



The Bahamas Department of Correctional Services
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June 22nd, 2026

Ref: **BDCS/**

Ms. Rochelle R. Dean
Country Contact
WDI Bahamas

Dear Ms. Dean,

**RE: INSTITUTIONAL STANDARDS, COMPLIANCE WITH ARTICLE 6 OF THE
DECLARATION ON WOMEN'S SEX-BASED RIGHTS, AND MERIT-BASED
ACCREDITATION FOR WOMEN RECRUITS**

Thank you for your correspondence dated June 10, 2026, regarding comments made during the signing-on ceremony for Trainee Correctional Officers "A" Squad 2026 and your organization's concerns regarding equity, compliance with Article 6 of the Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights, and merit-based recruitment within the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services (BDOCS).

I wish to reaffirm that the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services does not engage in discrimination on the basis of sex or any other improper consideration. Our recruitment, training, performance management, and disciplinary processes are guided by principles of fairness, professionalism, accountability, and equal opportunity. Female officers have served and continue to serve with distinction throughout our organization, including in operational, supervisory, management, and executive leadership roles.

The Department does not maintain separate performance, accreditation, or disciplinary standards based on gender, nor does it support differential treatment that would undermine the principles of fairness, professional accountability, or merit-based advancement. All recruits are expected to meet established standards and are evaluated in accordance with applicable policies, procedures, and operational requirements.

The Bahamas Department of Correctional Services remains guided by its Mission, Vision, and Core Values. Our Mission commits us to contributing to the protection of society through the professional development of staff and the maintenance of safe, secure, humane, and rehabilitative correctional environments in accordance with universally accepted standards. Our Vision is to set the standard for excellence in public safety, customer service, victim awareness, and community engagement in a spirit of openness.

Equally important are the Core Values that guide our daily operations. These include maintaining a well-trained and diversified workforce, promoting ethical behavior at all levels of the organization, fostering teamwork, encouraging contributions from all levels of staff, and working towards the full embrace of internationally recognized correctional standards. These principles inform our approach to recruitment, training, staff development, performance evaluation, and promotion.

Consistent with these values, the Department seeks to create an environment in which all officers and recruits are afforded equitable opportunities to develop, perform, and advance based upon their individual merit, conduct, competence, and commitment to service. Equity within the Department does not mean different standards; rather, it means fair access to opportunities for development, support, assessment and advancement under established professional requirements.

The Department's longstanding record of appointing and advancing women into leadership and decision-making positions reflects our commitment to equity, professional development, and equal opportunity. The contributions of women within this organization continue to strengthen our capacity to fulfill our mandate and serve the people of The Bahamas.

Notably, the Department's commitment to equity and dignity extends beyond its workforce to the care and management of persons in custody. Female residents are afforded access to programmes, services, and opportunities designed to support rehabilitation, personal development, and successful reintegration into society. Under my leadership, female residents have been afforded the opportunity to participate in the Extra-Mural Work Programme for the first time in the Department's history, reflecting our commitment to ensuring that rehabilitative opportunities are available on an equitable basis.

In support of this commitment, staff members receive training in gender-responsive correctional practices, including the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules). These internationally recognized standards reinforce the importance of treating women in custody with dignity, fairness, and respect while addressing their specific needs within the correctional environment.

We trust that this response provides reassurance of the Department's commitment to equal opportunity, professional standards, and merit-based advancement. BDOCS remains steadfast in its responsibility to uphold public confidence, maintain institutional integrity, and foster a workplace culture grounded in respect, accountability, and service. Through the continued development of both staff and residents, the Department remains committed to excellence, rehabilitation, and continuous improvement.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to our attention.



Mr. Doan Cleare, C.D.
Commissioner of Corrections