

## **INMATE MAIL GUIDE**

*This Guide is intended to be a summary of some of the provisions in the Inmate Mail Policy that may be of most interest to members of the public. The Guide IS NOT intended to be a complete description of all policies related to Inmate Mail. For detail please see the [Inmate Mail Policy](#)*

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### **Policy**

Jail mail-handling procedures support both the inmates' and the public's need to communicate in writing, to carry out legal and official business, and maintain family and community ties. Procedures also meet the Jail's need for efficient operations that preserve the good order, safety, and security of the facility, inmates, and staff. To that end, the following guide has been prepared to assist the public in complying with the Inmate Mail Policy.

The Jail's general Policy is that it will not limit, censor, or restrict the volume, language, content, format or source of inmate mail. However, some limitations are necessary for the security of inmates, jail staff, and the public, as well as for the efficient operation of the Jail.

**Inmate Mail.** Inmates may generally send and receive mail in any form delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. Personal property such as food, beverages, clothing and similar items are not allowed to be mailed to and from inmates and will be confiscated. Photographs are allowed provided they don't otherwise violate the Policy.

**Publications.** Inmates may receive publications, including but not limited to, books, magazines, newsletters and newspapers. However, the publication must be mailed directly from the publisher, book club or a bookstore.

**Addressing Inmate Mail.** Inmate mail must have the inmate's booking name as part of the addressee information (booking number is encouraged but not required). Incoming mail must have a return address including the name and address of the sender.

**Prohibited Mail.** Jail staff will not allow an inmate to receive or send mail that—

1. Contains—
  - A. Threats of physical harm, blackmail, extortion, or other criminal activity;
  - B. Plans for escape, criminal activity, or activity that violates jail rules;
  - C. Gang-related material;
  - D. Information that, if conveyed, could result in physical harm to someone;
  - E. Sexually explicit materials;
  - F. Inflammatory material;
  - G. Contraband materials including but not limited to such commonly mailed items as:

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- (1) Books larger than 9 by 12 inches or with plastic or metal bindings;
  - (2) Controlled substances as defined by ORS 475.005(6);
  - (3) Foreign substances, such as: a) bodily fluids; b) lipstick or perfume; c) glue or paint; d) anything with an unusual stain or odor that indicates a foreign substance may be present;
2. Is written in code or suspected code;
  3. Was a form of written communication not sent through the USPS or other approved system;
  4. Is to or from a victim of a crime that the inmate is in custody for in either pretrial or sentenced status;
  5. Would violate a court order;
  6. May produce a hostile work environment, such as sexual harassment;
  7. Is a credit or deferred billing transaction, such as "bill me later" subscriptions or merchandise bought on credit or collect-on-delivery terms;
  8. Is fraudulently marked as legal or official mail.

For more specific information about prohibited mail please review the full [Inmate Mail Policy J603](#)

**Appeals.** Both the inmate and an outside person have the right to appeal a decision to confiscate inmate mail. With very limited exceptions, the Jail will provide a Notice of Prohibited Mail to both the sender and addressee when inmate mail is returned or confiscated. The Notice of Prohibited Mail will explain the reason why the inmate mail was returned or confiscated and will explain the appeals process. The appeal process for an inmate follows the Jail's normal grievance process. The appeal process for everyone else requires a letter explaining the reason for the appeal, and providing contact information. The letter must be received within 15 days from the date of the Prohibited Mail Notice. The Jail will respond within 15 days of receipt of the letter.

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