



**JACKSON COUNTY
DETENTION CENTER
Kansas City, Missouri**

POLICY STATEMENT

EFFECTIVE DATE: AUG 29 2019

SECTION: DETENTION
SERVICES

DIRECTOR: Debra L. Turner

POLICY: MAIL

**APPROVED AS TO FORM, COUNTY
COUNSELOR** [Signature]

M.C.J.S.: 5.3

RESCINDS:

A.C.A.: 4-ALDF-2A-27, 60; 5B-05, 06,
07, 08, 09, 10; 6A-04

POLICY

It is the policy, procedure, and practice of the Jackson County Detention Center to ensure safety and security throughout the facility, while providing a systematic process for the collection and distribution of staff and/or inmate mail.

PROCEDURE

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Inmate Mail: The Jackson County Detention Center will not accept or process any package, money order, telegram or sealed letter delivered by a private delivery company, family member or friends.

- A. The incoming mail for the Jackson County Detention Center is picked up at the U.S. Post Office by the facility's Mail Officer or designee daily, Monday through Friday, excluding Holidays.
1. Mail will be sorted, opened and inspected to intercept cash, checks, money orders and contraband.
 2. Incoming and outgoing mail will not be held longer than 24-hours, excluding weekends and holidays or emergency situations.
 3. Packages will be held no longer than 72-hours.
- B. Inmate mail may only be processed and delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. Any inmate mail delivered by a "private courier" will not be accepted. This does not include "special delivery" mail delivered by the U.S. Postal Service.
- C. All incoming inmate mail correspondence (family/friends) may be on a standard sized postcard or via a standard business envelope. **Exceptions to this rule are listed in Section III of this policy.**

MAIL

- D. Inmates may purchase all mail supplies from commissary such as, writing paper, envelopes, postcards, postage stamps, and pre-stamped envelopes or postcards, or those items may be sent via mail to the inmate. Indigent inmates will be provided with writing supplies free of charge. **For more information, see Section V of this policy.**

II. INMATE MAIL (INCOMING FAMILY/FRIENDS)

In order to maintain the safety and security of the facility, maintain institutional efficiency, and streamline the inmate mail process, all incoming correspondence from family/friends will be via a regular size business envelope or a standard size postcard.

NOTE: Approved postcard sizes per the U.S. Postal Service are Maximum Size 4-1/4" x 6" and Minimum Size 3-1/2" x 5".

- A. The following types of postcards are **NOT** approved:
1. Oversized postcards.
 2. Defaced and/or altered postcards/envelopes.
 3. Envelopes or postcards with watermarks and/or stains.
 4. Envelopes or postcards with labels and/or stickers.
 5. Envelopes or postcards marked with paint, crayons, or permanent markers.
 6. Envelopes or postcards with biohazards or chemicals including lipsticks and/or perfumes.
 7. Envelopes or postcards depicting nudity/partial nudity, weapons, or gang references.
 8. Envelopes or postcards sealed and/or wrapped in plastic.
- B. Additional Incoming Inmate Mail Rules:
1. Inmate mail received with an alias name will be **"returned to sender."** Only mail addressed with the inmate's **"true name"** as listed in the Inmate Management System will be delivered.
 2. Mail received for a released inmate will be **"returned to sender."**
 3. Incoming mail may be in any language.
 4. No restrictions shall be placed on the identity, number of correspondents, or the volume of lawful mail an inmate may receive or send.
 5. An inmate is allowed to retain a combination of (20) twenty received postcards or envelopes in his/her cell. If it is determined by staff that an inmate has no support system in the local community to release/send excess letters, the excess letters will be placed with the inmate's property maintained by the Records Unit.
Note: Inmates may arrange through their Inmate Services Coordinator to have such property released to a family member within five calendar days and only newspapers, magazine, and periodicals will be discarded.
 6. Beyond what is already stated in this policy, all inmates can write and receive letters on the same basis. Any restrictions placed on mail will apply only when there is reasonable belief that a limitation is necessary to protect the public and/or

MAIL

safety and security of the facility, and associates working in the facility. Restrictions will be enforced only through court order.

7. All incoming inmate mail must have a legible and proper return address.
8. Inmate mail will not be read, censored or rejected except where there is reliable information that a legitimate threat to the safety, security and orderly running of the facility may exist.
 - a. The Manager of Detention or designee shall determine when questionable material is a threat to the institution. In the event the facility receives a threat through the mail, local law enforcement and the Postal Service will be notified.
 - b. The inmate will receive notice when any item poses a direct, clear, and immediate danger to the safety of associates and security of the facility or an item is not on the approved list. The item is either "returned to sender," given to the Professional Standards Division, or turned over to the U.S. Postal Service.

III. INCOMING INMATE MAIL THAT IS ALLOWED IN ENVELOPES

A. Permitted Photographs:

Envelopes containing photographs must be clearly marked "**PHOTOGRAPHS**" or it will be "returned to sender." Inmates may receive and retain a total of (10) ten photographs for the duration of their incarceration, with the following restrictions:

1. Photographs will be no larger than 4"x 6".
2. The receiving inmate's name must be on the back of each photograph. **No other markings or writing is allowed.**
3. All photographs must be unaltered.
4. No correspondence may accompany the photographs.

B. The following photographs are not permitted:

1. Photographs of alcohol, alcohol consumption, weapons, gang activity and/or gang signs, nudity or sexually suggestive will be "returned to sender."
2. Polaroid photographs will not be accepted.
3. Photographs having tape, stickers, or labels attached.

C. Inmate Funds:

Envelopes containing Postal Money Orders dated within the last 30 days must be clearly marked "**Attention Mail Clerk.**" This will alert the mail clerk that the envelope contains inmate funds. **Note: Checks and money orders are limited to \$1,000. Any correspondence found in the envelope marked "Attention Mail Clerk" will be "returned to sender."**

D. Courier Mail:

MAIL

Any inmate may correspond via the County's in-house "Courier" mail system with:

1. County Courts and/or Judges
2. Prosecutors Office
3. Office of Human Relations and Citizens Complaints
4. Probation and Parole
5. Public Defenders' Office

NOTE: Postage is not required for inter-department "Courier" mail. The Mail Clerk or designee will forward any document on the day it is received. The Mail Clerk may verify the sending office when in doubt. Such mail will be opened in the presence of the inmate to inspect the contents for contraband. All other mail must be sent or received through the U.S. Postal Service.

E. Incoming Privileged Mail:

Incoming "privileged" U.S. Mail will be in a sealed envelope. Such mail shall remain sealed until delivered by the Mail Clerk to the inmate addressee. The Mail Clerk, in the presence of the inmate, will open the sealed envelope and inspect the contents for contraband.

Privileged Mail is correspondence to or from the following:

1. Attorneys, Judges or County Counselors
2. Courts
3. The Governor of Missouri
4. Jackson County Executive
5. Jackson County Legislators
6. Jackson County Office of Human Relations and Citizens Complaints
7. Members of the Missouri House and Senate
8. Members of the paroling authority

IV. OTHER TYPES OF INCOMING INMATE MAIL

- A. Greeting cards:** Greeting cards are accepted. Cards must be of standard stock, no double thick cards, no recording devices, no cloth cards, and no medal or Millar components. All incoming greeting cards not meeting these standards will be "**returned to sender.**" **Note:** Greeting cards that are in the form of a postcard are acceptable.
- B. Magazines, newspapers, periodicals, tabloids, and paperback books:** Must be clearly marked with the name and address of the publisher, bookstore, or subscription house. In the event an inmate has been released or transferred from custody, bills for subscribed publications will be returned to the sender not forwarded. The address of the person receiving the mail should be clearly marked. Only books with flexible paper binding (**paperbacks**) are approved to be purchased by or for an inmate. Moreover, all publication inserts and/or advertisement will be removed prior to delivery to the inmate.

NOTE: The publications listed in Section B, above will be denied if:

MAIL

1. Not mailed from a publisher, bookstore, or subscription house via the US Postal Service.
2. Containing sexually explicit material, nudity, or photographs of a pornographic nature.
3. Containing instructions for the manufacturing of explosives, drugs or other unlawful substances.
4. Advocates violence and/or racial, religious, or national hatred within the facility.

C. Additional Rules Regarding Publications

1. Magazines:
 - a. Inmates are limited to one magazine subscription.
 - b. Inmates are allowed to retain two magazines in their cell.
 - c. Magazines in the possession of any inmate must have his/her name on the delivery label.
 - d. Magazines over five days old or not in the possession of the inmate subscriber will be removed from the inmate's cell and discarded.
2. Newspapers:
 - a. Inmates are limited to one subscription.
 - b. Inmates are allowed to retain two newspapers in their cell (less than three days old).
 - c. Newspapers over three days old or not in the possession of the inmate subscriber will be removed from the inmate's cell and discarded.
3. Paperback Books:
 - a. Inmates are allowed to retain three purchased paperback books in their cell.
 - b. Inmates will supply proof of purchase of any paperback book not from the department library.

Note: Publications that meet all safety and security requirements, but are not mailed to a specific inmate, will be placed in an appropriate location for use by the inmate population (law library, book carts, etc.) as approved by the Director or designee.

V. INDIGENT INMATES

- A. The Detention Center shall provide indigent inmates with a writing pack ("free-pack") through the Commissary vendor. Inmates are allowed one "free-pack" per week. For more information, see **C3.07 SUPPORT SERVICES**.
- B. If an indigent inmate needs additional writing supplies for contacting the Courts, Attorneys, or the Governor, requests shall be placed through the Inmate Services Coordinator. The Inmate Services Coordinator will see that additional materials are supplied.

VI. INMATE TO INMATE MAIL

MAIL

Inter-facility mail correspondence between inmates provides the means to organize escapes, riots, assaults, gang activity, and the introduction of contraband. Therefore, inmates housed simultaneously in the Jackson County Detention Center or Regional Correctional Center are **NOT** allowed to correspond by mail during their incarceration.

VII. PROCESSING THE INCOMING MAIL

The following procedures will be conducted when processing incoming mail:

- A. The Mail Officer or designee will mark all inmate mail indicating where the inmate is housed and stamp with the date received.
- B. If an envelope contains a Postal Money Order, the amount of the money order will be recorded in the "mail" section of the computerized inmate management system. Once recorded, the Postal Money Order will be sent to the Records Unit for processing and posting to the inmate's account. After the inmate's account is credited with the deposit, a receipt will be returned to the Mail Clerk for delivery to the inmate. A copy of the receipt will be put in the original envelope and returned to the inmate the same day. **Note: Mail containing private company money orders, cash, payroll checks, personal checks, or any other unauthorized item will be "returned to sender" with a note attached stating the Detention Center does not accept or process such items. A copy of the note will be sent to the inmate. Checks from Trust Accounts by managing companies are accepted only with the approval of the Manager of Criminal Records.**
- C. Mail containing or displaying gang writing or signs, gang-related drawings or graffiti, and/or gang-related photos will not be accepted. Photos that display nudity and/or explicit poses will not be accepted. Such items will be "returned to sender" when there is a reasonable belief this limitation is necessary to protect the safety, security, or facility order. An appeal of the Mail Officer's decision to return mail may be made by contacting the Office of Professional Standards.
 1. The Mail Officer will carefully conduct a visual inspection of all incoming postcards, regular and/or privileged/legal mail by inspecting the envelope and contents. All postage stamps will be removed or blacked out by the Mail Officer before delivery. Other investigative techniques can also be used to inspect for contraband by the Mail Officer (e.g. x-ray, metal detector, K-9, etc.). Magazines, newspapers, and periodicals should be checked for nudity, plastic and/or metal binding.
 2. If correspondence to an inmate is found to have contraband, (i.e., drugs, flammables, tobacco, unknown substances, weapon or potential weapon, etc), the entire envelope or package and the suspected contraband will be placed in a large envelope and sealed. A department report will be written by the Mail Officer or designee. A written notice will be sent to the inmate by the Mail Officer informing him or her that the mail is being withheld in part or in full and that

MAIL

future mail may be restricted (except Attorney/Client). The envelope with the contraband will be given to the Professional Standards Division for further disposition (e.g. contacting local Law Enforcement). In the event of a suspected biohazard contamination, the area will be sealed and the appropriate emergency and medical staff will respond.

3. To minimize the return of mail containing items that are not allowed, the Mail Officer may, at his/her own discretion, dispose of the following:
 - a. paper and binder clips
 - b. "Acco" type clips and/or staples
 - c. book covers
 - d. spiral wire from notebooks and calendars
 - e. string, ribbon
 - f. wrapping and packaging material
 - g. perfume samples, marketing samples, stickers and/or tape
 - h. membership cards and/or membership incentives
 - i. cloth boxes, rubber bands, and cardboard
 - j. greeting card decorations and/or dried flowers
 - k. food and/or candy items
 - l. pencils and erasers
4. If the Mail Officer feels there is too much value in the item or removing the item would destroy the contents, the entire item of mail will be "returned to sender."
5. To maximize the amount of mail successfully delivered to the inmates, the Mail Officer may, at his/her own discretion, copy incoming correspondence that appears to indicate contamination, including but not limited to: stains, unusual odor, sticky or powdery residue, etc. Original items will be placed in the inmate's property.
6. Removed items will be kept in the mailroom for 72-hours in case they have to be "returned to sender." After 72-hours, the item will then be disposed of properly. In some situations the inmate may be asked for permission to dispose of an item(s). If permission is not given, the mail would be "returned to sender."
7. Authorized publications that are received in a box, package, or padded envelope, shall be removed from the box, package, or padded envelope and placed in authorized packaging. The name and living area of the inmate addressee will be placed on the outside of the authorized packaging and delivered to the addressee inmate with other incoming mail. The original wrapping will be kept in the mail room for 72-hours in case the items have to be "returned to sender."
8. Incoming mail will be delivered to the DSO areas by the Mail Officer and delivered to the inmate by the DSO.
9. Correctional Officers will deliver the incoming mail (excluding privileged mail) to the appropriate inmate. Positive identification of the inmate will be made by the officer before it is passed to the inmate. The inmate wristband or Floor Copy will be used for positive identification.

MAIL

10. Mail for an inmate will only be given to the inmate to whom the mail is addressed. If the inmate is out of his or her living unit, the mail will be held in the floor work station until the inmate returns. Mail for inmates that have left the facility (released or transferred to the penitentiary), the postcard or letters will be marked "Out of Facility" and placed into the floor mailbox.
11. Mail for inmates admitted to the hospital will be delivered by the officers assigned to hospital duty.
12. Mail will be returned to the Mail Room or the floor mailbox if it is undeliverable. The mail will be "returned to sender" or forwarded to the inmates' new housing area. Mail for inmates being housed at alternative facilities will be returned to sender. A label with the inmates' alternative housing address will be placed on the front of the envelope.
13. At the discretion of the Director or designee, an inmate with a history of contraband violations, suspicious mail, or threats to the facility or staff may be provided with photocopies of original incoming mail.

VIII. STAFF MAIL

- A. Internal and interdepartmental mail or courier correspondence for staff, contract employees, and volunteers will be delivered to the appropriate staff mailbox by the Mail Officer. NOTE: Courier mail will be accepted by the Mail Officer or Administrative Secretary.
- B. Staff, contractors, and volunteers are prohibited from receiving or sending personal mail/packages without prior authorization. Non-work related mail/packages will not be permitted to be sent to/from the facility.
- C. Any mail/packages arriving at the facility may be refused at the discretion of the Director or designee. The facility assumes no responsibility for personal mail/packages that are delivered to the facility.
- D. Any mail/packages arriving at the facility may be opened and/or searched by designated facility staff. The Director or designee may determine items are not essential to the completion of job related duties and are a violation of Section VIII.B. of this policy.
- E. Each unit supervisor is responsible for ensuring the mailboxes for his or her departments are correctly designated with the names of their personnel.
- F. Prior to returning staff mail the Department Mail Officer will review all staff unit listings Administration, Detention, Inmate Services Coordinators, Records, and Medical to identify the staff person to receive the correspondence. Mail addressed to a past administrative staff person will be given to the Secretary/ Receptionist to assist for proper distribution.

IX. PROCESSING THE OUTGOING MAIL

All inmates confined at the Jackson County Detention Center are allowed to correspond with whomever they wish outside the facility, regardless of their classification or security level.

MAIL

All outgoing mail must be properly addressed. Outgoing mail will be in the form of the approved postcard or pre-stamped envelopes, which are available through the Inmate Commissary. Privileged/legal mail must have a recognizable legitimate address of the legal firm or governmental unit.

- A. The mail will be picked up from the inmate living areas by correctional staff and deposited into the mailbox located near the inmate elevator on each floor. All outgoing regular mail must contain proper postage. Courier Mail does not need a postage stamp.
- B. Mail for the Annex inmate living areas and the Regional Correctional Center (RCC) will be placed in the mail boxes located in the living area next to the entrance door.
- C. The Mail Officer or designee will pick up all outgoing mail from all mailboxes on each floor of the Main Facility, the Annex, and the RCC daily, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays or emergency situations.
- D. In-house mail, outgoing mail, and "courier" mail will be separated. All outgoing U.S. Mail will be placed in the mail box in front of the Detention Facility. In-house mail will be placed in the appropriate mail slot. "Courier" mail will be given to the Administrative Secretarial staff.

Note: Courier Mail does not require postage. All mail marked, as "courier mail" will be delivered to the courthouse mailroom by the Department Mail Clerk.

- E. The Mail Officer or designee will ensure that those inmates on court-ordered mail restriction are unable to send mail, unless the inmate is sending legal mail. If the inmate attempts to send any other document/mail, other than legal mail, the mail will be confiscated and the Mail Officer or designee will document the findings in a Departmental Report. The Departmental Report and confiscated mail will be forwarded to the Professional Standards Division. In cases where an inmate is in violation of court ordered mail restrictions, the appropriate Judge will be notified in writing and the inmate may be disciplined.
- F. Anytime outgoing mail is held or confiscated in accordance with policy, the Mail Officer will send written notification to the inmate. The inmate may appeal the decision of the Mail Officer by submitting an Administrative Remedy Form.
- G. Correspondence between inmates in the facility shall not be permitted. Exceptions may be granted to inmates who are family members and who are incarcerated in the facility at the same time. Requests for exceptions will be reviewed and approved by the Manager of Detention Operations or the Manager of Detention Administration. Family members are interpreted as brother, sister, mother, father, husband, wife or step-relations resulting from a legal marriage. The relationship must be legally recognized. The facility does not recognize common law marriages.
- H. In order to be in compliance with the United States Postal Service regulations, only addresses may be written on the front of the envelopes/postcards. No extra writing of any kind is allowed. Envelopes/postcards will not be accepted to be sent out of the facility if they contain anything other than addresses on the front.

MAIL

- I. There is no limit on the amount of outgoing mail. All outgoing mail, including privileged mail, is subject to inspection at any time, but particularly if there is reason to suspect:
1. It contains threats of physical harm against persons or threats of criminal activity.
 2. It threatens blackmail or extortion.
 3. It contains plans to escape.
 4. It contains plans for activities in violation of institutional rules.
 5. It is in code.
 6. It contains information which, if communicated, would create a clear and present danger of violence and physical harm to some person.

Indigent inmates shall receive pre-stamped envelopes, stationary, pencils and postcards sufficient to send two letters or postcards each week. This includes any mailing of a legal nature.

J. Outgoing Privileged/Legal Mail

Outgoing inmate "privileged/legal" U.S. Mail will be in a sealed envelope and treated as privileged mail only if it is clearly and properly mark with the name and title of the recipient and the correct address of the sender. Privileged/legal mail must have a recognizable legitimate address of the legal firm or governmental entity listed in Section III. E. of this policy.

1. Outgoing privileged/legal mail may be opened in the presence of the inmate to inspect for contraband where there is reliable information that a threat to the order and/or safety and security of the facility may exist. At no time should the mail be read during this inspection. Inmates are notified in writing when outgoing mail is withheld in part or in full. Mail that may be inspected may include letters unusual in appearance or which appear different from mail normally received or sent by the individual; packages and letters of a size or shape not customarily received or sent by the individual; packages and letters with a city and/or state postmark that is different from the return address; or packages and letters leaking, stained or emitting a strange or unusual odor, or which have a powdery residue.
2. Outgoing privileged/legal mail shall not be held longer than 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays, or emergency situations) and shall be held only to verify proper addressing.