



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Program Statement

OPI: OPA
Number: 1260.1F
Date: June 23, 2011
Supersedes: PS 1260.1E (4/28/10)
Subject: Official Communications

1. **PURPOSE AND SCOPE.** To establish guidelines and procedures to facilitate the dissemination of official information to D.C. Department of Corrections (DOC) employees, contractors and volunteers and officials of the Federal Government, District Government, and other government officials and agencies.
2. **POLICY**
 - a. It is DOC policy to foster an environment where employees (including, but not limited to, contractors and volunteers) are informed of agency policies and procedures and other official information that is relevant to his/her duties.
 - b. It is DOC policy that all employees shall safeguard verbal and written communications by not discussing operational or sensitive information around inmates and only disclosing information pursuant to DOC policy and procedures, applicable laws, and rights of privacy.
 - c. It is the policy of the Department of Corrections to respond expeditiously to inquiries from members of the U.S. Congress, the Mayor, the City Administrator, the Council of the District of Columbia, the courts or similar high ranking government officials and agencies. All correspondence shall be prepared, and/or approved and disseminated by the Office of the Director or designee.
3. **APPLICABILITY.** This policy shall apply to employees, contract employees and volunteers who perform duties for DOC.
4. **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES.** The expected results of this directive are:
 - a. To ensure that employees are provided with pertinent information as it relates to the performance of their duties and responsibilities as a DOC employee.

- b. To ensure that employees receive information in a timely, accurate and widely disseminated manner and to maximize awareness of the law, regulations and procedures.

5. **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION.** In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Code section 2.1401.01 et seq., (hereinafter, “the Act”), the District of Columbia does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is also prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

6. **DIRECTIVES AFFECTED**

a. **Directive Rescinded**

- 1) PS 1260.1E Official Communications (4/28/10)
- 2) D.O. 1320.1A Inquiries and Request from Government Agencies and Officials

b. **Directives Referenced**

- 1) PS 1010.5D Chain-Of-Command
- 2) PS 1110.2 Directives Management System
- 3) PS 2320.1 Issuance and Use of Telecommunications Equipment
- 4) PS 2420.4 Email and Internet Use
- 5) PS 5010.4 Post Orders

7. **AUTHORITY**

DC Code § 24-211.2, et seq. Powers; Promulgation of Rules.

DC Code § 2-701-et seq., Official Correspondence

8. **STANDARDS REFERENCED**

American Correctional Association (ACA) 4th Edition, 4-ALDF-2A-04

9. PROCEDURES

- a. **Written Directives.** Pursuant to PS 1110.2 *Directives Management System* DOC shall communicate policy and procedures by formal written directives rather than by memoranda or e-mail, since these less formal documents are not authenticated, numbered, annually reviewed, or historically traced.
 - 1) Policies and procedures are posted on the DOC database and are accessible. The Major, Shift Commanders and CDF Training Office shall maintain an updated set of policies that are available for correctional employee viewing.
 - 2) The governing post order shall be available at each respective security post. Correctional employees shall read and acknowledge receipt and understanding of the post order pursuant to PS 5010.4 *Post Orders*.
- b. **Scheduled Staff Meetings**
 - 1) Managers and supervisors shall conduct staff meetings to exchange information, assign responsibility and coordinate activities. At a minimum, the manager shall provide a written agenda for the meeting. The manager shall maintain copies of meeting agendas and minutes.
 - 2) Collective Bargaining officials shall be given the opportunity to be present at designated meetings.
 - 3) Generally, staff meetings shall be conducted in the following manner.
 - a) The Director shall conduct executive and senior staff meetings.
 - b) The CDF Warden shall conduct staff meetings for senior level management personnel under the Warden's authority.
 - c) The CDF Warden or designee shall conduct staff meetings for shift commanders and uniform supervisors under their authority.
 - d) Office Chiefs shall conduct staff meetings for personnel under their authority.
- c. **Roll Call Briefings.** Correctional and Program shift supervisors shall conduct roll call briefings to inform in-coming shift employees of recent events, activities, and official information, pertinent to their duties. When appropriate, roll call shall be used as mini-training sessions.
- d. **E-mail.** Employees may use e-mail as a general communication resource tool to announce employee meetings, events, activities, and other work related information as outlined in *PS 2420.4 "Email and Internet Usage"*.

- e. **Employee Bulletin Boards.** Employee bulletin boards shall be used to post updated DOC policy, memoranda, and other official written documents that are relevant to employee duties and responsibilities. All information being placed on the employee bulletin boards must be approved by the Warden or designee.
 - 1) Employee bulletin boards shall also be used to share official information that is in written form with the agency employees.
 - 2) Employee bulletin boards shall be cleared of outdated DOC policies, memoranda and official documents.

- f. **Telecommunications Equipment.** DOC employees who have been issued cellular telephones, pagers and personal digital assistants (PDAs) such as a blackberry or handheld mobile device shall only use them to conduct official DOC business in accordance with *PS 2320.1 Issuance and Use of Telecommunications Equipment*.

- g. **Office of Public Affairs (OPA).** The Office of Public Affairs, where appropriate, shall manage public disclosure of official communications in accordance with DOC policy.

- h. **External Government Communications.** All official information maintained by the Department of Corrections shall be released in accordance with applicable laws and rights of privacy.
 - 1) All correspondence responding to inquiries or requests from members of the U.S. Congress, the Mayor, the City Administrator, the Council of the District of Columbia, the courts, or similar high ranking government officials and agencies, shall be prepared for the Director's signature.
 - 2) All correspondence to heads of governmental agencies shall be prepared for the Director's signature.
 - 3) Inquiries concerning specific employees, inmates, or incidents in the Department of Corrections shall be investigated by the appropriate senior level manager or designated DOC employee. Information released should comply with D.C. Personnel regulations governing employee privacy/protection rights; and pursuant to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regulations and DOC FOIA privacy policies and procedures.
 - 4) Inquiries and requests from governmental officials and agencies shall be responded to initially within twenty-four (24) hours. If an appropriate response cannot be provided within (24) hours, the requesting officials shall be notified of the status of their requests. The requesting officials shall also be notified of the anticipated date of a response.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Hoey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "T" and a stylized "Hoey".

Thomas P. Hoey
Interim Director