interest you may not choose a site. We will try to accommodate a preference but that is not guaranteed.

What happens if I miss a work day?

It depends. If you have an emergency then you may re-schedule. All re-schedules are done in person. If you miss too many days, you may be removed from the program.

What happens if I am too sick to work in Work Release?

With a proper doctor's note, we might consider an individual with a medical condition for Electronic Monitoring. It is all on a case-by-case basis.

What is Electronic Monitoring?

Electronic Monitoring is a program where a sentenced inmate completes his/her sentence while at home in a "home confinement" setting. This program is designed for participants requiring more supervision than Work Release can provide.

The participant must wear an ankle monitor 24 hours a day for the duration of their sentence. The participant can continue to go to school, work and attend recovery meetings. There is a very structured schedule which the participant must always adhere to. Participants cannot attend special functions or sporting events, nor go on vacation. Participants are randomly drug-tested.

Who can do Electronic Monitoring?

There are different types of monitors that can be used depending on current conviction as well as past convictions. There is no limit on the duration of the sentence to participate on the Electronic Monitoring Program. Just like Work Release, there are certain convictions that can disqualify an individual from participating.

How much does Electronic Monitoring cost?

At no cost to qualify participants.

Do I need a land telephone line to participate on Electronic Monitoring?

You do NOT need to obtain a new telephone land line to participate in the program. Due to the amount of cell phone towers, we have devices that can use cell phone towers to process and send information.

However, if you live in a rural area where cell phone signal is very weak or non-existent, you may need to obtain a land line phone along with a corded phone. Please ask the CAP officer before making arrangements.

Do I need to tell my boss/supervisor that I am in the Electronic Monitoring Program?

No, you don't. As a general rule, we will not call your work or talk to your supervisor unless we are unable to locate you at your home or you fail to communicate with us.

When you return the completed application applying for the Electronic Monitoring, you will need to bring your last 2 pay stubs to confirm employment.

Will the Police or Sheriff's Office check on me?

Yes. While you are participating in the Electronic Monitoring Program, you are still considered being "in custody". Therefore, the CAP officers will do random house visits and will check your home to ensure you are following the rules and not in possession of drugs or any alcohol. Participants are also randomly drug tested.

Usually, no other agency (besides the CAP officers) will go to your house to check on you. If you are on Probation, please refer to your terms of your Probation.

My Court papers say I qualify for a program. Am I immediately accepted?

No. The Court will make a recommendation for CAP acceptance. The Sheriff's Office and the CAP Officers will make the final decision on acceptance to any of the Custody Alternatives Programs.

What is a "stay"?

A "stay" is a date given by the Court where you must surrender yourself to the County Jail to start serving your sentence. If you are accepted to participate on the Work Release or Electronic Monitoring Programs, the "stay" date is the date you will start the program.

You are free to start the program before your "stay" date.

Can I do Work Release and then switch to Electronic Monitoring?

Yes. In some cases, a participant's circumstances change (i.e. work, housing, etc). A CAP officer will make the determination to switch a participant from one program to the other. It is done on a case-by-case basis.

What happens if I am denied both programs?

If you are denied both programs, you will have to complete your sentence in the County Jail. Other options might be available, please see the Custody Alternatives Officer for details.