



Write a letter Change a life

About the Criminal Justice Ministry Pen Pal Program

For more than 23 years, our volunteer letter writers have been changing the lives of Missouri inmates. All it takes is one hour, one sheet of paper, one envelope, one stamp and you make a positive impact on the life of an incarcerated person.

What would I do as a pen pal?

- You exchange friendly letters and provide a diversion from the endless monotony of prison life
- You offer a positive connection to the outside world
- You write to people who have been marginalized by society
- You share everyday experiences in your life and the world around you
- You learn that your pen pal has hopes and dreams, just like you

How does this work?

- You write directly to your pen pal and use the CJM return address
- Your pen pal's letters are sent to Criminal Justice Ministry and then forwarded to you. This keeps your anonymity and does not reveal your home address.

What does my pen pal get?

- A sense of being included in everyday lives of people and experiences on the outside
- A protection on the inside. Many inmates have no contact with friends or family when incarcerated. By receiving letters from someone who cares, it shows they are not forgotten and are not as vulnerable.
- A chance to exchange ideas and dreams. Inmates enjoy lively discussions about sports, television, books, religion, food and weather.
- A sense of friendship and normalcy not available in a prison atmosphere

To be a CJM pen pal contact Program Coordinator Myra Vandersall at myravandersall@gmail.com. You will receive more information about the program and a volunteer application.

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