


Idaho Department of Correction 	Standard Operating Procedure	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities		Page: 1 of 16
		Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Adopted: 01-01-1991

**Ashley Dowell, chief of the division of prisons approved this document on
03/11/2018.**

Open to the public: **Yes**

SCOPE

This standard operating procedure applies to all department correctional facilities (correctional facilities includes prisons and community reentry centers, issues specific to either a prison or CRC are cited as such), correctional facility staff, and inmates.

(Information regarding electronic communication can be found in *Telephones and Electronic Communications: Inmate*: SOP [503.02.01.001](#).)

Revision History
Revision Date (03/11/2018) version 14.0: Added “Just Detention International” to the list of allowable outgoing confidential mail.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Board of Correction IDAPA Rule Number 402	2
Policy Document Number 402	2
Purpose.....	2
Responsibility	2
Standard procedures	3
1. Goals for Institutional Mail	3
2. Authorized Mail Items	3
3. Prohibited Use of Mail.....	4
4. Prohibited Mail Items	4
5. Prohibited Sexually Explicit and Pornographic Material.....	6
6. Prohibited Outgoing Mail	6
7. Outgoing Mail Process.....	6
8. Outgoing International Mail.....	7
9. Outgoing Confidential Mail.....	7
10. Inmate-to-Inmate Correspondence.....	9
11. Probationer and Parolee Correspondence with IDOC Inmates	10

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 2 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	--------------------------------

12. Indigent Inmates.....	10
13. Statehouse Mail	11
14. Internal IDOC Mail System	11
15. Incoming Mail	11
16. Incoming Confidential Mail.....	11
17. Undeliverable Mail	11
18. Publications	12
19. Incorrectly Addressed Incoming Mail	12
20. Correspondence Courses and Materials	13
21. Transfers within the IDOC	13
22. Release from an IDOC Correctional Facility	13
23. Contraband	13
24. Monitored Mail Lists	15
25. Staff Mail	15
26. Legal Mail	15
Definitions	15
References.....	16

BOARD OF CORRECTION IDAPA RULE NUMBER 402

Correspondence with Inmates

POLICY DOCUMENT NUMBER 402

Inmate Mail

PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to establish guidelines for ensuring inmate mail handling and delivery processes are managed consistently throughout Idaho Department of Correction (IDOC) correctional facilities.

RESPONSIBILITY

Facility Heads

Facility heads are responsible for the following:

- Implementing and ensuring that the guidelines are followed in their facilities
- Ensuring that mailroom officers receive training on institutional mail procedures before assuming mailroom duties and annually thereafter

Correctional Facility Staff

Correctional facility staff, at all levels of the mail handling and delivery system must ensure that mail is delivered intact to inmates and is not tampered with, except as necessary to determine compliance with this SOP.

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 3 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	--------------------------------

STANDARD PROCEDURES

1. Goals for Institutional Mail

It is important that each inmate be allowed to communicate with family and friends and have the opportunity to explore ideas, information, and concepts originating outside the institution. It is equally important that the IDOC fulfill its duty to protect the public.

The IDOC fulfills this duty by maintaining a safe and orderly environment while promoting the rehabilitative process. The goals of the IDOC for institutional mail include, but are not limited to:

- Maintaining family and community ties
- Providing communication with courts and legal counsel
- Sustaining a safe environment not compromised by the introduction of contraband
- Preventing inmates from tracking protective custody inmates or notifying other inmates of their location or obtaining information regarding information related to the crime, sentence, or identity of another inmate, emergency plans, command structures, or similar information that could threaten the safety and security of inmates or the operation of IDOC correctional facilities
- Preventing escape
- Reducing the risk of incarcerated inmates committing criminal acts
- Protecting inmates' relatives, friends, staff, and the public from coercion and harassment
- Limiting inmate access to information that could jeopardize institutional safety and security
- Preventing the distribution of materials that could incite sexual assaults, inmate disorder, or other violence
- Reducing the ability of inmates to form prison gangs or security threat groups
- Preventing the introduction of materials that would adversely affect treatment efforts

2. Authorized Mail Items

Inmates are authorized to use mail for the following:

- General correspondence
- New or used books from a book store or publisher
- New magazines, newspapers, and other publications such as monthly or daily calendars, journals, etc. that are mailed from the publisher or bookstore
- Items such as catalogs, college information, newsletters, etc. that have a typical IDOC address that includes the inmate's name, IDOC number, facility, housing unit, etc. Such mail that contains a typical IDOC address, but is no longer current will be handled in accordance with the procedures for incorrectly addressed incoming mail
- Greeting cards 8" x 10" or smaller and must not be padded, laminated, multilayered, or musical

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 4 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	--------------------------------

- Up to 20 loose photographs 5" x 8" or smaller, except instant photographs with layers (such as 'Polaroid type' photographs), which are not allowed. Images printed on copy-grade paper stock are not considered a photograph
- Cashier checks, money orders, refund checks from vendors, State of Idaho drafts, and US Treasury checks, which will be credited to the inmate's trust account. Must have the sender's name and address printed on the envelope
- Letter-size photocopies, including computer-generated documents are subject to the limitations regarding the amount of allowable property and the prohibition against storing case law as excess legal material described in SOPs [320.02.01.001](#), *Property: State-issued and Inmate Personal Property*, and [405.02.01.001](#), *Access to Courts*

3. Prohibited Use of Mail

Inmates are prohibited from using mail for the following:

- Receiving any contraband or anything of an illegal or threatening nature
- Soliciting or accepting any publication or item which has not been paid for in advance
- Obligating themselves or others to time payments
- Joining or participating in book, record, tape, or CD clubs, either personally or via a third party
- Using coercion, threats, or fraud to obtain money, favors, or anything of value
- Sending any item other than correspondence (written mail) out of the institution without the written approval of the facility head or designee
- Sending or receiving mail for another inmate (specifically a third party)
- Sending or receiving mail with coded messages
- Information related to the crime, sentence, or identity of another inmate
- Directing or conducting any business operations, except as necessary to protect real property or close out a business
- Receiving mail delivered collect-on-delivery (COD)
- Sending mail by COD
- Sending mail via any provider other than the U.S. Postal Service, such as United Parcel Service (UPS) or Federal Express (FedEx)

4. Prohibited Mail Items

Items prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Items in a letter or package not authorized by policy or standard operating procedure
- Packages without prior authorization
- Publications or items that describe the manufacture of weapons, bombs, explosives, alcohol and drugs, drug paraphernalia, or escape materials
- Role-playing games and related materials

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 5 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	--------------------------------

- Information related to the crime, sentence, or identity of another inmate.
- Promotional items such as fragrance packs, CDs, computer software, stickers, handbags, T-shirts, baseball caps, in publications, magazines, periodicals etc. Promotional items will be destroyed and the publication will be forwarded so that the mail process is not delayed.
- Junk mail (mail that does not contain a typical IDOC inmate mailing address [inmate's name, IDOC number, facility, housing unit, etc.] and is similar to the following examples: direct marketing, mass mailings, sales flyers, credit card applications, coupons, etc.). Junk mail will be destroyed.
- More than one subscription to the same periodical, magazine, etc.
- Publications or items evidencing gang involvement or activities (enemy lists, constitutions, structures, codes, signs, symbols, photographs, drawings, training material, clothing, etc.)
- Publications or items advocating that any ethnic, racial, or religious group is inferior or that make such groups an object of ridicule and scorn. However, no publication will be withheld solely because of its appeal to a particular ethnic, racial, or religious group.
- Publications or items that encourage violence between the recipients and members of another group
- Publications not mailed directly from the publisher or a bookstore.
- Clippings from magazines, books, or newspapers
- Postage stamps or envelopes (Postage stamps are allowed at CRCs if the CRC does not have commissary service)
- Greeting cards that are padded, laminated, multilayered, musical, or larger than 8" x 10"
- Photographs larger than 5" x 8" and instant photographs (such as 'Polaroid type' with layers) Photocopies are not photographs and may be on standard 8.5" x 11" paper.
- Hardback books (See reminder below for further details.)
- Padded envelopes (except legal mail)
- Envelopes or letters that are stained or have unknown substances, lipstick, or lip balm on them
- Letters or envelopes with a strong perfume-like or unusual odor
- Sexually explicit and pornographic material
- Electronic media items, including but not limited to CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, etc.

Reminder: A hardback book legitimately obtained and in an inmate's property before October 1, 2010 is allowable property. Facility heads may make exceptions on an individual basis for educational or religious hardback books that are not available in paperback or soft cover. **Such exceptions must be documented in the Corrections Integrated System (CIS) property module.**

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 6 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	--------------------------------

5. Prohibited Sexually Explicit and Pornographic Material

Sexually explicit and **pornographic material** includes pictorial depictions of nudity in books, pamphlets, magazines, periodicals, any other graphic images, or any other publication or any personal pictures, drawings, or photocopies of any of these items.

- **Nudity** in this SOP means a pictorial depiction where male or female genitalia, anus, or the nipples or areolas of female breasts are exposed.
- **Feature** in this SOP means that a publication contains pictorial depictions of nudity or sexually explicit conduct on a routine or regular basis or promotes itself based upon such depictions in the case of individual one-time issues.
- **Sexually explicit** in this SOP means a pictorial depiction of actual or simulated sexual acts including sexual intercourse, oral sex, or masturbation.
- **Pornographic material** also includes individual pictures, photographs, or drawings of nudity or sexually explicit conduct that are not part of a book, pamphlet, magazine, periodical, or other publication.
- Publications, drawings, photocopies, and other pictorial materials that meet the description of nudity in this section, but the person has clothing or other covering that is transparent or virtually transparent are not permitted.

Reminder: Publications that do not feature nudity, but contain nudity illustrative of medical, educational, or anthropological content may be excluded from this definition.

Written material of a sexual nature is permitted and is not included in this definition.

6. Prohibited Outgoing Mail

The facility head can prohibit outgoing mail that falls within the following categories:

- Correspondence with minors where the minor's legal guardians object, in writing, stating that they wish the correspondence to be discontinued
- Correspondence with minors, except immediate family, unless the minor's legal guardian has granted permission, which is documented in writing
- Correspondence with individuals who have filed a written request to have correspondence discontinued

7. Outgoing Mail Process

Mail services may include certified, registered, and insured mail.

Outgoing mail that presents no procedural problems will be processed within 24 hours, Monday through Friday, excluding weekends and legal holidays.

To ensure that undeliverable mail is returned to the sender, mail must be metered at the first-class rate.

Inmates must use embossed pre-stamped envelopes marked 'inmate correspondence' for all outgoing correspondence to include greeting cards. These envelopes are purchased through the IDOC commissary. CRCs without commissary services do not use embossed pre-stamped envelopes, but all correspondence must be marked 'inmate correspondence'. The exception to this rule is outgoing property items. Before property can be mailed out, a

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 7 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	--------------------------------

staff member must complete a property inventory in accordance with SOP 320.02.01.001, *Property: State-issued and Inmate Personal Property*.

Outgoing mail must be clearly marked with the sending inmate's first and last name (no nicknames or titles), institutional number, facility name, living unit, and facility address. Mail not clearly marked will be returned to the inmate. If the inmate's name cannot be determined, the mail will be destroyed.

Altering any envelope (including drawings) may result in mail being returned to the sender.

Outgoing mail will be delivered to the mailroom sealed, except when there is a request for a money order, which will be left open so the money order can be placed in the envelope for mailing.

Outgoing mail may be opened, inspected, and read to make sure that it does not violate the secure and orderly operation of the facility, does not adversely affect the rehabilitative progress of the inmate, does not pose a threat to a specific individual or the public, or does not conflict with the intent of the institutional mail procedures.

8. Outgoing International Mail

Mail and packages sent out of the United States require special handling and may cost more than domestic rates.

When mailing an item outside of the United States the inmate must do the following:

- Address the item clearly and correctly.
- Attach a withdrawal form (do not fill in the amount) with a statement of what is in the parcel and to what country it is being sent.
- Attach an accurate property inventory, completed by a staff member, to any item other than a standard letter. This is needed so the mailroom officer can attach an accurate customs tag.

The mailroom officer will weigh the parcel and affix the correct postage. The mailroom officer will enter the postage amount on the commissary withdrawal form and then forward the original to an account technician, and send a copy to the inmate sending the mail.

9. Outgoing Confidential Mail

Inmates can send confidential mail to the individuals and entities in accordance with this SOP. For the purpose of this SOP, mail sent to the following will be considered confidential: the president, the governor, the Idaho Legislature or U.S. Congress (except for bulk mailings), the Board, the director, IDOC chiefs and deputy chiefs, facility heads, public interest groups or government entities providing assistance for inmates, the Idaho Sheriffs' Association confidential sexual abuse reporting option, the Just Detention International sexual abuse confidential support option, the Idaho Commission of Pardons and Parole or any member thereof, or the consulate or embassy of an inmate who is a foreign national.

While this mail is treated as confidential, it is monitored for contraband and other items that might threaten the safety of the recipient.

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 8 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	--------------------------------

Procedural Steps for Sending Confidential Mail

Functional Roles and Responsibilities	Step	Tasks
Inmate	1	Address the item clearly and correctly.
	2	Ensure that the return address is correct and legible.
	3	Take the envelope to the unit officer or designated staff member.
Unit Officer	4	Inspect the envelope for contraband. Do not read the correspondence. (If contraband is found, skip to step 15.)
	5	Ensure that the envelope is sealed, unless there is a request for a withdrawal.
	6	Mark confidential.
	7	Print own name, associate number, date, and cover with clear tape on the back of the envelope.
	8	Send to the mailroom.
Mailroom Staff	9	Inspect the envelope.
	10	Check that a staff member has inspected the envelope.
	11	Open and inspect any envelope that appears to have not been properly inspected.
	12	Open and inspect any correspondence to the governor of the State of Idaho.
	13	If no contraband, weapons, or other inappropriate items are found, reseal the envelope, write, 'inspected by (prints name)' and the day's date.
	14	Mail the correspondence.
	15	If contraband is found, write an information report, attach the contraband items (including correspondence), and immediately forward to the shift commander or designee.

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 9 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	--------------------------------

Functional Roles and Responsibilities	Step	Tasks
Shift Commander or Designee	16	<p>Depending on the level of contraband take one or more of the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact facility heads. • Contact appropriate law enforcement agency. • Complete a 105, Incident Report, (see SOP 105.02.01.001, <i>General Reporting and Investigation of Major Incidents.</i>) • Take corrective or disciplinary action. • Document the information in the c-notes section of the CIS.

Caution: Both **legal mail** and **confidential mail** are treated as confidential and are handled in a similar manner such as they can be scanned but not read. **Legal mail** is handled in accordance with section 26 of this SOP and SOP 405.02.01.001, *Access to Courts*, and is processed through the resource center. (For those facilities **without** a resource center, follow SOP 405.02.01.001, *Access to Courts*). **Confidential mail** is handled in accordance with this SOP and is processed through the mailroom.

10. Inmate-to-Inmate Correspondence

Facility heads can approve inmate-to-inmate correspondence using *Inmate-to-Inmate Correspondence Request Form* in the following circumstances:

- When inmates are immediate family members, (see *Visiting*, SOP [604.02.01.001](#)).
- When both inmates are the biological parents of a minor child (copy of birth certificate required).
- When inmates write to inmates concerning legal work subject to the requirements of SOP 405.02.01.001, *Access to Courts*

In all cases, facility heads or designees of both facilities must approve the correspondence. Approvals must be documented in cautions in CIS. If the inmates are moved, and absent any other disqualifying circumstance, previous correspondence approvals will be honored at any receiving IDOC or IDOC contract facility. If Staff members at a receiving facility believe that any correspondence violates the provisions of this SOP, the staff member must immediately notify the facility head. The delivery of correspondence will continue pending the facility head's decision. The facility head can withhold correspondence if it poses a security threat to the facility or the public until a decision to continue, restrict, or deny the correspondence is made.

Correspondence between inmates should be reviewed on an annual basis and can be denied at any time if the correspondence is found to violate the provisions of this SOP.

Facility heads will only consider approving inmate-to-inmate legal correspondence when the scope of the legal work requires extended correspondence between the two inmates. If

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 10 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	---------------------------------

approved, such correspondence is not confidential. If the correspondence becomes personal instead of directly related to the legal claim, the approval will be withdrawn. Legal issues that require limited communication, such as one inmate completing an affidavit for another, are handled by the paralegal in accordance with SOP 405.02.01.001, *Access to Courts*.

11. Probationer and Parolee Correspondence with IDOC Inmates

If staff determines that correspondence is from an inmate currently under IDOC probation or parole supervision, the following steps will be followed. Inmates may correspond with probationers and parolees that are not immediate family, absent any other disqualifying circumstance, unless the probation and parole officer (PPO) does not approve the correspondence.

Functional Roles and Responsibilities	Step	Tasks
Staff Member	1	Notify the facility head or designee of the correspondence, the inmate's name and IDOC number housed at the facility, and the probationer or parolee's name, IDOC number, and supervising PPO (if available).
	2	If no violations of this SOP exist, process the mail.
Facility Head or Designee	3	Notify the probationer or parolee's supervising PPO of the correspondence.
	4	If the PPO responds stating that the correspondence should not be allowed, notify the mailroom supervisor and the inmate that the correspondence will not be allowed, and withhold any future correspondence as contraband. Document the information in the c-notes section of CIS.

12. Indigent Inmates

Indigence does not reduce the importance of an inmates' need to communicate with friends, family, and others outside of the correctional facility. The IDOC will not bear the cost of mailing packages for indigent inmates. However, indigent inmates will be given access to the following in accordance with *Inmate Trust Account*, SOP [114.03.03.011](#).

- One standard mail envelope, domestic or international, a week
- Up to four sheets of paper a week
- A writing instrument (pen, pencil, or security pen)
- One additional mail envelope per week for 'confidential' correspondence as defined in this SOP.
- Envelopes, postage, photocopies for legal mail as defined in *Access to Courts*, SOP 405.02.01.001

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 11 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	---------------------------------

13. Statehouse Mail

Inmates cannot use statehouse mail.

14. Internal IDOC Mail System

Inmates may use the internal IDOC mail system to contact IDOC staff and the Commission of Pardons and Parole.

15. Incoming Mail

Incoming mail must be sent to the facility in white, legal or letter sized envelopes. Incoming Legal Mail is exempt from the white envelope requirement.

Incoming mail that presents no procedural problems as identified in this SOP will be processed and delivered within 24 hours of receipt, Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays.

Incoming mail will be opened, inspected, and may be read to ensure that it complies with this SOP, is not sexually explicit, does not violate the secure and orderly operation of the facility, and does not adversely affect the rehabilitative progress of inmates.

If staff have a reasonable suspicion that a stamp, label, or sticker is being used to conceal contraband, such items may be removed before the mail is delivered.

16. Incoming Confidential Mail

Incoming confidential mail must be delivered to the unit sealed. A unit staff member will open and inspect the envelope in the presence of the inmate but will not read it. However, incoming confidential mail may be scanned to ensure that it does not violate the provision of this SOP. If contraband or materials are found that violate the provisions of this SOP, the mail will be withheld and immediately forwarded to the facility head or designee.

17. Undeliverable Mail

Mail that the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) returns as undeliverable will be opened by prison investigators, who will examine the contents. The investigator will ensure that the inmate listed in the return address was the sender. If the mail appears to be that of the inmate named in the return address and if no contraband or other violations of IDOC rules are found, the mail will be returned to the inmate.

If evidence indicates that the inmate listed in the return address did not send the mail, the mail is not given to the inmate listed in the return address. If the inmate that sent the mail can be identified, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with *Disciplinary Procedures: Inmate*, SOP 318.02.01.001.

If the sender cannot be identified, the mail will be destroyed.

Undeliverable Legal Mail

Mail that is marked as legal mail, that the USPS returns as undeliverable, will be sent to the resource center. In the presence of the inmate, an IDOC paralegal will open and scan the mail to ensure that it is legal mail, the mail belongs to the inmate named in the return address, and the mail does not contain contraband or violate IDOC rules. If it is legal mail belonging to the inmate named in the return address and does not contain contraband or violate IDOC rules, the paralegal will give the mail to the inmate.

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 12 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	---------------------------------

Mail marked as legal mail that does not qualify as legal mail, does not belong to the inmate listed in the return address, contains contraband, or violates IDOC rules is withheld, and forwarded to the facility head or designee for further investigation or disposition. If the inmate that sent the mail can be identified, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with *Disciplinary Procedures: Inmate*.

18. Publications

Books, magazines, and newspapers can be new or used but must be sent by the publisher or a bookstore with a paid receipt or invoice. Magazines may have a receipt or invoice or may have a printed delivery label with the inmate's name and address. If these, or similar, proof of origin and purchase are not present, the item will be returned to sender.

Books are considered property, which will be logged in and marked on the inside front cover using the following label.

Inmate: _____

IDOC#: _____

If this label is removed, the item becomes contraband.

When books are received, they will be forwarded to the property officer within 24 hours.

19. Incorrectly Addressed Incoming Mail

All incoming mail must be clearly addressed with the inmate's committed name (no nicknames), IDOC number, institution, and housing assignment. Incoming mail that is incorrectly addressed will be handled in accordance with the following guidelines.

If possible, incorrectly addressed mail will be delivered to the inmate with a note indicating the need for address correction. If after being notified, the sender continues to send mail incorrectly addressed, mail can be returned to the sender.

Mail should be returned to the sender if an inmate refuses to notify senders of his correct address or encourages senders to use an incomplete or incorrect address.

Incoming Mail with No Return Address

Incoming mail with no return address must be opened and inspected either by mailroom staff or by an investigations staff member. The mail must be delivered to the inmate as soon as possible but no later than the day following the two-business day period. Facility heads must designate the procedure in an FM. If no contraband or other violations of IDOC mail rules are found, the mail will be delivered to the inmate. Staff must stamp the envelope with the following message using red ink.

“Please request that the sender include his or her return address with full name and mailing address on future correspondence.”

If contraband or other violations of IDOC rules are found, the mail must be handled as contraband and disciplinary action in accordance with *Disciplinary Procedures: Inmate*, SOP 318.02.01.001 may be taken.

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 13 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	---------------------------------

20. Correspondence Courses and Materials

Correspondence and materials involved in a correspondence course may differ from the limits set in this SOP. Therefore, in facilities where correspondence courses are allowed, facility heads, in consultation with education staff members, will designate an employee to approve correspondence courses.

The designated person must approve a correspondence course before an inmate can participate. If the inmate and the course are approved, the designated person will notify the mailroom supervisor of the inmate's name and the name of the school or organization. Correspondence and materials between the inmate and the correspondence source will then be allowed.

If the mailroom has any concerns regarding a specific incoming or outgoing item, the mailroom supervisor may withhold the item and discuss the concerns with the facility head or designee. The delivery of the item should not be delayed more than two business days, unless the facility head or designee approves the withholding of the item. If the item is declared contraband, the processes for the handling of contraband outlined in this SOP will be followed. Correspondence courses, materials, and communication between inmates and schools, universities, departments of education, etc. are not confidential.

21. Transfers within the IDOC

When an inmate is transferred to a different housing unit or institution, mail will be forwarded for 60 days from the date of transfer. After 60 days, mail should be returned to the sender.

22. Release from an IDOC Correctional Facility

Inmates are responsible for filing a change of address with the U. S. Postal Service and notify the facility mailroom of their new address before their release from IDOC custody.

When an inmate is paroled or released from the custody of the IDOC and the address is known, mail will be forwarded for a period of 60 days. After 60 days, incoming mail will be returned to the U.S. Postal Service.

23. Contraband

Mail Processed Through the Mailroom

The facility head must designate a staff member to serve as the mail review authority to review items withheld as contraband.

Contraband received through the mail is handled using the following process steps:

Functional Roles and Responsibilities	Step	Tasks
Mailroom Staff	1	Determine whether or not the mail contains contraband.
	2	Remove any contraband found and forward allowable items to the inmate.

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 14 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	---------------------------------

Functional Roles and Responsibilities	Step	Tasks
	3	<p>Take the following actions based on the type of contraband found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash; personal or two-party checks; or greeting cards that are padded, laminated, multilayered, musical, or larger than 8" x 10": Return to sender using a <i>Correspondence, Publication, Item, and Contraband Denial Form</i>, for explanation. • Promotional items: Destroy • Illegal: Forward to local law enforcement • All other contraband: Continue to step 4.
Mailroom Staff	4	Within three working days, notify the inmate using a <i>Correspondence, Publication, Item, and Contraband Denial Form</i> .
	5	Forward the contraband to the property officer or designee.
Property Officer or Designee	6	Handle the contraband in accordance with SOPs 320.02.01.001, <i>Property: State-issued and Inmate Personal Property</i> and 316.02.01.001, <i>Grievance and Informal Resolution Procedure for Inmates</i> .

Incoming Currency

If a cashier check, money order, refund check from a vendor, State of Idaho draft, or US Treasury check is found in legal or first class mail in the unit, the staff members should take the following action:

1. Accept the item from the inmate.
2. Log the item in the daily log. Place the following information in the daily log and on an envelope:
 3. Inmate's name
 4. Maker of the money order or check (Well Fargo, Traveler's Express, etc.)
 5. Serial number of the check or money order
 6. Amount of the check
 7. Staff's name
8. Take the money order or check in a sealed envelope to the control center, at the end of the officer's shift.
9. Place in a designated secured processing area such as lock box, control room, etc. Either the mail staff or accounting will pick it up on the next business day.

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 15 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	---------------------------------

The check will be deposited to the inmate's account and a receipt will be attached to the envelope and returned to the inmate.

24. Monitored Mail Lists

Any inmate can be placed on a monitored mail list for mail if there is a reasonable suspicion of illegal activity, the introduction of contraband, or other issues that threaten the safe and secure operation of an IDOC facility or rehabilitation of inmates. The facility head or designee must approve an inmate's placement on a monitored mail list. When placed on a monitored mail list, all of the inmate's mail will be reviewed for possible contraband. The inmate's mail may be delayed up to two business days to accommodate this process. If mail is determined to be contraband, the processes in section 23, must be followed. If it is determined that the mail does not contain contraband, it will be delivered to the inmate as soon as possible but no later than the day following the two-business day period.

25. Staff Mail

To ensure that all mail is processed efficiently the following procedures apply to IDOC staff and approved volunteers:

- Staff and volunteers should not receive personal mail at work.
- When communicating with outside agencies and individuals, staff and volunteers will take reasonable efforts to ensure the agency or individual has the staff's correct name, work unit, facility name, and address.
- Mailroom and administrative staff will make a reasonable effort to identify the staff member or volunteer when the address on incoming mail is incorrect.

26. Legal Mail

Legal mail is handled in accordance with *Access to Courts*, SOP 405.02.01.001. Legal mail that is processed through the resource center will be logged in the access to courts database.

Legal mail, incoming and outgoing, that is not processed through a resource center will be logged by mailroom staff. The mailroom will log the following information:

- The **incoming log** – the received date, sender, and the inmate's name and IDOC number
- The **outgoing log** – the date the inmate delivered each piece of mail to staff, the date mailed from the institution, the addressee, and the inmate's name and IDOC number

DEFINITIONS

Contraband: Anything--of any kind--that is prohibited by Board, department, or facility rules, policies, directives, or standard operating procedures. Contraband also includes anything--of any kind--that a facility head has not approved for possession by an inmate or to bring into a facility or onto IDOC property.

Indigent Inmate: An inmate who has been housed at an IDOC correctional facility (including a contract facility) for 30 consecutive days and whose trust account has a balance of less than \$0.15 and has had no deposits for 30 consecutive days. If the inmate is paroled or

Control Number: 402.02.01.001	Version: 14.0	Title: Mail Handling in Correctional Facilities	Page Number: 16 of 16
---	-------------------------	---	---------------------------------

released and returns to the IDOC as an inmate, the 30-day clock starts over. If the inmate is transported to another facility, hospital, county jail, or out of state the inmate retains indigent status upon return to an IDOC facility provided the inmate did not received any deposits in the meantime.

Legal Mail: Confidential communication directly between (1) an inmate and an attorney (for the purposes of seeking or providing legal services only), (2) an inmate and the court, (3) opposing parties for service of documents (pursuant to court rules), or (4) third parties for service of documents (pursuant to court rules).

Statehouse Mail: The internal mail system for the State of Idaho that does not require postage.

REFERENCES

[Inmate-to-Inmate Correspondence Request Form](#)

[Correspondence, Publication, Item, and Contraband Denial Form](#)

Standard Operating Procedure [114.03.03.011](#), *Inmate Trust Account*

Standard Operating Procedure [105.02.01.001](#), *Reporting and Investigation of Major Incidents*

Standard Operating Procedure [316.02.01.001](#), *Grievance and Informal Resolution Procedure for Inmates*

Standard Operating Procedure [320.02.01.001](#), *Property: State-issued and Inmate Personal Property*

Standard Operating Procedure [405.02.01.001](#), *Access to Courts*

Standard Operating Procedure [503.02.01.001](#), *Telephones and Electronic Communications: Inmate*

Standard Operating Procedure [604.02.01.001](#). *Visiting*

– End of Document –