

**Title :** Guidelines on the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights for elderly prisoners in Thailand

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**Abstract**

The objectives of this research were 1) to study the history and the importance of human rights problems of elderly prisoners 2) to seek guidelines for the protection and the promotion of human rights of elderly prisoners in Thailand, and 3) to make policy recommendations and/or recommendations for improving the law to prevent the effect that occurs from the treatment of elderly prisoners in prisons in relation to human rights.

The research results showed that the important welfare benefits that prisons provide for elderly prisoners are such as; food, bedding, clothing, medicine, bathing and laundry, ventilation inside the bedroom, health care, epidemic prevention, activities for the development of the elderly, and preparation before release and support after release. There are many prisons that perform well, and some that still need to be improved. In regard to the separation between elderly prisoners and general prisoners, we found that prisons do not have specific separation for elderly prisoners. Most informants agreed that prisons should distinguish elderly prisoners from general prisoners in order to take care of the well-being of the elderly, and to be able to conduct activities which are specifically designed to improve

the development of the elderly. Prisons should be financed with more budget for the elderly in order to supply food and personal supplies as appropriate and necessary. We also found that the post-release supporting process for elderly prisoners still lacks cooperation with relevant organizations to support the elderly after release, such as housing, family and social relations, health, and post-release follow-up, etc.

The researchers suggested the following guidelines for the development of the human rights for elderly prisoners: The proposal for the implementation are 1) as an independent constitutional organization, the Office of the National Human Rights Commission should act as a central organization to coordinate with any related organizations that incharges of elderly prisoners, such as the Department of Corrections, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, and local administrative organizations, to hold meetings to discuss about how to develop the welfare for elderly prisoners in prisons to comply with international standards, resulting in creating proposal of recommendations, policies and measures to present to the government and relevant organizations 2) the Department of Corrections should have concrete guidelines for monitoring the operation of prisons to comply with the standard practice of the Department of Corrections in a continuous manner 3) the Office of Social Development and Human Security should coordinate with prisons to develop the referral system for elderly prisoners, in order to provide necessary supports in many aspects for the elderly to return to the society, and 4) local administrative organizations should coordinate and share information with prisons for prisons to provide aid and support to elderly prisoners who are going to be released to the society, such as creating an understanding to the society and to the elderly's families, preparing public health, finding job placement, housing and post-release monitoring, to enable the elderly prisoners to continue living as a normal people with basic rights under the principles of human rights.

The suggestions for future research were 1) there should be a study on the gaps and conflicts of laws and government regulations regarding the rights of elderly prisoners in Thailand that has not yet been developed to be in accordance with international standards and conform with the present changing society, so as to improve the laws and regulations to be up-to-date and to be benevolent in developing the judicial process for the elderly 2) there should be a study to find proper practices that the Department of Corrections has

successfully conducted that can be used as a concrete sample, for the purpose of setting standards to the implementation of prisons across the country.