

Dogs, Inmates Paired to Benefit National Security

Texas inmates will help socialize and train puppies who will eventually work with the TSA to detect explosives.

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Dogs are headed to prison in Texas, where they'll be living, eating, sleeping, and interacting with convicted criminals. These dogs aren't being punished, however, but rather will one day work to protect national security.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice have teamed up to create the Puppy Prison Program, where the dogs will be trained to detect explosives. Inmates selected to participate in the program will be responsible for feeding, cleaning and socializing the puppies. Dogs who graduate from the year-long program will move on to formal explosive detection training provided by the TSA.

Dogs aren't the only ones expected to benefit from the program, as prisoners are expected to gain companionship and a sense of responsibility from interacting with the dogs, according the TSA.

"TSA is excited to embark on this mutually beneficial partnership with the Texas prison system," said Scott Thomas, director of the TSA Canine Breeding and Development Center. "The prison is an ideal environment to socialize puppies with a variety of sights, sound and smells, similar to what they will encounter in a transportation environment."

The TSA is a division of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and is responsible for securing all modes of transportation including air, rail, and highway.