

**PURPOSE**

The Inmate Mail Officers are responsible for the Collection, Inspection and Delivery of all Inmate Mail.

**INMATE MAIL PICK UP**

- A. All incoming inmate mail is picked up from the U. S. Post Office, Main Dallas Office at appropriate times.
- B. No inmate mail is picked up or delivered on any Federal or County Holidays.

**INMATE MAIL COLLECTION**

- A. Outgoing inmate mail is collected by each individual County jail facility staff and placed in an appropriate area for pickup by the mail officers after delivery of that day's mail.
- B. Inmate outgoing mail is then delivered to the U.S. Post Office, Main Dallas Office by the Mail Room Officers.

**PROPER ADDRESSING OF CORRESPONDENCE**

- A. Incoming mail must be addressed as follows:

Full name of inmate (no nicknames)  
Book-in number of inmate and tank location  
P. O. Box 660334  
Dallas, Texas 75266-0334

- B. Outgoing mail must have the return address as follows:

Full name of inmate (no nicknames)  
Book-in number of inmate and tank location  
P. O. Box 660334  
Dallas, Texas 75266-0334

**PRIVILEGED MAIL**

- A. Privileged mail is any correspondence between inmates of the Dallas County Jail and the following agencies or individuals:
  - 1. Attorneys

2. Any unit of government
  3. All elected or appointed governmental officials
  4. Letters from a bona fide news media
- B. Privileged mail is opened only in the presence of the inmate the correspondence was addressed to and then only by the mail officer.

### ROUTING MAIL

- A. The Mail Room Officers view the envelope of incoming mail to determine an inmate's location. If no location is found, and the article is properly addressed with book-in number, the Mail Room Officers determine the inmate's location by the AIS system.
- B. Once the location of the inmate is determined the following occurs:
1. If the inmate is still in custody, the jail housing location is written on the front of the envelope.
  2. If the inmate is no longer in custody, the mail is appropriately marked on the outside of the envelope and returned to the U. S. Post Office.

### INSPECTION OF MAIL

- A. All inmate mail, not considered privileged, is opened in the mail room area and inspected for items not allowed in the Dallas County Jail System. **Inmate mail that, by touch, can be determined to contain photographs is opened by hand rather than processed through the letter opener machine.**
- B. Any items considered "contraband" are returned to sender if a return address is visible.
- C. Any items considered illegal are forwarded to the SID.
- D. A log is kept on the following mail items:
1. Money
  2. Contraband
  3. Certified mail

### CORRESPONDENCE CONTAINING CURRENCY

- A. All inmate mail containing tangible U. S. currency is processed as

follows:

1. All letters containing money are logged onto the computer with this information:
    - a. The Date received.
    - b. Inmate's name and book-in number.
    - c. The amount of the currency.
    - d. The sender's name and address.
  2. Currency is deposited to an inmate's account according to instructions contained in Appendix A.
- B.** All monies received are credited to the inmate's account the same day on which the correspondence was received.
- C.** Cash is not **preferred**, but is accepted once received through the mail.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE CONTAINING OTHER NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS**

- A.** If an item such as a money order is found in an inmate's letter, it is handled in the same manner as currency, with the exception:
1. Date received
  2. Inmate's name and book-in
  3. Amount of money order
  4. Sender's name and address.
- B.** Only the following Non-Negotiable Instruments are accepted:
1. All Money Orders
  2. Bank issued Certified Checks
  3. Bank issued Cashier's Checks
  4. Municipal, County, State, or Federal Law Enforcement Checks
  5. Correctional Agencies Checks
  6. Government Checks
- C.** Money Orders, Certified or Cashier's checks must have the following information with the exception of Government checks:
1. Payable to the Dallas Sheriff's inmate Trust Fund
  2. Inmate's name and book-in number
  3. Housing location
  4. Sender's name and address

- D. All other non-negotiable instruments are marked "return to sender".

### **PACKAGES OF NON-STANDARD SIZE**

- A. All packages of non-standard size are inspected in the same manner as other mail.
- B. Packages or envelopes with hard cardboard or air bubbled packaging are not given to the inmate. The contents of such packages or envelopes are put in to an inter-office envelope prior to delivery. The packaging is discarded in the mail room.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

- A. Inmates may receive pre-paid subscription magazines, books, and newspapers that do not depict nudity, pander to sexual interests, advocate racial prejudice or present a security threat to the facility, if the inmate is not on Restriction for an offense regarding the Mail Room policies.
- B. All books must be soft cover and mailed directly to the inmate through the U.S. Postal Service (No UPS or Fed Ex shipments will be accepted.) Books must be sent directly from one of the following sources:
  - 1. Amazon.com
  - 2. Barnesandnoble.com
  - 3. Borders.com
  - 4. Approved publisher or book store
- C. Any publication from the publisher Prison Legal News (including the so-titled magazine itself, renewal notices for that magazine, book fliers or catalogs) are to be delivered to any inmate to whom that publication is addressed, in accordance with these procedures. No publication from Prison Legal News can be withheld from an inmate on the grounds of censorship without prior approval of the Sheriff's Legal Advisor.

### **CONTRABAND**

- A. Contraband items are articles that are not allowed in an inmate's possession while in the custody of the Dallas County Sheriff's Department. If such items are found in an article of mail, the entire

package of the article of mail is marked prominently as contraband and what contents make the article such. The article is then returned to sender in accordance with procedure.

- B.** Items not allowed to be received through the mail are, but not limited to, the following:
1. Writing materials such as pens, pencils, paper, envelopes, stamps, or stationary. All greeting cards must be signed by sender in ink.
  2. Any photographs that depict obscenity, violence, pornography, or of a sexually enticing nature.
  3. Books, magazines or newspapers not mailed from the publisher or a bookstore.
  4. Polaroid photographs of the "instamatic" variety that do not have the chemical developing backing removed.
  5. Items that are oversized, in general, items that are larger than an 8" x 10" surface area.
  6. Any items that have no value or are of no use to the inmate while incarcerated in this facility.
  7. Jewelry or religious items.
  8. Any items with a glued surface or backing.
  9. Any items that may not be readily determined as to their nature or description.
  10. Items of inflammatory nature described as follows:
    - a. Contain information regarding or the depiction of the manufacture of likeness of explosives, weapons or drugs.
    - b. Contain material that a reasonable person, could construe as written solely for the purpose of communicating information designed to achieve the breakdown of prisoners through inmate disruption such as strikes, riots or escapes.

- c. If the material leads to specific factual determination that the material is detrimental to a prisoner's rehabilitation because it encourages deviate sexual behavior.

### **ILLEGAL MATERIAL**

- A. Any items not lawfully obtained or possessed under terms outlined in the Texas Penal Code are considered illegal material. Illegal material found in the mail is handled as follows:
  1. A **RMS** report is prepared by the Mail Room Officer.
  2. An **Evidence Report, Chain of Custody** is prepared by the Mail Room Officer. The chain of evidence is preserved in that the Mail Room Officer retains the illegal material in his possession until delivery to SID.
  3. The Evidence Report, Chain of Custody and the illegal material are secured in the Evidence Locker.
  4. A copy of the evidence report is given to Mail Room Supervisor and a file maintained accordingly.

### **USE OF MAIL ROOM VEHICLE**

- A. The Mail Room Officers do not use their personal vehicles for delivery of mail or any other mail responsibilities. The officers use the vehicle assigned for mail room function by the Division Commander.
- B. All Motor vehicle laws of the State of Texas must be observed at all times.
- C. Officers may not leave the vehicle unattended unless it is legally parked and locked in a designated area.
- D. A visual inspection of the mail room vehicle is made by every officer prior to its use so as to prevent unreported damage.
- E. If any damage occurs to or is noticed on a mail room vehicle, a report must be forwarded to the section supervisor. This report is completed in accordance with departmental policy regarding such incidents.

## **DELIVERY OF MAIL / MONEY RECEIPTS FROM THE VAULT**

- A. Prior to delivery, all mail is sorted by housing facility and location.
- B. The items of mail are delivered to each housing location by Mail Room Officers only.
- C. Mail is delivered to a central location at each jail facility.
- D. All deposit receipts from the Vault are delivered every mail delivery day.

## **DELIVERY OF LEGAL MAIL**

- A Legal Mail is delivered in the following manner:
  - 1. Mail is delivered to the addressee only. If the addressee does not answer mail call, the mail is returned to the mail room for delivery the next day or until the inmate is present to receive it.
    - a. Mail is not left with another inmate upon written or oral request.
    - b. If the inmate is absent after several mail calls, the article of mail may be left with a supervisor at that location for delivery only with mail room supervisor's approval or court order.
    - c. Each time delivery is attempted, the date of the attempted delivery is noted on the outside of the envelope.
    - d. Undelivered mail is left in the appropriate mail sorting slot to be delivered the next working day.
    - e. The inmate housing location of all undelivered mail is rechecked on the AIS system the next day.
  - 2. The inmate's arm band is checked to be certain that the inmate is the addressee.

## **RETURN MAIL**

- A. If the inmate has been released from custody, or the mail item contains contraband material, the address is marked out and a legible sticker or stamp is placed on the outside of the article explaining the reason why the article was returned.
- B. If there is no return address, the article is declared a "dead letter" by the U. S. Post Office and handled in accordance with rules pertaining to such mail.
- C. If the inmate has been released to TDCJ the letter is returned to the sender.
- D. All return items are placed in a mail bucket and then taken to the U.S. Post Office Main Dallas Office for return by U. S. Postal authorities.

## **GENERAL RULES REGARDING CORRESPONDENCE**

- A. Inmates may not send contraband items or money to another inmate within the jail system. (The contraband is disposed of according to proper procedures.)
- B. Incoming mail without the proper postage affixed is returned to the sender. Dallas County Jail does not accept "postage due" articles.
- C. Inmates may send and receive mail in any quantity, amount, and number of pages.
- D. Inmates may send mail to whomever they desire, provided the weight does not exceed 15 ounces.
- E. All outgoing mail must conform to U. S. Postal regulations. If the article is addressed to the general public and is not legal mail, it may be opened and inspected.

## **RECORDS**

- A. The Mail Room Officers maintain records of certain types of mail handled.
  - 1. Certified mail

- a. All certified, registered or other special delivery service mail is recorded in a specific ledger book.
- b. This record shows date received, addressee and any identifying article number.
- c. If the article is to be returned, the same is noted legibly beside the addressee's name.

2. Money

- a. All articles to be returned, that contain currency or money, are recorded in a specific ledger book.
- b. This record shows the date returned, addressee, amount and type of instrument (i.e. money order, case, etc.) and the address returned to.

3. Contraband

- a. All articles returned as contraband are recorded in a specific ledger book,
- b. This record shows the date returned, addressee, reason for return and address returned to.

- B. Other records may be required and maintained from time to time as necessitated or court order required.
- C. Completed ledger books are kept in accordance with departmental record keeping procedures for a period of time required by law.

**POSTAL MONEY ORDER SECURITY FEATURES**

A. Marking / Value Limitation

- 1. A Ben Franklin watermark on the left side.
- 2. A silver thread running from top to bottom on the left.
- 3. The United States Postal Service shield on the right.
- 4. A Value of no more than \$1,000.00.

**REPORT ALL CASE PAYMENTS OVER \$10,000.00 TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (REFER TO APPENDIX C.)**

- A. The following IRS form is used to report cash transactions received through the mail that exceed \$10,000.00.
- B. After completing Form 8300, the mail room officers should send the completed form to:  
Internal Revenue Service  
Currency Reporting and Compliance Division  
P. O. Box 32621  
Detroit, MI 48232-0621

**Appendix A**

This procedure is used by the Mail Room Officers to have funds deposited into an Inmate's Trust Account:

1. The book-in number on the letter is matched by name to the computer record of that book-in to assure the money is placed on the correct inmate's account record.
2. All money is placed on the Vault system by logging into the inmate account cash deposit screen.
3. Mail Room Officers log on the Property / Vault system using their designated pass word
4. Mail Room Officer enters through the inmate Management System.
5. Upon entry, then the officer enters through Inmate Monies screen.
6. Upon entry, then the officer proceeds through the Cash Deposit Screen.
7. Once into the cash deposit screen the Mail Room Officer enters the inmate's book-in number.
8. After the inmate's book-in number is entered, all information pertaining to that inmate is visible on the screen.
9. The Mail Room Officer then enters the amount of currency, the sender's name, and enters into the remarks section "cash deposit".

10. To complete the transaction the officer then presses the "POST" button to credit the inmate's account and a deposit transaction receipt is generated
11. All monies and a copy of the receipt are given to the Vault book-in clerk for daily collections and deposits.
12. One copy is sent to the inmate and one copy for filing purposes.