

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES
POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policy No: 04-03	Effective Date: 08/11/04	Revision Date: 08-11-14
Subject: Resident Mail		

I. Policy Statement

Juveniles in Division facilities/programs shall have the right to communicate through written correspondence with members of their family, legal counsel, and other persons and organizations, subject to the limitations necessary to maintain order and security of the facility or program.

II. Rationale

To provide an opportunity for juveniles to maintain a relationship with family members and other supportive persons and organizations, and to allow for legally required communication.

III. Definitions

- A. "Contraband" items are those for which possession by a juvenile is either illegal by federal or state law or prohibited by policy of the Division or a particular Division facility or program. Contraband items include, but are not limited to: tobacco, illicit drugs, paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages, weapons, jewelry, money, electronic devices, cell phones, items capable of being used to effect an escape, or any item that might interfere with the treatment process.
- B. "Correspondence" is any mail or written communication to or from juveniles, including letters, postcards, and greeting cards.
- C. "Parcel" is a package that contains more than written correspondence.
- D. "Privileged mail" is between the juvenile and their attorney, or a judge.

IV. Procedures

A. Outgoing Mail

- 1. Juveniles shall be permitted to send letters to members of their family, legal counsel, and other persons and organizations, subject to the limitations necessary to maintain order and security of the facility or program. There is not a limit to the volume of mail a juvenile may send, as long as it does not interfere with facility security, and programming.
- 2. If there is ever a need to limit outgoing mail it shall be approved and documented by the Assistant Program Director (APD).

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3. All outgoing correspondence shall be clearly addressed and without unnecessary additions such as drawings, symbols or words on the outside of the envelope.

B. Incoming Mail

1. During the juvenile's stay at a Division facility, he/she will not be allowed to subscribe to magazines, record clubs, book clubs or other organizations that require monetary compensation. Any exception to this must be in writing and have prior approval by the APD.
2. Residents may receive soft-cover materials if they are free and not found to:
 - a. be detrimental to the security of the facility or program;
 - b. depict bombs, weapons or describe methods of absconding;
 - c. depict, describe or encourage the use of alcohol or drugs, or the brewing of alcohol;
 - d. depict, describe or encourage activities that may lead to aggressive acts or violence;
 - e. be inflammatory, degrading, dehumanizing or hurtful to others;
 - f. encourage or instruct criminal or delinquent activity;
 - g. be sexually explicit or degrading;
 - h. be in direct conflict with established treatment goals.
3. Incoming correspondence with unnecessary drawings, symbols or words will be returned to sender.
4. Mail without a return address will be returned to the post office. Juveniles will be verbally notified when mail is returned to the sender.
5. The number of letters or volume of publications a juvenile may have in his or her individual room may be restricted for safety and security reasons. Juveniles shall be advised of these restrictions.
6. Staff shall hand out mail daily, except on Sundays and holidays.
7. Any mail received, which is not appropriate as recommended by the unit supervisor and approved by the APD, will not be delivered to the juvenile, but held for five days pending a grievance. If no grievance is filed in five days, the mail will be returned to sender.

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- a. The juvenile must be given notice the material has been received and will be returned to the sender in five (5) days, unless a grievance is filed prior to that time.
 - b. The regular grievance procedure will be followed in accordance to JJS Grievance Policy 04-08 for this purpose.
8. Any correspondence not allowed in a juvenile's room should be held with other personal items for safekeeping, and returned upon release from the facility.
 9. Incoming mail shall be opened by the juvenile in front of staff and shaken out to check for contraband. If any contraband is found, the letter and its contents will be directed to the appropriate supervisor for further action.
 10. Parcels must be pre-approved. They will be opened by the juvenile in front of staff. The contents shall be inventoried and documented according to facility procedures. Items not allowed in a juvenile's room should be held with other personal items for safekeeping, and returned upon release from the facility.
- C. Reading Incoming or Outgoing Mail
1. Staff shall not read a juvenile's incoming or outgoing mail. Mail will not be read at the time it is received, or at any time thereafter, unless there is a documented threat to a known person or the facility, or ongoing criminal activity.
 2. Juveniles must be notified at the time of admission to the facility, as a routine part of the orientation process, that under specific circumstances (excluding legal correspondence) the facility director may read the mail.
 3. In cases where there is documentation to justify reading a juvenile's mail, the juvenile must be notified and the mail is to be referred to the facility director to be opened.
 4. The facility director must document any mail that is read and clearly outline the rationale.
- D. Juveniles are not allowed to send to or receive mail from residents or inmates in prisons or other correctional settings, with the exception of parent, legal guardian, siblings or others as approved by APD or designee. Correspondence arriving

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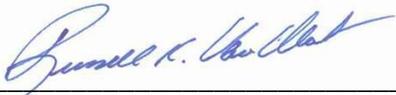
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from other juveniles in custody, and/or other correctional facilities, will be returned unopened to sender and the juvenile will be notified of this.

V. Continuous Renewal

This policy shall be reviewed every three (3) years to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness. This policy may be reviewed before that time to reflect substantive change.

This policy has been reviewed by the Board of Juvenile Justice Services and is approved upon the signature of the Director.



Russell K. Van Vleet, Chair
Board of Juvenile Justice Services

8-11-14

Signature Date



Susan Burke, Director
Division of Juvenile Justice Services

8-11-14

Signature Date