

June 23, 2014

Policy and Initiatives Unit
Virginia Department of Corrections
PolicyInitiatives@vadoc.virginia.gov

Re: Request Related to Prisoner Grievances

Dear FOIA Coordinator:

I am a University of Virginia Law School student conducting a research project on prisoner grievance procedures in Virginia. As part of my project, I am requesting public records from the Virginia Department of Corrections. My request is made under the Freedom of Information Act, § 2.2-3700 et seq. of the Code of Virginia.

I am requesting the following documents:

Records Requested

1. Any current prisoner handbooks or manuals (including any inmate orientation handbook or manual), system-wide or institution-specific. My understanding is that each of the department's institutions maintains its own manual for prisoners. Ideally, I would like all of the handbooks. If that is not feasible, I would like one handbook from each type of prison—max, medium, minimum—and male and female for each.
2. Any record, created or updated from 2003 to the present, tallying or reporting:
 - The number of grievances filed and resolved each year.
 - The categories or subject matter of grievances filed and resolved, and number of grievances in each subject matter category used (for instance, grievances related to food, health care, use of force, etc., and including both ordinary and “sensitive” complaints such as those involving allegations of staff misconduct).
 - Grievance outcomes or resolutions each year, by subject matter category and year.
 - Statistics or data on length of time to resolve grievances, by subject matter category and year.
 - I am not requesting individual grievance records. I am only requesting records that summarize, aggregate, or compile grievance data.

My preferred form for public records is digital copies (such as Word files or PDFs), sent as email attachments. However, if records are only available in paper form, or if transferring to a digital form would incur a cost, please let me know.

Should you determine that any of the information requested is exempt from disclosure, please provide me with a notification citing the legal authorities on which you rely.

I anticipate that the records I am requesting are readily available and will not require excessive staff time or resources. Because I am conducting this research on behalf of a public university

and intend to use the information for educational purposes, I am requesting a fee waiver. If you believe the fee waiver does not apply, please notify me before processing this request.

Yours,

[signature]

Katie Robeson
The University of Virginia Law School
Address