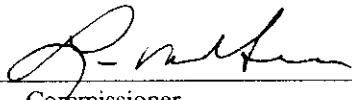
	<p align="center"><b>PHILADELPHIA PRISONS</b> <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b></p>	<p><b>Policy Number:</b> 4.G.1</p>	<p align="right"><b>Page 1</b> <b>of 11</b></p>
<p><b>Part:</b> IV - Institutional Services <b>Section:</b> Mail, Telephone, and Visiting</p>		<p><b>Related Pennsylvania Minimum Standards:</b> Title 37 PA Code § 234 <b>Related ACA Standards:</b> 4-ALDF-2A-21, 4-ALDF-2A-22, 4-ALDF-5B-05-10</p>	
<p><b>Subject:</b> Inmate Correspondence</p>		<p><b>Supersedes:</b> Policy 4.G.1 signed October 24, 2001</p>	
<p><b>Approved:</b>  Commissioner</p>		<p><b>Signature Date:</b> August 23, 2013</p>	
<p><b>Effective Date:</b> September 23, 2013</p>		<p><b>Scheduled PAD Review:</b> Annually <b>Scheduled Commissioner's Review:</b> August 23, 2017</p>	

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedures that will be used to process and account for inmate non-legal correspondence and packages.

**Policy**


It is the policy of the PPS to permit inmates to correspond with family, friends, officials, and other significant community contacts with a minimum of interference, consistent with the legitimate security needs of the System.

**Definitions**

*Indigent inmate:* An inmate with an account balance of \$5.00 or less for (30) consecutive days will be considered indigent for the purposes of payment of postage by the Warden or his/her designee.

*Contraband:* any item or substance that is not allowed in the facility because it may be used to compromise the safety and security of the facility, its staff and inmates. Specifically, contraband is, but not limited to, any article which is:

- prohibited under any law applicable to the general public;
- capable of being used to cause death or serious injury, including but not limited to handguns, cartridges, knives, explosives, or dangerous drugs;
- introduced into a correctional facility with the intent to transfer to an inmate without the permission of the Warden or his/her designee; or
- possessed by an inmate without authorization; and
- misused authorized items (e.g. placing batteries in a sock to be used as weapon, hoarding or selling of medication prescribed for one person to another.
- Any item introduced into the institution without approval of the Warden.

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*Inmate Correspondence:* Written letters or papers sent in envelopes to or from inmates via official mail services.

*Package:* Any mailing container other than a standard letter or business letter, or manila mailing envelopes (8.5 x 11 or 11 x 14).

**Procedural Overview**

Overall responsibility for inmate correspondence and Mailroom operations will belong with the Deputy Warden for Administration.

The Mailroom in each facility will be located in a secure section where inmates are not permitted. All inmate mail and packages will be received, inspected, sorted, and distributed from this designated Mailroom. The Mailroom will be kept secured at all times when not attended by the designated Mailroom Officer or assigned relief. No loitering will be permitted in the Mailroom, and the area will be maintained in a professional manner. Each Mailroom will be supplied with a standard postal scale.

There will be no limit on the source, destination, amount, or content of incoming or outgoing non-legal correspondence unless there is a reasonable belief that some limitation is needed to protect public safety, PPS security and orderly operation, or the inmate cannot afford postage.


The mail system in each facility will provide for the convenient deposit and distribution of mail every day except Sundays and federal holidays. The Transportation Unit will pick up outgoing mail at each facility early every morning (except Sundays and federal holidays) and deliver it to the Post Office. While at the Post Office, the Transportation Unit will pick up the incoming PPS mail and then deliver it to the Mailrooms of each facility.

Inmate non-legal mail received in the facility will be distributed to the inmate within twenty-four (24) hours of arrival (excluding Sundays and federal holidays). Exceptions to this 24-hour requirement will be made only in the case of extreme emergency situations, at the direction of the Warden.

NOTE: See Policy and Procedure 3.F.8 Legal Mail regarding inmate legal and official mail.

**Collection and Processing of Outgoing Inmate Mail**

The Unit Sergeant will be responsible for having unit staff empty the mailbox(es) during the 11-7 shift. The outgoing mail will be delivered to the Mailroom by 7:00 a.m. every day except Sundays and federal holidays. From the Mailroom, it will be picked up by the Transportation Unit early every morning and delivered to the Post Office.

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No inmate outgoing mail will be opened. There will be no restriction on the length, language content, subject matter or number of letters mailed by an inmate. Each inmate may write to, and receive mail from, any person. However, correspondence may be restricted between facilities upon authorization of the Warden(s) if it is being used for purposes that are illegal or prohibited by PPS Policies and Procedures. In such case, the Deputy Warden for Administration will be responsible to ensure that the inmate is given written notification.

**Outgoing Inmate Packages**


With the advance approval of the Unit Manager, an inmate may be permitted to send out a package containing such items as craft goods, extra personal property, or excess correspondence materials, if these items cannot reasonably be sent out via a visitor. In such cases, the inmate will be permitted to obtain an empty carton or other necessary packaging materials from the Supply Room Officer. The inmate will then fill out and submit a Request for Disbursement Form (D-Form) to the Unit Manager or designee with the items to be mailed. The form should be made out to the City of Philadelphia (it should not be signed until the cost of shipping is listed by the Mailroom Officer). The inmate will then package and seal the items in the box in the presence of staff, per the Unit Manager's instructions.

Unit staff will deliver the sealed and properly addressed package and D-form to the Mailroom Officer, who will weigh it and determine the correct postage. The Mailroom Officer will write the amount of postage on the D-form and return it to the Unit Manager. The Unit Manager will arrange for the inmate to sign the D-Form authorizing the cost of postage to be collected from their personal account. The Unit Manager will then return the form to the Mailroom Officer who will forward it to the Warden's office per standard procedure. The Mailroom Officer will notify Inmate Accounts to place a hold on the inmate's account for the exact amount, pending routine processing of the D-form. The Mailroom Officer will then place the correct amount of postage on the package and send it to the Post Office on the next routine Transportation Unit mail pick-up.

**Indigent Inmate Mail**

A locked box for indigent mail will be maintained at a location(s) accessible to the inmate population. An inmate requesting indigent mail service will deposit his/her mail, with police photo number clearly indicated, in the locked box. The Unit Sergeant, Unit Manager, Mailroom Officer, or other staff assigned by the Warden of the facility will be responsible, on a daily basis, for the following:

- collecting the indigent mail from the housing areas;
- confirming an inmate's indigent status (via the automated MIS, when available);
- providing plain envelopes to each confirmed indigent inmate, who will address each one (including return address), insert the letter, seal the envelope, and sign the Outgoing Indigent Mail/Daily Log form (see below);
- delivering the indigent mail to the Mailroom staff.

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The staff member processing indigent mail will maintain a binder of the daily Outgoing Indigent Mail/Daily Log forms (attachment 4.G.1.b). The form will contain the following information for each indigent inmate sending mail:

- date and time;
- housing location;
- type (legal, non-legal);
- number of mail pieces;
- indigent status verified;
- police photo number;
- inmate's name;
- name and address of addressee;
- Unit Sergeant's initials;
- inmate's signature.

Prior to the end of the 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. shift, the staff member processing indigent mail will forward the indigent mail bundle to the Mailroom Officer, along with a copy of the Outgoing Indigent Mail/Daily log form(s) for the day.


Indigent inmates will be provided standard first-class postage for up to ten letters (including legal mail) per week.

**Writing Materials and Stamps**

Except as provided in this policy, postage charges will be the responsibility of the inmate. Inmate letterhead will be available on the housing unit at all times. Inmates will be permitted to retain fifty (50) sheets of writing paper. Paper tablets, pens, and stamps may not be received via US. Mail or any other carrier. An inmate is permitted to have up to twenty (20) stamped envelopes in his/her possession, except if he/she has demonstrated a verifiable need, in writing, and has received the written approval from the Unit Manager or the appropriate Supervisor. Indigent inmates will be provided access to plain, unstamped envelopes, and are permitted to have up to twenty (20) unstamped envelopes in their possession.

**Inspection and Rejection of Incoming Mail**

Inmate housing locations will be maintained in the automated system. The Mailroom Officer will access the automated system for housing locations. The Mailroom Officer will note the housing location on every piece of incoming mail, including letters and packages. Mail addressed to inmates no longer in the custody of the PPS will be set aside and will not be opened (see *Forwarding Mail For Released Inmates*, below). The PPS will not pay any postage due.

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Lack of an institution or police photo identification number will not, alone, constitute a reason to return correspondence. The Mailroom Officer will make every effort to establish the correct identification of an inmate addressee who is not fully identified by institution number or police photo number.


The Mailroom Officer will open each piece of mail in the designated mailroom, remove the contents without reading any correspondence, and check the contents for contraband, money orders, cash, photographs, etc. (Inmate legal mail will be processed in accordance with Policy and Procedure 3.F.8, Legal Mail.)

If no return address is given, the mail will be stamped "unacceptable" and returned to the Post Office, and this action will be recorded in the Returned/Forwarded log. However, if the mail item also contains a money order or other funds for the inmate, the Mailroom Officer will:

- accept the money only;
- place it in a fresh envelope with a notation that the original envelope and contents were returned to the sender; and
- process it routinely as described under *Incoming Funds for Inmates*, on page seven.

Mail containing items other than written correspondence will be handled as follows:

- money (cash, money orders, etc.) will be processed as described under *Incoming Funds for Inmates*, on page seven;
- food items of any kind will be destroyed, but any accompanying correspondence will be accepted; the Mailroom Officer will make a notation on the envelope that food contents were removed and destroyed;
- personal photographs will be accepted (except those depicting nudity or sexual acts);
- official documents (documents other than legal documents or regular correspondence-i.e., insurance documents) will be placed in the inmate's personal effects, but any accompanying correspondence will be accepted. The Mailroom Officer will notify the inmate that the document was received. An inmate may request through his/her Social Work Services Manager to review the document. If an inmate obtains written approval from the Unit Manager to have a particular document in his possession, it may be retrieved from the personal effects, not directly from the mailroom; if a document appears questionable (e.g., another person's identification), it will be handled as illegal contraband;
- shoes and boots (no steel tips) will be accepted if sent directly from the vendor; this provision excludes types of footwear sold in commissary;
- plastic or musical greeting cards, tobacco, cosmetics, jewelry and medications will not be accepted through the mail; a piece of mail containing such non-approved items will be returned to the sender in its entirety, and this action will be recorded in the Returned/Forwarded log;

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- illegal contraband will be called to the attention of the Mailroom Officer's supervisor immediately, and will be held and handled in strict compliance with Policy 3.A.17, Contraband Control;
- contents that may constitute illegally mailed material will be held as illegal contraband, and the Mailroom Officer's supervisor will be notified immediately.

All packages except those specifically approved by this policy must be approved in advance by the Unit Manager.


Items that can be purchased through the commissary will not be accepted through the mail and will be returned to the sender. However, if an inmate demonstrates a special circumstance or need (e.g., is from out of state and receives no visits), the Unit Manager may recommend for him/her to receive such items. In such case, the Unit Manager will notify the Deputy Warden for Administration, in writing, of his/her recommendation, noting the specific items. If the Deputy Warden also approves the request, he/she will notify the Mailroom Officer, in writing. The Unit Manager may also recommend for an inmate to receive specific items of outerwear for court or discharge.

Medical or dental appliances or equipment will be accepted only with the advance written approval of medical staff, on an Authorization to Receive Medical Appliance Form (attachment 4.G.1.c), forwarded to the Mailroom Officer via the Deputy Warden for Administration .

Books and periodicals will be accepted through the mail. However, see Policy and Procedure 4.G.2, Incoming Publications, for restrictions and detailed procedures.

The Mailroom Officer will search all incoming packages thoroughly and will inventory the contents on Form 86-172 (Rev. 11/81), Items Received for Inmate (attachment 4.G.1.d), including the inmate's housing location and the name and address of the sender. The Mailroom Officer will then place all approved contents in a brown paper bag, staple the form to the bag, and deliver it to the Unit Manager who will deliver it directly to the inmate. All cartons and packaging will be discarded in designated trash containers.

Contraband enclosed in letters may form a basis for restricting correspondence and/or referral for prosecution. The Mailroom Officer may use a metal detector or X-ray machine, if available, or manual manipulation to check the contents of any mail or package for contraband.

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**Incoming Registered, Certified and Insured Mail**

The Transportation Unit officer will sign at the Post Office for any incoming registered, certified or insured mail. Consistent with current local Post Office practices, this includes "return receipt requested" mail.

**Exceptions to Standard Procedure for Incoming Mail**

In two specific types of circumstances, the Warden may direct mail addressed to a particular inmate be opened and read, if it is not from attorneys, judges, official court personnel, or government officials. (See Policy and Procedure 3.F.8 Legal Mail for exceptions to standard procedure regarding *legal mail*.)

For non-legal mail, these circumstances are:

- when there is intelligence from a criminal justice agency that an escape attempt involving the particular inmate is being planned; or
- when there is reliable intelligence information that prison disorders, confrontations, or violence may be planned involving the particular inmate, either as subject or participant, or that an attempt will be made to smuggle contraband into or out of the institution.

If either of these circumstances does exist, and if the Warden does direct that the particular inmate's mail be opened and read, staff will adhere to the following procedures.


Within twenty-four (24) hours of arrival of the mail at the institution, the facility's Deputy Warden of Administration will deliver a written notice to the inmate, with a copy to his/her designated counsel, stating the reason for interception of the mail and informing the inmate that he/she may be present at the opening of the mail upon request. The Deputy Warden of Administration will return in-person to obtain the inmate's response as to whether he/she wants to be present or to challenge the interception.

If the inmate decides to challenge the interception, the Warden will be notified and will review the situation. The Warden will decide whether the interception is warranted or not and will direct staff accordingly.

**Distribution of Mail**

When the mail has been marked with a housing location and inspected, the Mailroom Officer will complete the sorting of all accepted mail and bundle it by housing area. Routine UPS or Federal Express mail received at the facility after 12:00 noon may be processed with the following day's mail.

The Mailroom Officer will deliver letters to the housing units prior to the end of his/her shift. The 7-3 and 3-11 shift housing unit officers will deliver the mail into the hands of the addressees. Any mail undelivered by 11:00 p.m. will be returned by the 3-11 housing unit officers, with any changes noted, to

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the "Undelivered Mail" box, which will be located centrally in each facility. The Mailroom Officer will empty the box each morning, then re-check and process each piece.

The Mailroom Officer will deliver any packages to the Unit Manager's office, along with the completed Form 86-172 (Rev. 11/81), Items Received for Inmate (attachment 4.G.1.d), for each package. The Unit Manager or designee will deliver the package directly to the inmate, having the inmate acknowledge receipt by signing Form 86-172, and sending the original of the form back to the Mailroom Officer.

**Incoming Funds For Inmates**

Inmates may receive funds for their personal use through the mail. These funds may be in the form of U.S. Postal Service money orders or certified checks. Money orders other than U.S. Postal Service money orders will be accepted in the amount of \$100.00 or less. Social Security retirement checks (not SSI checks) and other monies such as military pensions, annuities, interest income, etc., will also be accepted. (See Policy and Procedure 1.B.11, Inmate Accounts).


Unacceptable monies will be noted in the Returned/Forwarded log. The Mailroom Officer will return them to the sender in a fresh envelope along with a completed copy of the Return of Unacceptable Monies form (attachment 4.G.1.e). The Mailroom Officer will enclose a copy of the form, then process the letter routinely. A third copy of the form will be kept on file in the Mailroom for a period of two years. If there is no return address, the funds will be placed in the inmate's personal effects envelope.

The Mailroom Officer will remove acceptable funds from the envelope or package, stamp the outside of the envelope with the "Funds Enclosed" stamp (which provides space to list the amount and form of funds received), and complete the stamped form to notify the inmate of this information. The receipt information will be entered into IJMS and the letter or package will then be processed routinely.

The Mailroom Officer will verify in the IJMS if the inmate is incarcerated at the PPS. All required information will be entered into the IJMS. The money order will be stamped on the back "Absence of Endorsement Guaranteed." The Mailroom Officer will obtain the signature of the inmate on the back of any governmental, payroll and bank check. All incoming Work Release pay checks will be stamped on the back of the check "Absence of Endorsement Guaranteed." The Mailroom Officer will then complete Form 86-111, Transcript of Daily Incoming Mail Containing Money (attachment 4.G.1.f) noting inmate name, intake number, police photo number, and serial number of all money orders and checks. The Mailroom Officer will photocopy all monies received and keep the photocopies on file for a period of two years.

By the end of the shift, the Mailroom Officer will bundle all funds and Forms 86-111 and deliver them personally to the Cashier's Office. The Cashier will verify all funds and reconcile the total amount



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received with the Mailroom Officer's records. The cashier will retain the original Form 86-111 and the Mailroom Officer will keep the copy. The cashier will complete the processing of the incoming funds in accordance with Policy and Procedures 1.B.11 Inmate Accounts and 1.B.12 Cashier Functions.

**Forwarding Mail For Released Inmates**

For a period of thirty days following an inmate's discharge, the PPS will maintain on the MIS, if available, information regarding the inmate's forwarding address or the correctional institution to which the inmate was transferred. The Mailroom Officer will input any information received updating a discharged inmate's forwarding address.


The Deputy Warden for Administration will ensure that the mailroom is supplied with up-to-date address listings for state institutions, nearby county institutions, and residential treatment programs to which inmates may be transferred as a condition of release.

Whenever mail is addressed to an inmate who is no longer in the custody of the PPS, the Mailroom Officer will carry out the following procedures:

- if a suitable forwarding address is on record, the Mailroom Officer will stamp the outside of the mail with the "MOVED - please forward to: (address)" stamp, and write in the forwarding address;
- if no suitable forwarding address is on record, the Mailroom Officer will stamp the outside of the mail with the "MOVED - not forward able" stamp and will return it to the U.S. Post Office on the next routine Transportation Unit pick-up.
- if mail for a discharged inmate has been opened in error, the Mailroom Officer will place it in a new envelope, add appropriate postage, and write in the discharged inmate's name and forwarding address for remailing; (if no forwarding address is available, the Mailroom Officer will write in the sender's name and address on the new envelope for returning and note on the original envelope the reason the mail is being returned; if the sender's name and address are not indicated, the Mailroom Officer will stamp the new envelope with the "MOVED - not forward able" stamp and will return it to the U.S. Post Office on the next routine Transportation Unit pick-up).

**Mailroom Staffing**

Each facility will establish a regular post for a designated Mailroom Officer. Two such posts with overlapping schedules will be established at Curran-Fromhold Correctional facility. The post will be staffed for one full shift six days per week (Monday through Saturday) except federal holidays. The sixth day relief spot will be filled by a trained relief officer. The post will not be left uncovered. The Mailroom Officer will not be pulled for any other duties unless (1) the requirements of Policy and Procedure 1.C.3

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Security Staff Deployment are fully met, and (2) the mail functions are fully completed, by trained staff, each day.

Each facility will take steps to ensure that all mail received each day is distributed within twenty-four (24) hours. This may require additional staff or extended Mailroom hours, especially during holiday seasons when the volume of mail may increase.

**Inmate Accessibility To Mailroom**

No inmate will be assigned to work in the Mailroom. However, assigned inmate janitors will clean the area daily while under the direct supervision of correctional staff and while the Mailroom Officer is present. At no other time will any inmate be permitted in the Mailroom.


**Suspicious Mail**

**GLOVES SHOULD BE WORN AT ALL TIMES WHEN HANDLING INCOMING MAIL**

Mailroom staff shall take the following steps when incoming mail, either letter or package, appears suspicious or contains any unknown powder or suspicious substance:

- Remain calm
- Do not shake or empty the contents
- Put the package or envelope down gently.
- Cover the package or envelope with a trash can or other material to prevent the substance from becoming airborne.
- Do not remove the package or envelope from your area.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or other body parts.
- Shut windows.
- Shut off heating, ventilation, air conditioners, fans, or any other equipment that might have a fan.
- Notify your immediate supervisor.
- Do not allow anyone to enter the area with the exception of emergency personnel.
- Do not leave your area until told to do so the emergency responding personnel.
- Wash your hands
- Complete a “PPS Suspicious Package or Letter Checklist” (attachment 4.G.1.g) form.

The Deputy Warden of Administration shall ensure that the instructions above (attachment 4.G.1.h) are posted conspicuously in the Mailroom.

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Any supervisor that receives a report of a suspicious letter or package is to take action in accordance with PPS Policy and Procedure 3.B.15 Hazardous Materials Response Plan.

**Measurement of Implementation**

The Deputy Warden for Administration will be responsible for monitoring the Mailroom operations and will assess the operations by the following standards:

- incoming mail delivered within mandated time frame;
- outgoing mail delivered to Post Office within mandated time frame;
- incoming monies processed in timely fashion without error;
- all logs accurate and up to date;
- mail for released inmates forwarded or returned in timely fashion;
- indigent mail processed in timely fashion;
- approved items accepted;
- non-approved items rejected;
- Mailroom fully staffed on all mail days;
- full complement of supplies and equipment in good working order.