

 <p>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p> <p><b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE</b></p>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	April 22, 2024	<b>Page 1 of 22</b>
	<b>SUPERSEDES:</b>	4070.4G December 16, 2015	
	<b>OPI:</b>	SECURITY	
	<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	April 22, 2025	
	<b>Approving Authority</b>	Thomas Faust Director	
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>INMATE CORRESPONDENCE AND INCOMING PUBLICATIONS</b>		
<b>NUMBER:</b>	<b>4070.4H</b>		
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachments: Attachment A – Notice of Disposition of Mail Inmate Correspondence Attachment B – Request to Correspond (Inmate to Inmate Official Use Only) Attachment C – Money Receipt Stamp (Official Use Only) Attachment D – Message to Volunteers Regarding Incoming Publications and Program		

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES:**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Change</b>
	<i>Minor revisions made to the policy.</i>
§2. c. & g.	<i>New language regarding incoming letters and legal mail was added.</i>

**APPROVED:**



\_\_\_\_\_  
*Thomas Faust, Director*

4/22/2024

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date Signed*

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1. **PURPOSE AND SCOPE.** To establish procedures governing the collection, distribution, and inspection of all incoming mail to inmates, including legal and non-legal correspondence, money orders and authorized checks, and all publications, and to establish procedures for the sending of mail by inmates outside of the DC Department of Corrections (DOC).
  
2. **POLICY**
  - a. It is DOC policy to allow inmates to freely communicate or correspond with persons or organizations.
  - b. DOC may read, censor or reject incoming and outgoing correspondence when there is a reasonable belief that such action is necessary for reasons of public safety, to abide by law and/or postal regulations and to maintain order and security within DOC. Subject to security interests, DOC shall notify an inmate in writing when withholding/ censoring/rejecting incoming or outgoing mail in part or in its entirety.
  - c. Incoming letters shall be photocopied by the mailroom staff, and the photocopy delivered to the Inmate. The original letters shall be maintained by the mailroom staff for up to thirty (30) days before being destroyed.
  - d. Inmate mail, both incoming and outgoing, may be opened to intercept cash, checks and money orders and inspected for contraband.
  - e. Inmates are subject to discipline in accordance with DOC PM 5300.1, Inmate Disciplinary and Administrative Housing Hearing Procedures for violations of this policy and may be subject to criminal prosecution for any violation of federal and local law regarding illegal use of the US Postal Service.
  - f. Inmates may send sealed letters to a specified class of persons and organizations, including but not limited to the courts, legal counsel, DOC officials, state and local officials and grievance systems administrators.
  - g. Pursuant to guidelines set forth herein, staff shall inspect incoming legal mail and may inspect outgoing legal correspondence. Incoming legal mail shall be inspected for authenticity before being delivered to the inmate. Staff shall inspect legal mail for contraband while in the inmate's presence.

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- h. Mail shall be held, stored, and handled in a secure manner which is intended to prevent theft, tampering, delay, or other interference.
- i. This directive shall be made available to staff and inmates through posting on bulletin boards, and placement in the law library.

**3. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES.** The expected results of this program are:

- a. Inmates shall be able to maintain ties with their families and the community.
- b. Inmates will be able to receive legal and non-legal correspondence, money orders and authorized checks, and numerous publications and send mail in accordance with this directive.
- c. Inmates shall have access to the courts and counsel.
- d. Inmates shall be able to communicate or correspond with persons or organizations, subject only to the limitations necessary to maintain security and order.

**4. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED**

a. **Directives Rescinded**

PP 4070.1G            Incoming Correspondence and Incoming Publications  
(12/16/15)

b. **Directive Referenced**

- 1) PP 1280.2            Reporting and Notification Procedures for Significant Incidents and Extraordinary Occurrences
- 2) PM 1340.2            Media/Public Relations
- 3) PP 4020.1            Inmate Orientation
- 4) PP 4030.1            Inmate Grievance Procedures (IGP)
- 5) PP 4050.1            Inmate Property

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- 6) PP 4160.3                      Access to Legal Counsel (Attorney Visits)
- 7) PP 5009.2                      Searches of Inmates, Inmate Housing Units, Work and Program Areas
- 8) PP 5010.3                      Contraband Control
- 9) PM 5300.1                      Inmate Disciplinary and Administrative Housing Hearing Procedures

## 5. AUTHORITY

- a. 18 U.S.C., § 1341, Frauds and Swindles- US Postal Services
- b. 18 U.S.C. § 1342, Fictitious name or address– US Postal Services
- c. Turner v. Safely, 482 U.S. 78 (1987)
- d. D.C. Code § 24-211.02, Powers; promulgation of rules

## 6. STANDARDS REFERENCED

- a. American Correctional Association Performance-Based Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities, (ACA) 5<sup>th</sup> Edition: 5-ALDF-5B-05, 5-ALDF-5B-06, 5-ALDF-5B-07, 5-ALDF-5B-08, 5-ALDF-5B-09, 5-ALDF-5B-10, 5-ALDF-6A-02, 5-ALDF-6A-04, and 5-ALDF-6A-09.

## 7. NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

- a. In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code §2-1401.01 et seq., (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 intra-family offense, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that is also prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

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## 8. INMATE MAIL PRIVILEGES

- a. Except as prohibited or otherwise restricted in this directive, an inmate may correspond with the public, the media, his/her attorney(s), the courts and public officials.
- b. Inmates in administrative restrictive housing and special management units shall be able to write and receive letters on the same basis as inmates in the general population.
- c. Pursuant to §12 of this directive, inmates may receive funds from money orders and authorized checks.
- d. An inmate at his/her own expense may send and receive an unlimited number of letters and publications, except when there is reasonable belief that limitation is necessary to protect public safety or maintain facility order, safety and security.
- e. Inmates may purchase writing materials and stamps through the inmate commissary.
- f. *Indigent inmates.* Inmates housed at DOC facilities that has less than \$5.00 dollars in their inmate finance account.
  - 1) Indigent inmates who maintain \$5.00 or less in their account during the entire thirty (30) day period prior to the request for postage assistance, may mail two (2) standard postage-free letters per week.
  - 2) Indigent inmates may mail two (2) pieces of “*Postage Free*” standard size (9x12) legal correspondence requiring standard postage per month to individuals and organizations such as the courts, legal counsel, law enforcement, federal and local authorities, embassies, news media representatives and public/private social service agencies. All requests to mail “*Postage Free*” legal correspondence must be submitted to the law library. The Law Librarian must verify legal mail.
- g. Inmates may have access to numerous publications as outlined in §14 of this directive.

## 9. MAIL RESTRICTIONS

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- a. *US Postal Service.* DOC shall only accept letters and approved publications mailed to inmates via the US Postal Service.
- b. DOC shall only accept certified or registered mail addressed to inmates when the envelope is clearly marked as being from a government official or legal source.
- c. DOC shall document, return to sender or otherwise appropriately dispose of items that do not comply with specifications in this directive (Attachment A)
- d. *Inmate-to-Inmate Correspondence*
  - 1) *DOC Internal Mail System.* Inmates are prohibited from corresponding with other inmates in the CDF and CTF through the DOC internal mail system.
  - 2) *US Postal Service.* Inmates are prohibited from corresponding with other inmates in the DOC, its contract facilities or another jurisdiction through the US Postal Service *unless the inmate obtains prior written approval* from the Warden/Designee. Inmates must obtain approval through the Warden/Designee every six (6) months.
    - a) Inmates shall submit an Inmate Request for this privilege through the assigned Case Manager (Attachment B).
    - b) The Case Manager shall conduct an inquiry through the Offender Management System (OMS) to determine if the requesting inmate has a court ordered or DOC imposed separation from the other inmate or there is any other reason set forth in this directive that would preclude correspondence privileges.
    - c) Upon the Warden's/Designee's approval, the Chief Case Manager or designee shall forward the request to correspond to the Warden/Designee at the facility where the other inmate is housed.
    - d) Upon receipt of the notice of approval or rejection, the Chief Case Manager shall provide notice to the Case Manager and forward a copy to the Mailroom.
    - e) The Mailroom shall maintain the database of approvals and rejections.

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- f) The Mailroom shall query the database whenever the envelope is addressed to an inmate at another correctional facility.
  - g) The Mailroom shall dispose of the item when there is no written prior approval.
- e. *Correspondence Between Inmates and Employees/Volunteers.* DOC prohibits correspondence between an inmate and a current or former employee, a current or former volunteer, or a current or former contract employee except with the written approval of the Warden/Designee or otherwise authorized by DOC policy.
- f. *Request To Block Inmate Correspondence*
- 1) Inmates shall not write to an individual who has made a written request to the Warden/Designee to prohibit the inmate from corresponding.
  - 2) The Warden/designee, and the Mailroom staff shall maintain a list of individuals who request correspondence restrictions.
  - 3) Mailroom staff shall forward the correspondence to the Deputy Warden. The Deputy Warden will provide written notification to the sending inmate to cease corresponding with the complainant.
  - 4) Inmates are subject to discipline pursuant to PM 5300.1; Inmate Disciplinary and Administrative Housing Hearing Procedures for violations or requirements set forth herein and may be subject to criminal prosecution for any violation of federal and local law regarding illegal use of the US Postal Service.
- g. *Fraudulent or Other Illegal Use of the Mail System*
- 1) Inmates are prohibited from falsely identifying himself/herself as an employee, agent or representative of DOC;
  - 2) Inmates are prohibited from using any DOC or DOC contract facility address or mail system in order to conduct business or illegal enterprises or for any other fraudulent purpose;
  - 3) Inmates shall include the following information on each envelope when sending outgoing mail:

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- a) His/her name as it appears on their Judgment and Commitment order,
  - b) His/her DCDC number,
  - c) CDF address printed legibly on the upper left corner of the envelope.
- 4) Inmates are subject to discipline pursuant to PM 5300.1. *Inmate Disciplinary and Administrative Housing Hearing Procedures* for violations of requirements set forth herein and may be subject to criminal prosecution for any violation of federal and local law regarding illegal use of the US Postal Service.
- h. *Prohibited Mail Items*
- 1) Postage Stamps and Envelopes. Postage stamps and envelopes are prohibited in incoming correspondence for inmates.
  - 2) *Cash, Personal Checks and Non-Government Payroll Checks.* DOC shall attempt to return cash, personal checks, and private-industry payroll checks to the sender pursuant to guidelines set forth in § 12 of this directive. DOC may, upon receipt of government subsistence checks and as required by law, provides written notification to the affected agency that the inmate is incarcerated.
  - 3) Self-addressed labels or any type of pre-printed labels is prohibited.
  - 4) Photos are prohibited as follows:
    - a) Polaroid or other photos that contain plastic or any other synthetic backing;
    - b) Photographs that contain/portray nudity, exposure of female or male genitalia or other sexually explicit subject matter (e.g. thongs, pasties, g-strings);
    - c) Photographs that display cash, alcohol, drugs and drug paraphernalia;
    - d) Photographs that depict acts of violence or promote illegal activity against another person(s), to include gang related materials, gestures and insignia;



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- e) Photographs that display weapons, weapons in use against others, showing weapons aimed in the direction of another person;
  - f) Photographs that depict or imply physical violence, terrorist activity or physical resistance to governing authorities;
  - g) Photographs of crime scenes unless through legal mail;
  - h) Photo negatives/slides;
  - i) Photos of current or former employees, and
  - j) Photos that are glued, taped, stapled, or otherwise affixed to a page.
- 5) News articles or magazines depicting gang activities or containing instructions on how to join a gang/crew.
  - 6) Materials containing instruction on self-defense, martial arts, guns or ammunition.
  - 7) E-mail/internet materials (printouts of pages from websites such as Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter/X etc.).
  - 8) Battery-operated greeting cards.
  - 9) Letters that contain decorative stamps, ribbons, bows, mirrors, or stickers on the envelopes or contents may be turned over to the Office of Investigative Services (OIS), DOC Security Team, or disposed of.
  - 10) Electronic documents including but not limited to CDs, DVDs, MP3s, cassettes, videos and audio tapes.
  - 11) Mail containing a foreign substance which prevents an effective search or which contains an unknown substance, the mail shall be turned over to the DOC Security Team or to the Office of Investigative Services (OIS). Inmates shall be subject to discipline pursuant to DOC PM 5300.1, "Inmate Disciplinary and Administrative Housing and Hearing Procedures.
  - 12) Personal identifying information (e.g. birth certificate, social security number, driver's license number, etc.) of individuals other than the

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inmate/resident and his/her immediate family as verified through Case Management.

- 13) Correspondence from DOC inmates that concerns and/or attempts to send, receive, solicit or contain money orders or any other items of value from other inmates or from relatives or visitors of other inmates.
- 14) Correspondence or documents that indicate the inmate is entering into a contract or engaging in a personal enterprise/business.
- 15) Junk mail to include, but not be limited to, pamphlets, ads and leaflets.
- 16) Materials, publications or correspondence that contain:
  - a) Threatening messages, plans for escape or other criminal activity;
  - b) Creates a substantial danger to the emotional or mental health of the receiving inmate;
  - c) Gang related materials including but not limited to gestures, symbols, codes and insignia or photographs that have been altered;
  - d) Sexual behavior, these materials include, but are not limited to, pictures, drawings, or photographs which display or suggest vaginal, rectal, or oral penetration by a person or object, ejaculation, bondage, bestiality, sadistic or masochistic behaviors, child pornography, or the suggestion of child pornography;
  - e) Obviously coded messages or messages written in such an incomprehensible format that the message appears coded;
  - f) Obscene drawings, pictures and materials;
  - g) Strong scented envelopes and articles of clothing, bodily fluids or hair;
  - h) Tablets or binders;
  - i) Maps or illustrations of the DOC facility or other government agency floor plans, maps of the District of Columbia or surrounding areas; and

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j) Publications that have hardback covers.

- 17) When correspondence is rejected, the Mailroom shall notify the sender and the intended inmate in writing of the rejection and the reasons for rejection. Mailed items that are rejected and are in excess of (\$10) in value may be held for no longer than ten (10) business days for the sender, with government issued identification, to retrieve. DOC shall give notice that the sender and the inmate may appeal the rejection to the Deputy Director for Operations.
- 18) When rejected correspondence contains plans for, or discussion of the commission of a crime or evidence of a crime, DOC shall refer the matter to appropriate law enforcement authorities and the sender and intended inmate shall not be notified.
- 19) DOC shall confiscate and appropriately dispose of contraband items that inmates attempt to mail in accordance with DOC policy 5010.3 Contraband Control. Inmates may be subject to discipline in accordance with DOC PM 5300.1, Inmate Disciplinary and Administrative Housing Hearing Procedures.
- 20) The Mailroom shall return all prohibited items to the sender and notify the inmate of the reason for return.
- 21) Any mail which has papers that are bound together by metal clips shall be disassembled by removing the metal clips.
  - i. *Inmate Property Allowance Restrictions.* Inmates are subject to limits on the amount of personal property, to include legal materials, correspondence, papers, books, magazines and photographs as outlined in DOC policy 4050.1, *Inmate Property*.

## 10. MAIL EXAMINATION, SEARCH AND CENSORSHIP

a. Examination and Search

- 1) Mailroom staff shall open mail to intercept cash, checks, money orders and contraband.

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- 2) Pursuant to PP 5009.2, *Searches of Inmates, Inmate Housing Units, Work and Program Areas* and PP 5010.3, *Contraband Control*, DOC shall use narcotic detection dogs to search DOC mail. Staff shall conduct K-9 searches as often as necessary to control and eliminate the introduction of illegal drugs.
  
- 3) Contraband
  - a) Minor Contraband. The Mailroom may return or dispose of miscellaneous items valued at less than ten dollars pursuant to PP 5010.3, *Contraband Control*. Examples of such items include, but are not limited to, newspapers and magazines not sent directly from the publisher, telephone calling cards, chewing gum, pencils, pens, jewelry, and items indicated in § 9.
  
  - b) Major Contraband. The Mailroom shall immediately contact OIS and the Security Office. Security staff shall collect the contraband and follow procedures as set forth in PP 5010.3, *Contraband Control*. Major contraband may consist of, but not be limited to, narcotics, prescriptions, chemicals and other illegal substances, knives, tools or metal substances, food items, smoking materials and/or tobacco products, and cell phones parts/accessories.
  
  - c) Persons mailing contraband into the facility may lose their privilege to send mail to DOC facilities may be prosecuted.
  
- 4) Suspicious Packages. Suspicious mail may include letters unusual in appearance or that appear different from mail normally received or sent by the individual, letters postmarked in a city or state that is significantly different from the return address, or when the letter is leaking (to include powdery substances), stained or emitting a strange or unusual order.
  
- b. Censorship and/or Rejection
  - 1) Mailroom staff, OIS and designated Security staff may read and recommend censorship, rejection or disposal of non-legal mail based upon legitimate facility interests of safety, security and order. Such may include but not be limited to:
    - a) Plans for sending contraband in or out of the facility;

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- b) Plans for criminal activity;
  - c) Terrorism information;
  - d) Gang related materials such as codes, news clippings and/or symbols;
  - e) Instructions for the manufacture of weapons, drugs or drug paraphernalia, tattoo devices or alcoholic beverages;
  - f) Threat(s) of blackmail or extortion;
  - g) Plans for escape or unauthorized entry or information or maps which might aid in an escape;
  - h) Code(s) that is not understood by the reader;
  - i) Plans for activities in violation of facility rules;
  - j) Information that, if communicated, would create a serious danger of violence and/or physical harm to a human being; or
  - k) Other material that would if communicated, create a serious danger to the safety, security, or order of the facility.
- 2) Mail written in a foreign language that cannot be interpreted by institutional staff to the extent necessary to conduct an effective search may be subject to a delay for translation of its contents by a third party. This process may take up to three (3) additional days.
  - 3) The mailroom supervisor shall review the mail that was flagged by staff to determine if there are sufficient grounds to withhold and/or censor the mail; determine that the correspondence being withheld or censored is no more extensive than necessary to meet criteria for censorship; and correspondence being withheld or censored is done so in accordance with established policy.
  - 4) Subject to legitimate security concerns, the DOC may notify the inmate in writing when censoring and/or withholding mail in part or full. Notice shall include the reason for the actions and shall advise the inmate of any appeal process and disciplinary actions taken.

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- 5) In each case where it is deemed necessary to censor and/or reject a particular letter/correspondence DOC shall document:
  - a) The inmate’s name and DCDC number;
  - b) Sender’s name and address;
  - c) Date the letter was received, censored and/or rejected;
  - d) The reason for censoring and/or rejecting the letter; and
  - e) The employee’s signature.
  
- c. **Mail Fraud** - Staff shall, pursuant to PP 1280.2, *Reporting and Notification Procedures for Significant Incidents and Extraordinary Occurrences*, forward information or evidence of suspected mail fraud or other illegal activity or improper use of the mail system through the chain-of-command to the Office of Investigative Services (OIS) for investigation. OIS shall report incidents of actual mail fraud to US Postal Officials in accordance with federal laws 18 U.S.C. §1341 and 18 U.S.C. §1342.

## 11. INCOMING MAILROOM PROCESSING

- a. The Mailroom shall process incoming and outgoing mail within forty-eight (48) hours, excluding weekends and holidays. Reasonable delays may occur during the holidays, Valentine’s Day and emergency situations.
- b. Mailroom or designated support staff shall compare the inmate’s name and DCDC number against the OMS database and write the inmate’s housing unit and cell number on the envelope.
- c. With the exception of legal correspondence, Mailroom staff shall open all letters prior to forwarding to secure sections of the facilities.
- d. Mailroom staff shall be sensitive to the fact that information in correspondence is of a private nature and must be handled discreetly. Unless there is a legitimate concern relating to the facility’s security, safety, or orderly operation, the contents of reviewed correspondence shall be revealed to any other person.

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- e. Incoming mail (not legal) is photocopied and the originals maintained in the mailroom for thirty (30) calendar days before being destroyed. In such cases, photocopies of the mail shall be delivered to the inmate.
- f. When reviewing correspondence, disagreement with the sender/receiver's apparent moral values, attitudes, or choice of words will not be used as a reason for withholding or delaying correspondence.
- g. Staff shall inspect legal mail pursuant to § 13 of this directive.
- h. No correspondence, printed material, inmate personal property, or money may be hand delivered to inmates by visitors. The Warden or designee may allow attorneys of record to hand deliver privileged mail directly to the inmate, subject to approval and examination for contraband.

## 12. PROCESSING MONEY ORDERS, CASH AND AUTHORIZED CHECKS

- a. DOC shall only accept money orders complete with the sender's name and address, US or local/state government checks and cashier's checks that are mailed to the DOC for deposit in an inmate's personal account. DOC also accepts Western Union electronic money transfers and deposits through the Offender Connect kiosk.
- b. Mailroom staff shall stamp notice to an inmate's envelope when a money order or government check was included in the inmate's mail (Attachment C/Sample). Mailroom staff shall include on the envelope the amount of the money order/government check, the date received and signature of the employee who logged the deposit in OMS.
- c. Mailroom staff shall forward money orders and government checks to the Inmate Finance Office by the close of business of each working day Monday through Friday.
- d. Upon receiving money orders and authorized government checks from Mailroom staff, the Inmate Finance Staff shall post the amount to the individual inmate's account within two (2) business days.
- e. *Cash Received Through the Mail*

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- 1) When cash is received in correspondence, mailroom staff shall countersign receipt to include the amount and bill denominations. A photocopy of the cash will be made and be attached to the receipt.
- 2) Mailroom staff shall make written notification to the Warden or designee.
- 3) Mailroom staff shall return cash to the sender certified mail with written notice that cash is not acceptable.
- 4) Cash or money orders received with no return address and/or that was obviously hidden in the mail shall be forwarded to Inmate Finance for further disposition. In those cases, a detailed description and photograph of the method used to conceal the money shall be made, and an explanatory letter will be provided to the sender and the inmate.
- 5) Any discrepancies or failure by staff to comply with the procedures outlined herein shall immediately be reported to the Deputy Director for Operations or designee.

### **13. INCOMING LEGAL MAIL**

- a. Inmates/residents will be allowed to send/receive confidential correspondence with the following special correspondents:
  - 1) District, State, and federal elected officials;
  - 2) District official appointed by the Mayor of the District of Columbia;
  - 3) State officials appointed by the Governor;
  - 4) Federal officials appointed by the President of the United States;
  - 5) District, State, and federal judges and courts;
  - 6) Attorneys who can be verified as licensed to practice law in any state or in the District of Columbia;
  - 7) City, county, state, and federal officials having responsibility for the inmate/resident's present, prior, or anticipated custody, parole, or probation supervision;



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- 8) District, county, or local government agencies regarding child custody proceedings;
  - 9) Officials of a foreign consulate;
  - 10) Verified legal service providers/organizations (e.g. American Civil Liberties Union, Prison Law Office, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, etc.).
- b. Mailroom staff shall process and deliver all legal mail within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt, excluding weekends, holidays and during emergency situations to the inmate population.
  - c. Incoming correspondence shall bear the sender/agency official name and address on the envelope. Correspondence with a public official using an address different than the official's business address will be returned.
  - d. MailSecur technology shall be used to scan all sealed legal mail prior to delivery.
  - e. An assigned officer shall deliver legal mail to the inmate and document in the legal mail log book:
    - 1) The date the mail was received;
    - 2) The name and DCDC number of the addressee;
    - 3) The name of the sender;
    - 4) The date the mail was delivered to the inmate; and
    - 5) Signatures of the inmate and the staff member delivering the legal mail.
  - f. Incoming legal mail shall be opened and inspected in the inmate's presence and examined for contraband and other items. In the absence of adequate identification, staff may open and read the mail to the limited extent necessary to determine its legitimacy and ascertain whether it is, in fact, legal mail.

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- g. Mailroom staff may verify all incoming legal mail by corresponding with the sending attorney, or law firm.
- h. If staff observes that incoming correspondence is not legal mail as set forth in this directive, they shall notify the mailroom supervisor for further disposition.

#### 14. INCOMING PUBLICATIONS

- a. All publications, including books, newspapers, newsletters, magazines, pamphlets and other materials mailed that will be brought into housing units shall be paperback and mailed to the inmate directly from the original source or an authorized distributor.
  - 1) Original sources and authorized distributors include, but are not limited to: publishers, bookstores, book clubs, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, and other entities as determined by the DOC.
  - 2) If a sender wishes to mail more than one paperback copy in bulk for several inmates, they may be mailed to the Department of Corrections, c/o the Director of Chaplaincy Services, 1901 D Street, SE, Washington, D.C., 20003, who will distribute the materials to the appropriate recipients.
- b. Books received from an original source or authorized distributor must have a paperback. No hard-back books shall be accepted by Mailroom staff.
- c. Inmates may purchase publications, except those that:
  - 1) Provide instruction for the manufacturing of explosives, drugs, or other unlawful substances;
  - 2) Illustrate the making of weapons, alcoholic beverages, tattoos, and or narcotic substances;
  - 3) Materials containing instruction on self-defense, martial arts, guns or ammunition;
  - 4) Advocate violence or gang activity;

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- 5) Have demonstrably caused violence or other serious disruptions of institutional security;
  - 6) Advocate racial, religious, or national hatred, or
  - 7) Contain sexually explicit material, nudity or pornographic material.
- d. Mailroom staff shall scrutinize publications for contraband and obscene content.
  - e. DOC shall maintain and periodically update the list of publications that are banned from distribution.
    - 1) The Mailroom shall hold publications containing questionable content and by the next business day, contact the Deputy Director for Operations or the Office of the General Counsel for determination.
    - 2) An inmate shall be notified when a publication is disapproved, and the inmate shall be told the reason that the publication was disapproved.
  - f. Upon release or transfer to another facility/jurisdiction, mail may not necessarily be forwarded to the inmate. It is the inmate's responsibility to notify publishers about a change in their address.

## 15. MAIL DELIVERY

- a. CDF and CTF shall ensure mail is distributed to the appropriate inmate.
- b. At no time shall mail be distributed by an inmate or be accessible to any inmate other than the addressee.
- c. Staff shall not leave correspondence on beds or in cell doors.
- d. Inmates are responsible for notifying their correspondents upon transfer to another facility or jurisdiction.
- e. The Mailroom shall return the correspondence to sender if the inmate was transferred to an out-of-state or federal facility. The Mailroom shall forward mail to inmates transferred to a local community correctional center.

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## 16. OUTGOING MAIL

- a. Case Managers shall inform inmates at Intake Orientation that letters they are sending through the US Postal Service are placed there at the inmate's request and the inmate shall assume responsibility for the contents of each letter. Correspondence containing threats, extortion, etc., may result in prosecution for violation of federal laws. When such material is discovered, the inmate may be subject to disciplinary action, the written material may be copied and all material may be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency for further disposition.
- b. DOC shall not mail "bill-me-later" subscription requests from inmates to newspapers or publications.
- c. Outgoing mail may be opened to intercept cash, checks, money orders and inspected for contraband.
- d. Inmates shall not attempt to send bodily fluids or other contraband through the mail. This may result in disciplinary action or criminal prosecution.
- e. Each inmate shall include the following information on each envelope when sending mail.
  - 1) His/her name as appearing on the judgment and commitment order,
  - 2) His/her DCDC number,
  - 3) Facility address printed in a legible manner on the upper left corner of the envelope.
- f. Mailroom staff may open envelopes not bearing this information, dispose of the item or return it to the inmate sender when identity is certain.
- g. The inmate shall affix sufficient postage to all outgoing non-legal mail.
- h. Inmates shall deposit mail in the designated mail box in the housing unit.
- i. Mail shall be delivered to the Mailroom Monday through Friday, except holidays and during emergency situations.

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- j. When the Mailroom receives mail without postage, staff shall run the OMS query for inmates to determine if the inmate meets the indigence criteria. The Mailroom shall return letters with written notice to inmates when they are ineligible for postage free non-legal correspondence.
- k. Legal mail shall receive priority processing and mailing.
- l. The inmate shall include the recipient agency's name and/or individual's name and address. Upon reasonable suspicion, DOC may within forty-eight (48) hours, verify that the intended recipient meets established criteria for legal correspondence.
- m. Staff, in the presence of the inmate, may be allowed to inspect outgoing legal mail for contraband before it is sealed.

## 17. INMATE APPEAL PROCESS

- a. The sender may appeal to the Warden or designee when correspondence is rejected/returned, withheld or censored by written request.
- b. An inmate may appeal a decision that results in mail being withheld or censored by filing a grievance in accordance with DOC PP 4030.1, *Inmate Grievance Procedures (IGP)*.
- c. An inmate may appeal a decision that results in the disapproval of a publication by filing a grievance in accordance with DOC PP 4030.1, *Inmate Grievance Procedures (IGP)*.
- d. The IGP Coordinator shall notify the Mailroom when an inmate has filed an appeal; Mailroom staff shall hold all questionable correspondence/publications until the grievance process is completed.
- e. If the inmate chooses not to appeal, the publication shall be returned to sender confirmed by government identification or the censored materials shall be disposed of.
- f. If a decision to deny publication or censorship is reversed via the grievance process, the Deputy Director for Operations shall instruct the Mailroom to forward the publication/correspondence to the inmate within one (1) business day of notification of the final decision of the grievance.

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## Attachments

Attachment A – Notice of Disposition

Attachment B – Request to Correspond – Inmate to Inmate (Official Use Only)

Attachment C – Money Receipt Stamp (Official Use Only)

Attachment D – Message to Volunteers Regarding Incoming Publications and Program

**DOC/PP4070.4H/4/22/24/OPP**



DC Department of Corrections  
3924 Minnesota Ave NE Washington DC 20019

### NOTICE OF DISPOSITION OF MAIL

TO

ADDRESS

DATE

RE:

INMATE NAME

DATE

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Returned to Sender | <input type="checkbox"/> Destroyed or Confiscated                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Censored           | <input type="checkbox"/> Withheld pending administrative decision |
- In excess of two (2) postage-free letters per week when authorized as indigent
  - Contains Food or Clothing – Inmate is only allowed DOC issued food/clothing or purchased via inmate canteen
  - Contains Cash, Personal or Non-Government Check
  - Contains stationery/ink pens/pencils/more than twenty (20) postage stamps
  - Contains decorative stamps or stickers on the envelope or contents
  - Contains telephone calling cards or credit cards
  - Contains Polaroid or similarly backed photographs
  - Contains nude, sexually explicit or obscene content
  - Contains newspapers, magazines, book, publication that were not mailed directly from the publisher
  - Contains electronic media – CD, MP3, DVD etc., or battery-operated greeting cards
  - Contains hardback books
  - Contains other contraband or unknown substance Describe \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- Inmate sending mail is attempting to falsely identify him/her self as a government agent, employee or official
  - The correspondence is between two inmates in DOC custody without prior written authorization from the Warden
  - There is a written request from a citizen requesting the inmate not be allowed to correspond
  - Contains a solicitation to or receipt of money from other inmates, other inmate's relatives or visitors in DOC custody  
This does not include family members who are related to both inmates
  - Indicates an inmate is entering into or engaging in a business enterprise
  - Displays drugs, drug paraphernalia or significant amounts of alcohol
  - Displays weapons, weapons in use against or aimed in the direction of others
  - Displays/contains gang signs, insignia, gestures
  - Contains threats, terrorist acts or plans of criminal activity







**MEMORANDUM**

TO

Warden/Designee

Approve

Deny

FROM

Case Manager

Approve

Deny

SUBJECT Recommendation for Inmate-to-Inmate Correspondence Privileges

DATE

INMATE \_\_\_\_\_ DCDC # \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_

The above DOC inmate is requesting to correspond with

INMATE \_\_\_\_\_ Inmate ID # \_\_\_\_\_

RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

FACILITY NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation  Approve

Deny

Provide rationale for recommendation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Case Manager (Print/Type Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature



**Government of the District of Columbia  
Department of Corrections**

**Mail Room**

**Acknowledged Receipt Stamp**

**Money Order** \_\_\_\_\_

**Official Check** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Certified Check** \_\_\_\_\_

**INITIAL:** \_\_\_\_\_



**A MESSAGE TO VOLUNTEERS REGARDING  
INCOMING PUBLICATIONS AND PROGRAM MATERIALS**

In order to maintain the safety, security and order of the facility, the D.C. Department of Corrections must search all publications that come into the facility and confirm they come from reliable sources in sealed packaging to ensure they do not contain contraband or information not allowed in the facility. In order to do so efficiently, the facility follows a standard correctional practice approved by the U.S. Supreme Court called the “publisher only rule.” This requires all publications, including books, newspapers and newsletters, magazines, pamphlets, and any other materials that will be provided to inmates for their use in their cells to be mailed from the material’s original source or an authorized distributor. An authorized distributor includes but is not limited to the publisher, a bookstore, a book club, a faith based organization, a community based organization or other entities as determined by the Department of Corrections.

For legal reasons, and in order to ensure that all sources of reading materials are treated equally, the Department cannot make exceptions for certain groups or organizations. This is by no means a reflection on the trustworthiness of the sending organizations or the respect and appreciation the agency has for organizations that donate books and reading materials to inmates. The agency acknowledges the importance of such contributions to the intellectual, spiritual, and mental well being of the recipients and encourages their continued involvement in these programs.

Any person or organization that is an original source or authorized distributor seeking to provide inmates with publications such as books, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, or program materials can find the procedural requirements set forth in DOC Policy and Procedure 4070.4, *Inmate Correspondence and Incoming Publications*.

All publications in the institution must be soft cover and shall be mailed to an individual inmate. If the sender wishes to mail more than one soft cover copy in bulk for several inmates, they may be mailed to the Department of Corrections, c/o the Director of Chaplaincy Services, 1901 D Street, SE, Washington, D.C., 20003, who will distribute them to the appropriate parties.

Materials for Use in a Program or Lesson Plan- If an individual or organization wants to bring in soft cover publications for an inmate to use during a program, lesson, meeting or group, without having to mail the materials in advance, they may bring them with them for the event where they will be searched upon entry. The materials must be collected from the inmate(s) upon completion of the program, lesson, meeting or group and taken out of the institution when they leave. If the authorized distributor, volunteer or program provider wants to allow the inmates to keep the publications and materials and take them back to their cells, the mailing procedures set forth above must be followed in advance of the activity.

If there is any need for clarification on these requirements, you may contact the Director of Chaplaincy Services at 202-523-7079. Your anticipated cooperation is much appreciated.