

5-10-010 Inmate Mail and Correspondence: Approved by CSS on 04/01/2025

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

| | |
|---|--|
| Unit Order: 5-10-010 | |
| CUSTODY SERVICES DIVISION SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS | Effective Date: 01/01/94 Reviewed Date: 2/18/2025 |
| CENTURY REGIONAL DETENTION FACILITY | |
| Subject: Inmate Mail and Correspondence | |
| Reference: CDM 5-01/030.00, 5-06/010.10, 5-06/070.00, 5-06/020.00, 5-06/020.05, 5-07/010.00, Title 15 Sections 1063,1063(e) & 1066 MPP 5-03/190.00 thru 5-03/195, and 5-03/200.15 | |
| Unit Commander Signature: On File | Date: 4/08/2025 |

PURPOSE OF ORDER:

The purpose of this order is to establish procedures for processing incoming and outgoing inmate mail and legal mail.

SCOPE OF ORDER:

This order shall apply to all personnel assigned to and/or working in any capacity at the Century Regional Detention Facility (CRDF).

ORDER:

Pursuant to Title 15, Section 1063, the term mail and correspondence are interchangeable. CRDF inmates may correspond via United States (U.S.) mail with other inmates in all Custody Services Division facilities and inmates in other institutions. Permission to write an inmate incarcerated at CRDF is not necessary.

Incoming Mail

Incoming inmate mail can be delivered directly to CRDF by the United States Postal Service or retrieved from the Inmate Reception Center (IRC) by the Operations office's law enforcement technician (LET), or designee. All inmate mail entering CRDF should be expeditiously delivered to the Cashier/Mail Room.

Cashier/Mail Room personnel shall inspect all mail for money, photographs, money orders, and contraband. They shall then write the inmate's housing location on the envelope and separate the mail by module for transfer. Cashier/Mail Room personnel shall also separate, and place designated "flagged" correspondence

in the Operation Safe Jail (OSJ) unit's mailbox.

Personnel assigned to CRDF's Inmate Services Bureau (ISB) or Custody Inmate Grievance Application Team (CIGA) will conduct a secondary inspection of all incoming mail. ISB or CIGA personnel will transfer the incoming inmate mail to the mail sorting slots inside the main control sally port. Once the mail is delivered, ISB or CIGA personnel will announce via their county issued handheld radio that inmate mail is ready for pick up in the main control sally port.

Inmate mail shall be retrieved from the main control sally port once per day by AM or PM shift personnel and distributed to each addressed inmate. The distribution of mail shall be logged in the electronic Uniform Daily Activity Log (e-UDAL).

NOTE: Module personnel shall not retrieve inmate mail from the Cashier/Mail Room.

Incoming Money

Cashier/Mail Room personnel shall remove enclosed monies from all incoming inmate mail. Cashier/Mail Room personnel shall record on the face of each envelope containing money; the type, amount, and disposition of the enclosed money. The money shall then be deposited into the inmate's account.

All cash and negotiable instruments of \$200 or less shall be deposited directly to the inmates account. Acceptable negotiable instruments include:

- Postal Money Order
- Western Union Money Gram
- Most money orders issued in the State of California. Items in this category must say "Money Order" on its face.
- American Express Money Orders if in the U.S. currency
- Cashier's checks (in state only) and if payable to the inmate or the Sheriff's Department
- Checks from other law enforcement agencies if payable to the inmate

The following items are not acceptable for deposit and must be returned to the sender:

- Cash
- Personal checks
- Out of state checks
- Payroll checks
- All other monies not listed above are not acceptable

Money left in a released inmate's account shall be held for 90 days before being transferred to the County General Fund.

Restrictions on Mail / Mail Containing Contraband

When an inmate is sent material that is not prohibited by law, but is considered contraband (e.g. plastic cards, food, hygiene items, postage stamps, combs, or pornographic material, etc.), it shall be returned to

sender or destroyed. A brief explanation indicating the reason for returning the mail shall be written or stamped on the envelope. The sender, if identifiable, shall be notified of the mail item's rejection through the "Returned Mail Item-Sender Notification" form (SH-J-465), which shall be sent by the USPS to the sender. Any contraband item or suspicious material that cannot be resolved by personnel shall require a supervisor's disposition.

Photographs may be given to inmates, subject to the following guidelines:

- Photographs or computer generated pictures shall be unadorned; size shall be a minimum of 3 inches by 5 inches, not to exceed 4 inches by 6 inches.
- Photographs or pictures that are sexually explicit, depicting nudity and/or sexual acts, or displaying gangs, gang tattoos, or hand gestures (signs) are prohibited.
- Polaroid photographs shall be cut open for examination.

NOTE: Unit commanders may prohibit the possession of photographs or computer generated images that they deem capable of compromising the security of the facility.

When narcotics are found in mail, the on-duty watch commander shall be notified immediately. The mail containing narcotics shall be surrendered to the watch commander who will designate personnel to complete the appropriate Incident Report (SH-R-49) and ensure the proper handling of the recovered narcotics, pursuant to CDM section 5-14/080.00 "Narcotic Evidence Booking Procedures."

Gang related materials found on or inside inmate mail, shall be delivered to OSJ personnel for proper review and handling.

Mail found to contain information of a criminal matter shall be immediately delivered to the respective tower supervisor or on-duty watch sergeant and shall not be delivered to the concerned inmate. The supervisor shall investigate its contents to determine whether the information is sufficient to warrant further action. If the mail contains workable information in a criminal case, proper notification shall be made to the agency or unit involved in the investigation. The investigator involved with the case will make a determination as to the status of the item in question.

Excess Mail and Mail Limitations

There is no limit on the amount of mail an inmate may receive; however, the mail must fit into the County issued inmate property bag with the rest of the inmate's property.

Any excess mail that does not fit within the property bag shall be mailed out by the inmate or discarded by the inmate.

- There shall be no limitation on the volume of mail that an inmate may send
- Indigent inmates shall receive four postage paid envelopes and eight sheets of paper each week by ordering an "Indigent Kit" from Commissary
- There shall be no limitation on the number of postage-free letters to the inmate's attorney and to the courts
- There shall be no limitation to the number of legal correspondences sent by an inmate

Out Going Regular Mail-Staff Responsibilities

Prior to delivering outgoing mail to the floor control booth, module personnel shall ensure the following rules and standards are adhered to, preventing any further delay in mail processing. The following information shall be placed on the upper left-hand corner on the front of the envelope:

- Inmate's full name and booking number
- Inmates housing location (including cell number and bunk)
- CRDF's full address

The envelope containing regular mail shall remain unsealed and placed in the mail box located in the housing module for processing. Any sealed envelope shall not be accepted and immediately returned to the inmate.

Floor control personnel assigned to the early morning (EM) shift shall be responsible for inspecting all outgoing mail from their respective floor's modules. They shall also ensure all outgoing mail is appropriately weighed, stamped, and addressed. The outside of the envelope shall be marked with the "INSPECTED" stamp. In the event the volume of mail is heavy, the assigned floor rover shall assist in the inspection of mail. It will be the responsibility of each EM tower supervising line deputy to conduct weekly checks of each module and floor control booth to ensure inmate mail is being delivered and processed in a timely manner.

Mail containing incorrect postage or address information shall be returned to module personnel by the next shift. Module personnel shall expeditiously return incorrectly prepared mail to the inmate. Appropriately addressed outgoing mail shall be kept separated by each housing location. Due to United States Postal Service mail regulations, all pieces of first-class mail must weigh no more than 13 ounces.

When mail is found to be inappropriate or has drawings on the front of outgoing envelopes, the mail shall be returned to the inmate. If the mail is considered contraband, the contraband will be disposed of.

Inmate Services personnel shall be responsible for collecting outgoing mail from all floor control booths. They shall collect the unsealed inspected mail from each floor control, seal the mail, and place it inside the main control sally port in the United States Postal Service mail bins.

The main control supervising line deputy shall ensure outgoing mail left is bagged and prepared for pickup by the Operations LET on AM shift. If a large volume of outgoing mail warrants expedient transport to the U.S. Postal Service Office, the LET may take the mail to the Lynwood Postal Office. Only meager amounts of outgoing mail may be placed in the postal receptacle in front of the facility. Inmate mail shall be processed and deposited with the U.S. mail without undue delay.

The Operations sergeant shall conduct monthly checks to ensure that inmate mail is being processed according to policy.

Legal/Confidential Mail

All incoming legal/confidential mail shall remain sealed and placed in the Legal Unit sorting slot located in the Cashier/Mail room. Personnel assigned to the CRDF Legal Unit shall retrieve the mail at least once per day and shall be responsible for the following:

- All legal mail shall be opened in the presence of the inmate
- CRDF Legal Unit personnel delivering legal mail shall scan the pages of the document(s) checking for contraband
- CRDF Legal Unit personnel shall photocopy the front of the envelope and place it in the “Legal Mail Logbook.” The inmate shall sign the log confirming receipt.

All outgoing legal/confidential mail shall be examined in the presence of the inmate for contraband and to ensure the validity of the legal mail without reading the contents of the letter. If determined to be valid legal mail, the module deputy shall instruct the inmate to place the letter in the addressed envelope and seal the envelope in their presence. The module deputy accepting the mail shall write their initials and employee number on the flap of the envelope prior to forwarding the documents for delivery/mailing.

Inmates shall be afforded the following privileges with respect to outgoing legal/confidential mail:

- Legal/confidential correspondence with any State or Federal Court, active member of any State Bar, holder of public office, the State Board of Corrections, any licensed physician, licensed psychiatrist, Correctional Health Services (mental or medical), unit commander, or any official of the Sheriff's Department.
- Legal/confidential correspondence with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Auditor, Rape Crisis Centers, ACLU and Just Detention International (JDI) personnel

For additional information, refer to CDM section 5-06/070.00, “Inmate Correspondence” and Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) section 5-03/195.00, “Confidential/Legal Correspondence of Inmates.”

Discipline

Correspondence privileges shall not be withheld except in cases where the inmate has violated correspondence regulations, in which case correspondence may be suspended for no longer than 72 hours without the review and approval of the unit commander.

For additional information, refer to CCR Title 15, section 1083 (f), “Limitations on Disciplinary Actions”).

[REDACTED TEXT]

REVISED 2/18/2025

REVISED 01/11/22 (Approved by CSS on 3/15/2022)

REVISED 08/03/17
