



## A Program for the Development of Moral and Psychological Stability in Security Division Officers of Correctional Institutions

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**Abstract.** Addressing the issue concerning the development of moral and psychological stability in employees of security division of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia is of major importance to the functioning of correctional institutions. We regard the development of moral and psychological stability as a process of consistent development of personal traits, including self-evaluation of professional and psychological readiness to act in emergency situations, a sense of confidence in the legality of the use of fire arms, the knowledge and skills required to respond adequately and adjust one's emotional state when performing one's duty; all these traits should help officers deal successfully with negative factors arising in the course of their service and use firearms lawfully. The topic of the paper is relevant, since there has been an increase in the number of violations related to officers' non-compliance with the law. We have revealed that the level of moral and psychological stability in the majority of security division representatives (52.6%) is low: their sphere of emotional and volitional qualities is not developed; they do not have enough moral requirements and assessments, etc. In this regard, we have worked out a comprehensive target program, the goal of which is to form moral and psychological stability in security officers of correctional facilities in situations requiring the use of firearms. The program was implemented on the basis of correctional institutions in the Komi Republic Department of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia. The program is based on the principles of activity, research orientation and objectification (awareness) of officers' behavior and includes 56 academic hours (lectures, group classes). In the course of its implementation, various psychological and pedagogical techniques were used to encourage high-quality performance of professional duties. The positive outcome of the program is observed in the fact that officers who use firearms in their work become fully equipped with relevant knowledge, skills and abilities. The skills they acquire are the basis for maintaining personal emotional balance and developing necessary professional qualities.

**Key words:** corrections officers; activity of a security division; moral and psychological stability; formation of emotional stability; training techniques; program for the formation of moral and psychological qualities in an individual.

13.00.01 – General pedagogy, history of pedagogy and education.

**For citation:** Viktorova T.V., Zautorova E.V. A program for the development of moral and psychological stability in security division officers of correctional institutions. *Penitentiary Science*, 2020, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 592–595. DOI 10.46741/2686-9764-2020-14-4-592-595.

Addressing the issue concerning the development of moral and psychological stability in officers of security divisions of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia (FSIN Russia) is important for the effective functioning of correctional institutions and ensuring officers' readiness to act lawfully and without hesitation

when preventing escapes and other illegal acts of convicts, including officers' readiness to use deadly force [7; 8; 11].

The formation of moral and psychological stability in officers authorized to carry firearms is the process of purposeful development of personal characteristics, including self-evalu-

ation of professional and psychological readiness to act in emergency situations, a sense of confidence in the legality of the use of weapons, a sense of confidence in the legality of the use of firearms, the knowledge and skills required to respond adequately and adjust one's emotional state when performing one's duty; all these traits should help officers manage negative factors arising in the course of their service and use firearms lawfully [3; 4; 6; 9].

According to the Prosecutor General's office of the Russian Federation, in 2016–2018, 260 violations were detected related to non-compliance with the requirements of the law regarding both the grounds and the procedure for using physical force and special means. The investigative authorities initiated 144 criminal cases against penal officers. In 112 cases, the actions of officers were classified as abuse of authority. In 2016, 25 criminal cases of this category were initiated, in 2017 – 23, and in 2018 their number increased almost three-fold – up to 64 cases. Sixty-seven officers were prosecuted, while 38 persons were convicted, the majority of them were convicted in 2018 [5].

These statistics data bring to the fore an issue regarding the development of moral and psychological stability of officers authorized to carry firearms. In the course of the study, it was proposed to list the five most important qualities of a security division officer. The answers were distributed in descending order as follows: emotional stability, self-discipline, confidence, ability to remain calm in difficult work situations, remain true to duty and honor, high morale. The data obtained confirm that moral and psychological qualities are important for security division officers of correctional facilities.

At the same time, it was revealed that most of the officers (52.6%) have a low level of moral and psychological stability (the study was conducted on the basis of penal colony IK-19, penal colony IK-29, pre-trial detention center SIZO-2 of the Komi Republic Department of FSIN Russia. Seventy-nine security division officers participated in the pedagogical experiment). Thus, the study revealed that respondents have a poorly developed sphere of emotional and volitional qualities: the presence of moral assessments is not pronounced in them, as well as requirements that are aimed at internal stability and independence from an external environment; the readiness of security division officers to make decisions in a situation of subjective uncertainty is absent as well. The ability to transform the situation and the ability to predict the consequences of choice in the implementation of independent decisions are observed sporadically.

In this regard, a comprehensive and targeted program was designed. It is aimed at developing the moral and psychological stability in officers who serve in the security division of a correctional facility and who are authorized to carry firearms. The program was tested in several correctional institutions of the Komi Republic Department of FSIN Russia (IK-19, IK-29, SIZO-2).

The main objectives of the program are as follows:

1. Create a psychological and pedagogical environment enabling self-actualization of internal resources and improvement of relevant personal and professional qualities in officers.

2. Form the moral and psychological readiness of security division officers to act lawfully and without hesitation when preventing escapes and other illegal acts committed by convicts, including officers' readiness to use deadly force.

3. Increase officers' moral and psychological stability through psychological and pedagogical correction of emotional-volitional, operational-reflexive and cognitive-activity components.

4. Provide psychological and pedagogical support to officers, expand their social and psychological experience.

The program is based on the following principles:

- activity (intensity of attention, memory and will of students in order to understand and digest the knowledge). The officer is the subject of training [1] (activity increased gradually during the participation of security division representatives in cognitive activities);

- research orientation (in the course of training, officers discover new knowledge and unlock their personal potential, abilities and features);

- objectification (awareness) of one's behavior (participants shifted from impulsive to objectified behavior patterns with the help of feedback) [10].

The program is designed for 56 hours: 19 hours are lectures, the rest are group classes (9 hours are seminars and 28 – practical classes). Lectures are aimed at acquiring theoretical knowledge about the moral and psychological stability of an individual, techniques to regulate psycho emotional states, resources and reserves of the mental organization of an individual, techniques to reduce the level of anxiety and develop optimal mental states, types of rational attitudes toward the perception of life events, methods for developing the external locus of control, motivation for success, under-

standing the importance of knowledge of laws, regulations and regulatory documents.

Group classes, in particular practical ones, are focused on the development of such skills and abilities of security division officers as flexibility and concentration in complex situations arising in the course of their service; development of strong-willed and emotional resistance toward continuous pressure; stress resistance to negative work factors; confidence in decision-making in the aspect of using firearms and the legal grounds for their use; attention control in situations of long-term observation; application of methods of operational self-regulation. Seminar sessions were aimed at analyzing situations of moral choice in various situations, one's own psycho emotional states and choosing the right ways to cope with them; making independent decisions and assuming personal responsibility for the outcome; forming a positive attitude toward the service with an awareness of the importance of professional tasks that are directly related to the use of firearms.

The course "Theoretical foundations of moral and psychological stability" includes discussions of professional choice and risks in the profession of a security division officer (topics "Professional choice in one's life. Risks in the profession of a security division officer", "Essence of the notion 'moral stability' and its place in the holistic structure of the personality", "Foundations of legal literacy of security division officers" "Moral and psychological support for guard duty. Maintaining the moral and psychological stability of security division officers under special conditions of service: when preventing an escape, during mass riots", etc.).

The course "Practical bases of moral and psychological stability" includes three units:

- the unit that forms cognitive skills (topics "Normative documents, laws and instructions on the use of firearms in a correctional facility", "Legal bases of security", etc.);

- the unit that forms volitional and emotional qualities (topics "How to act in a difficult situation", "Showing determination when performing official duty", "Risk and you", "Stress – what is it?", "Professional observation", "Ready to use weapons to shoot to kill", etc.);

- the unit that forms important professional qualities of a security division officer. It involves discussing issues regarding the stability of the set of one's own views and attitudes, moral requirements and assessments that make an officer relatively independent of external circumstances; understanding one's ability to effectively solve official tasks in various, including special, conditions of service (topics "Respon-

sibility and duty", "Self-assessment of personal qualities", etc.).

Group classes have the following structure: 1) introduction to the topic (warm-up exercises aimed at creating an atmosphere of trust, emotional relaxation and cohesion in the educational team); 2) main part (implementation of the program content); 3) final part (discussion of the results of the class, group reflection).

Various psychological and pedagogical techniques were used during classes. For example, the method of moral choice was used, where students, avoiding direct influence, were invited to join in the discussion of situations that seemed to be far from their official duties. Being theoretical, these situations in the thoughts and feelings of security department officers shape possible behavior in situations of real responsibility and decision-making [2].

Specially selected exercises aimed at disclosing personal potential, revealing personality resources and learning how to manage various situations were used during the classes. For example, the exercise "Concentration and readiness to act", the purpose of which is to develop the accuracy of actions in conditions of uncertainty (conditions of uncertainty and surprise are created, the speed of decision-making and actions is trained).

Certain achievements in the formation of moral and psychological stability were made by involving officers authorized to carry firearms in the work on the use of self-supporting statements (affirmations), namely: "I am a professional, I do my job", "I am in control of myself, my thoughts, emotions and actions – I am in control of the situation!", "If I do not know what to do in a particular situation, I ask a more experienced officer for advice", "In a critical situation, first think, then act!", "I am confident, calm, attentive and demanding according to the instruction, I act reasonably, based on the current situation". Mini-lectures, discussions, video information sketches, simulation techniques etc. were widely used in class.

The positive outcome of the program is that security division officers become equipped with knowledge, skills and abilities that meet relevant requirements to the professional qualities of such officers; they develop mental balance in cases when the use of firearms is necessary; besides, they implement systematic control of their moral and psychological state, etc. The presented program can be used when planning lectures and practical classes with security division officers of a correctional institution in the framework of service training and in the system of professional development of penal system staff.

Thus, moral and psychological resistance to various kinds of complex and dangerous situations arising in the framework of one's professional activity is considered as one of the leading components in the effectiveness of professional activity of security division officers at correctional institutions of FSIN Russia. The confident behavior of officers when performing official duties is formed through consistent and systematic psychological and pedagogical training, education in the foundations of legal knowledge and implementation

of complex measures in other fields. The use of a specially developed comprehensive and targeted program aimed at developing the moral and psychological stability insecurity division officers at correctional institutions will contribute to the development of the necessary professional qualities in persons authorized to carry firearms. The acquired knowledge, skills and abilities will become the basis for maintaining the emotional balance of an individual and forming the necessary professional qualities.

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