	DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION CORRECTIONS ADMINISTRATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES	EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2024	POLICY NO.: COR.15.02
		SUPERSEDES (Policy No. & Date): COR.15.02 of January 04, 2022	
	SUBJECT: CORRESPONDENCE		Page 1 of 12

1.0 PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the monitoring/delivery of inmate correspondence to individuals and organizations outside of the facility. The sending and receiving of correspondence will only be restricted to the extent necessary to prevent a threat to the safety, security, and good government of the facility, the safety or well-being of any individual, or for other legitimate penological purposes.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all Department correctional facilities. To the extent any individual facility's policy conflicts with the statewide policy, the statewide policy shall control.

3.0 REFERENCES, DEFINITIONS & FORMS

.1 References

- a. Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR), Policy and Procedures (P & P), COR.02.13, Monetary Donations to Inmate Trust Fund.
- b. DCR, P & P, ADM.08.08, Prison Rape Elimination Act.
- c. DCR, P & P, COR.11.01, Administrative Segregation and Disciplinary Segregation.
- d. DCR, P & P, COR.13.03, Adjustment Procedures Governing Serious Misconduct Violations and the Adjustment of Minor Misconduct Violations.
- e. Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), § 96-18, Agencies May Not Open Letters to Ombudsman.
- f. HRS, § 96.18, Agencies may not open letters to ombudsman.
- g. HRS, § 353.30, Others by Permission.
- h. *Averhart v. Shuler*, 652 F.Supp. 1504 (N.D. Ind. 1987).
- i. *Bell v. Wolfish*, 441 U.S. 520 (1979).

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- j. *Blaisdell v. Department of Public Safety*, United States District Court for the District of Hawaii, Civ. No. 14-00433 (2014).
- k. *Covell v. Arpaio*, 662 F.Supp.2d 1146 (D. Ariz. 2009).
- l. *Keenan v. Hall*, 83 F.3d 1083, 1094 (9th Cir. 1996).
- m. *Samonte v. Maglinti, et al.*, United States District Court for the District of Hawaii, Civ. No. 05-00598 SOM-BMK (2007).
- n. *Turner v. Safley*, 482 U.S. 78, 93 (1987).
- o. *Wolff v. McDonnell*, 418 U.S. 539, 576-77 (1974).

.2 Definitions

- a. **Censoring Mail** – The act of monitoring and withholding personal correspondence, periodicals, and publications that are found to be detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the facility or that might incite violence or facilitate criminal activity.
- b. **Docketed Case** – An active lawsuit currently filed in court.
- c. **First Class Mail** – A class of mail that includes all matter wholly or partly in writing or typewriting, all actual and personal, official, privileged correspondence to include postcards, letters and sealed parcels.
- d. **Indigent Inmate** – An inmate with less than ten dollars (\$10.00) of income in his/her spendable or restricted account at the time of his/her request.
- e. **Inmate Contraband** – Anything not specifically authorized for possession by the facility Warden, or which inmates are prohibited from obtaining or possessing by statute, rule, regulation, or order.
- f. **Mail Watch** – Identification of an inmate or inmates for whom it is deemed necessary to read all of their personal correspondence to protect safety and security issues of the facility and public.
- g. **Official Correspondence** – Mail, incoming and outgoing, between an inmate and the courts (State of Hawaii or the United States), Ombudsman, Attorney General, Hawaii Paroling Authority, Elected state or federal

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officials to include the Governor's Office, Director of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and Corrections Division Administrators).

- h. Personal Correspondence – Mail, incoming and outgoing, between an inmate and individual other than those approved for privileged correspondence.
- i. Privileged Correspondence – Mail, incoming and outgoing, between an inmate and his/her attorney.
- j. Prohibited Correspondence - Mail, incoming and outgoing, between an inmate and individual containing malicious, false, inflammatory, or other types of statements or information, the purpose of which is reasonably intended to harm, or intimidate an employee, visitor, or member of the general public is prohibited. Any correspondence that falls within Section 5.4 is considered prohibited.
- k. Pro Se Inmate – An inmate representing himself/herself in a docketed case.
- l. STG – Security Threat Group

.3 Forms

- a. DCR 8322, Prohibited Correspondence form (attached).
- b. DCR 8323, Prohibited Items form (attached).

4.0 POLICY

Inmates shall retain their right of free expression and communication. Access to the public is an integral part of rehabilitation. Inmates shall be permitted to communicate with their families and friends as well as with public officials, the courts, individual members of the news media, and their attorneys. Correspondence shall be subject only to the limitations necessary to maintain safety, security, order, discipline, or treatment interests of the correctional institution.

5.0 PROCEDURES

.1 Personal Correspondence

- a. There shall be no limit on the volume of personal correspondence an inmate may send or receive through the U.S. Postal service, except when

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there is a reasonable belief that a limitation is necessary to protect public safety or institutional order and security.

During assigned times, inmates have access to an inmate tablet for secure electronic messages and photo-sharing with approved visitors.

- b. A small facility (less than 500 inmates) may adopt a **postcard personal mail system**. This is in addition to standard legal/letter size envelopes for personal correspondence. Postcards will be screened for delivery first, and standard legal/letter size envelopes will be screened for delivery within 4 working days. All privileged mail and official mail shall be exempt from the postcard requirements.

Postcards should be no smaller than 3 ½" x 5" nor longer than 6 ½" x 11 ½" in size.

- c. Personal correspondence shall be in English or Hawaiian unless authorized in accordance to the following:
1. Requests for alterative languages may be made for any inmate who is unable to write in English or Hawaiian, or if the recipient of the correspondence does not read English or Hawaiian. Under these conditions, the inmate shall make a request to the Warden for approval to correspond and receive mail in a different language.
 2. Inmates who are authorized to correspond in a language other than English may have their personal correspondence delayed in sending and/or receiving the document due to the review process by translators.
- d. Personal incoming or outgoing correspondence, including secure electronic messages and photo-sharing via inmate tablet communication, to and from inmates may be inspected, censored, blocked from delivery, and/or read for the following:
1. Plans to escape;
 2. Plans for criminal activity;
 3. Plans to introduce contraband into or out of the facility (i.e. drugs, weapons, other contraband);

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4. Plans for activities in violation of facility rules;
 5. Information which, if communicated, would create a clear and present danger of violence and physical harm to a human being;
 6. Correspondence which attempts to forward unauthorized correspondence to a third party, to include any attempt to pass information or communicate through a 3rd party to another inmate confined in any correctional facility;
 7. Suspicious correspondence (i.e. oily stains, discoloration, crystallization, excessive wrapping/taping, deformed letters, etc.);
 8. STG or gang-related activities and plans;
 9. Nudity; or
 10. Any threat or factor that would undermine safety, security, order, discipline, control, or other legitimate penological interests.
- e. Postcards may be inspected/censored to ensure that they have not been adulterated or split and glued back together in an attempt to smuggle contraband.
 - f. Facility Wardens shall publish and make available to inmates and staff information indicating authorized items for inmates which are not restricted contraband.
 - g. Without prior written approval by the Warden/designee, inmates are prohibited from writing to other inmates.
 - h. Facility Wardens have the discretion to place an inmate on mail watch to screen all personal correspondence, including secure electronic messaging and photo-sharing via inmate tablet communication, of a particular inmate or inmates when officials have reason to suspect that the targeted inmates may be using the mail and inmate tablet communication features of illicit or illegitimate purposes.
 - i. Reference DCR, P & P COR.02.13 "Monetary Donations to Inmate Trust Account" for guidelines on receiving monetary donations for inmates by mail.

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.2 Privileged Correspondence

- a. In order for mail to be considered privileged, it must be contained in envelope with the following information:
 1. Envelopes from an inmate's attorney should show in the upper left-hand corner the name of the attorney and/or the law firm, address of the law firm, and the attorney's bar number; and
 2. Envelopes from an inmate's attorney shall be marked "privileged" or "confidential".
- b. Privileged correspondence is extended to an inmate's attorney(s) and any prospective attorney only. Mail for government agencies (Attorney General, Hawaii Paroling Authority, and Ombudsman's Office), officials, and courts is not considered protected legal mail.
- c. Privileged correspondence shall be subject only to inspection for contraband in the presence of the inmate. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the inmate must be present when privileged correspondence is opened.
- d. Privileged correspondence shall not be subject to censorship, unless there is sufficient cause to believe mail is in fact private or threatening under the pretense of legal mail. In such cases, reason for censorship will be documented and authorized by the facility Warden or his designee.

.3 Official Correspondence

- a. There shall be no limit on the volume of official correspondence an inmate may send or receive, except when there is a reasonable belief that a limitation is necessary to protect public safety or institutional order and security. A letter sent to the Ombudsman from an inmate shall be forwarded, unopened, immediately upon receipt.
- b. All incoming/outgoing official correspondence must be received in a standard legal or letter size envelope with adequate postage and must include the following information:
 1. Inmate name;
 2. Inmate identification number or SID;

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3. Facility name and address; and
 4. Name and full address of the sender/receiver.
- c. Official incoming or outgoing correspondence to and from inmates may be inspected/censored and/or read for the following:
1. Plans to escape;
 2. Plans for criminal activity;
 3. Plans to introduce contraband into or out of the facility (i.e. drugs, weapons, other contraband);
 4. Plans for activities in violation of facility rules;
 5. Information which, if communicated, would create a clear and present danger of violence and physical harm to a human being;
 6. Correspondence which attempts to forward unauthorized correspondence to a third party;
 7. Suspicious correspondence (i.e. oily stains, discoloration, crystallization, excessive wrapping/taping, deformed letters, etc.);
 8. STG or gang-related activities and plans; or
 9. Any threat or factor that would undermine safety, security, order, discipline, control, or other legitimate penological interests.

.4 Package/Items

- a. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that disallowing packages does not violate inmates' rights.
- b. Facilities have the discretion to permit or prohibit receipt of packages for inmates as set forth in their facility policies.
- c. Refer to Section 5.9 of this policy for the process of rejection/denial of prohibited items.

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.5 Inmates in Segregation

- a. Inmates in segregation shall be provided the same opportunities for writing and receipt of personal, official, and privileged mail as are available to the general population unless there is a problematic basis for restriction as determined by the Adjustment Hearings Officer or Program Committee. Suspension of correspondence shall never be for punishment purpose.
- b. Factors that may warrant a restriction on correspondence include an offense involving the mail threatening a State or Federal government official or other person, attempting to solicit funds or samples and subscribing to a publication without paying for the subscription, planning an escape, and planning or introducing contraband; i.e., weapons, drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, etc.
- c. Privilege correspondence shall not be subject to censorship, unless there is sufficient cause to believe mail is in fact private or threatening under the pretense or legal mail. In such cases, reason for censorship will be documented and authorized by the facility Warden or his designee.
- d. The inmate shall be advised in writing of any correspondence restriction and given the opportunity to appeal to administration.
- e. Reference DCR, P & P COR.11.01, Administrative Segregation and Disciplinary Segregation, for further guidelines concerning inmate/ward correspondence while in segregation.

.6 Inmates Reporting PREA

- a. In reference to DCR, P & P ADM.08.08, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), an inmate may report incidents of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and retaliation in writing to the following agencies and individuals:
 1. Office of the Ombudsman;
 2. Office of the Attorney General;
 3. Legislator or Political Representative;
 4. Sex Abuse Treatment Center;

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5. Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Offices & staff;
6. A family member; or
7. Relevant law enforcement agency.

.7 Requests for Inmate Information from Outside Agencies.

- a. All replies to requests for information concerning inmates from outside agencies, attorneys or individuals shall be in accordance with established policies and shall be routed through the appropriate administrative authority as follows:
 1. Requests for inmate information addressed to the Director shall be routed through the Director's Office for signature.
 2. Requests for inmate information addressed to the facility Warden shall be routed through the facility Wardens' Office for signature.
 3. Request for inmate information addressed to the Internal Affairs (IA) Office shall be routed through the IA Chief Investigator's Office.

.8 Correspondence Delivery Schedule

- a. At least one (1) correspondence/mailbox/lockbox receptacle will be available for general population and segregation inmates to drop of mail daily.
- b. Inmate incoming correspondence should be handled within 24 hours (Monday through Friday) without unreasonable delay except:
 1. On weekends and holidays;
 2. When mail is delivered to the wrong facility (i.e. an inmate transferred to another facility or out-of-state facility);
 3. When mail would present a threat to personal safety of facility security, order, discipline, control, or other legitimate corrections interests; and
 4. When the mail must be held for investigation.

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- c. Inmate outgoing correspondence should be ordinarily logged and posted on the same day (Monday through Friday) without unreasonable delay except:
 - 1. When mail is received from inmates after the close of normal business hours or after last mail pick up of the day;
 - 2. When mail is received from inmates on weekends or holidays; or
 - 3. When the mail must be held for investigation.

.9 Prohibited Correspondence/Items

- a. When mail is received for an inmate is rejected or denied, the sender (if known) and the inmate to whom the mail was addressed shall both be notified in writing of the following:
 - 1. Notification of rejection or denial;
 - 2. Reason for rejection or denial; and
 - 3. Process for both the inmate and the outside person wishing to correspond with the inmate to appeal the rejection or denial to the Warden/designee.
- b. Facility mailroom staff will document receipt of prohibited correspondence on DCR Form # 8322, "Prohibited Correspondence".
- c. Facility mailroom staff will document receipt of prohibited items discovered with an inmate correspondence on DCR Form # 8323, "Prohibited Items".
- d. Unless an investigation or legal/disciplinary action is necessary, prohibited correspondence will be returned to the sender along with a copy of DCR Form # 8322. The sender has up to seven (7) calendar days from receipt to appeal. The Warden will provide a response to the appeal from the sender within thirty (30) days.
- e. Where permitted, the cost of returning prohibited correspondence/items to the sender will be charged to the inmate addressee.
- f. Inmate appeals should be made through the inmate grievance system.

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- g. In the event correspondence/items was deemed appropriate based on the outcome of an investigation and/or no legal/disciplinary charges are recommended, the correspondence will be forwarded to the inmate.
- h. In the event correspondence contains contraband and/or intoxicants, it will be immediately confiscated, and inmate will be charged with 7(9) misconduct violation in accordance with DCR, P & P, COR.13.03, Adjustment Procedures Governing Serious Misconduct Violations and the Adjustment Minor Misconduct Violations and place on Mail Watch. The sender shall be notified of the rejection/denial and reason of the rejection/denial and banned from correspondence. Law enforcement officials will be immediately notified.

.10 Writing Supplies and Postage


- a. Writing paper, envelopes, postcards, and postage shall be made available for purchase in the facility commissary by inmates for written correspondence.
- b. Upon request, **indigent inmates** will be provided with supplies and postage for privileged, official, and personal correspondence as follows:
 1. For privileged correspondence, the facility will provide sufficient writing supplies and postage in an amount equal to three (3) one (1) ounce letters per week;
 2. For official and personal correspondence, the facility may provide sufficient writing supplies and postage in an amount equal to one (1) one (1) ounce letter per week; and
 3. The facility will not be responsible for providing additional postal services such as registered mail, certified mail, insured mail, etc.
- c. Upon request, **pro se indigent** inmates will be provided with supplies and postage for privileged, official and personal correspondence as follows:
 1. For official correspondence related to their docketed case, the facility will provide sufficient writing supplies and postage in an amount equal to four (4) one (1) ounce letters per week;

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2. For official and personal correspondence unrelated to their docketed case, the facility may provide sufficient writing supplies and postage in an amount equal to one (1) one (1) ounce letter per week.
 3. The facility will not be responsible for providing additional postal services such as registered mail, certified mail, insured mail, etc.
 4. If a pro se indigent inmate feels the writing supplies and postage provided by the facility are insufficient, he/she may submit a written request for additional writing supplies and postage along with the reason for such a request to his/her case manager. The case manager will promptly respond to the pro se indigent inmate's request in up to 3 working days. The inmate may appeal the case manager's response by way of grievance.
- d. The facility business office shall debit the amount on the inmate's accounts receivable in the spendable account of the inmate trust account for collection upon any deposits.
 - e. Inmates are prohibited from receiving writing supplies and postage in incoming correspondence. All writing supplies and postage must be purchased through the facility commissary.

APPROVAL RECOMMENDED:




Deputy Director for Corrections

JAN 0 1 2024

Date

APPROVED:



DIRECTOR

JAN 0 1 2024

Date

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PROHIBITED CORRESPONDENCE

Facility Name			
Inmate Name		SID	

This is to inform you that correspondence to/from the following individual has been reviewed and denied due to the discovery of prohibited correspondence:

Name			
Address			
City	State	Zip Code	

Type of Correspondence (Check One): Privileged Official Personal

Reason for Denial (Check All That Apply):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plans to escape
<input type="checkbox"/> Plans to introduce contraband into or out of the facility (i.e. drugs, weapons, other contraband)
<input type="checkbox"/> Information which, if communicated, would create a clear and present danger of violence and physical harm to a human being
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspicious correspondence (i.e. oily stains, discoloration, crystallization, excessive wrapping/tape/string, deformed packaging, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other correspondence that may threaten or undermine safety, security, order, discipline, control, or a legitimate penological interest. | <input type="checkbox"/> Plans for criminal activities
<input type="checkbox"/> Plans for activities in violation of facility rules
<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence which attempts to forward unauthorized correspondence to a third party
<input type="checkbox"/> Engaging in STG or gang-related activities and plans |
|--|---|

Facility Disposition for Prohibited Correspondence (Check One):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Returned to Sender (include DCR Form ## Appeal) <input type="checkbox"/> Retained for Further Investigation | <input type="checkbox"/> Referred for Disciplinary Proceedings
<input type="checkbox"/> Forwarded to Law Enforcement Officials |
|--|---|

Form Completed By:

Printed Name			
Signature		DATE	

Inmate appeals should be made through the facility grievance process within fifteen (15) calendar days of rejected correspondence. The sender has up to seven (7) calendar days from receipt to file appeal.

CORRESPONDENCE APPEAL

State Reason for Appeal (Attach additional pages if necessary):

Printed Name			
Signature		DATE	

This section to be completed by facility staff:

Warden /Designee Response (Attach additional pages if necessary):

Disposition of Appeal: Approved Denied

Signature		DATE	
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PROHIBITED ITEMS

Facility Name			
Inmate Name		SID	

This is to inform you that prohibited items to/from the following individual have been discovered with your correspondence:

Name			
Address			
City	State	Zip Code	

List of Prohibited Items Received:

Form Completed By:

Printed Name			
Signature		Date	

This section to be completed by the inmate for prohibited items received:

- I request the prohibited items to be returned to sender
- I request the prohibited items to be destroyed
- I request the prohibited items to be picked up by my visitor (I understand Warden or designee approval is required for this option)
- I request to pay for the prohibited items to be mailed to the following address:

Name			
Address			
City	State	Zip Code	

Inmate Signature	Date	
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NOTE: In the event a disposition has not been received within thirty (30) calendar days and no pending grievances or other hold notices exist, the prohibited items will be destroyed.

This section to be completed by facility staff:

For items requesting to be destroyed or for items where no disposition indicated within thirty (30) calendar days of notice:

Are there any pending appeals, grievances, or other hold notices for the prohibited item? Yes No
 If yes, do not destroy the prohibited items until a final disposition has been reached.

Destruction Information:

Date of Destruction	Time of Destruction	
Staff Signature		

For items requesting to be picked up by visitor:

- Approved Disapproved

Warden/Designee Signature	Date	
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For items requesting to be mailed out:

Mailed By	Date Mailed	
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