



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY
DEPARTMENT WIDE

REVISION DATE
7/10/20

PAGE NUMBER
1 of 3

NUMBER
DOC 110.300

POLICY

TITLE
CORRESPONDENCE GUIDELINES

REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:

- Effective: 11/17/01
- Revised: 2/7/05
- Revised: 3/13/07
- Revised: 5/6/08
- Revised: 3/1/10
- Revised: 6/25/12
- Revised: 12/1/13
- Revised: 7/10/20

SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:

Policy Statement I., Directive I.A., II.A.3. & 4., III.A., III.A.1, and III.A.3. - Adjusted language for clarification
 Removed I.A.1. that the guidelines include formatting specifications
 II.A.5. - Removed unnecessary language
 Removed III.A.2 that only official letterhead will be used for Department communications

APPROVED:

Signature on file

STEPHEN SINCLAIR, Secretary
 Department of Corrections

6/16/20

 Date Signed

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REFERENCES:

DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; [Executive Order 05-03](#); [Office of the Governor Executive and General Correspondence Guidelines](#); [Office of the Governor Plain Talk Guidelines](#); [Correspondence Guidelines](#)

POLICY:

- I. Timely response to correspondence is important in building positive relations, educating people about how we manage agency programs, and demonstrating respect to the individuals we serve. The Department has established guidelines for all official correspondence to ensure consistency and promote understanding by providing a standardized format using Plain Talk principles.
- II. The Department will respond to all constituent correspondence. Any complainants will be informed of findings and action taken, if appropriate.

DIRECTIVE:

- I. Correspondence Guidelines
 - A. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will follow [Correspondence Guidelines](#) when preparing official correspondence. Correspondence will be responded to within 10 business days.
 1. Correspondence for internal or external communications will be prepared for signature on official letterhead, delivered via Department email, or other specific applications.
 2. Correspondence to other jurisdictions or agencies reflecting the official position of the Department will be signed and/or delivered by the appropriate Appointing Authority and/or designee.
 - B. The latest edition of the Gregg Reference Manual provides additional, detailed information on standard grammar, punctuation, and writing guidelines.
- II. Headquarters Correspondence Unit
 - A. The Correspondence Unit will be responsible for:
 1. Coordinating with appropriate employees, contract staff, and/or volunteers to ensure response to specific correspondence addressed to the offices of the Governor, Secretary, and Assistant Secretaries.

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2. Coordinating with appropriate employees, contract staff, and/or volunteers to ensure response to electronic correspondence,
3. Preparing the monthly statistical report, documenting where executive level letters are assigned and the subject matter of the letters,
4. Producing a weekly list of overdue executive level correspondence,
5. Retaining and archiving executive level correspondence, and
6. Updating the Department of Corrections Correspondence Guidelines.

III. Official Department Letterhead

- A. Department letterhead bearing the Washington State seal indicates approval of the information in the document. Only Department letterhead and memoranda will be used for official business.
 1. Department letterhead will not be used to communicate personal observations or opinions or initiate personal requests unrelated to the writer's official job.
 2. Under no circumstance will an individual under the Department's jurisdiction be allowed access to the official Department letterhead or memoranda for use.

DEFINITIONS:

Words/terms appearing in this policy may be defined in the glossary section of the Policy Manual.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

DOC FORMS:

None