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

SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:

I.A. and II.A.6. - Adjusted language for clarification

APPROVED:

Signature on file  
BERNARD WARNER, Secretary  
Department of Corrections  
10/21/13  
Date Signed
REFERENCES:

DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; Department of Corrections Correspondence Guidelines; Executive and General Correspondence Guidelines; Gregg Reference Manual

POLICY:

I. Correspondence is important in building positive public relations and educating people about Department operations. The Department has established correspondence guidelines to ensure consistency and standardized format in all official correspondence.

II. The Department will respond to all constituent correspondence. Any complainants will be informed of findings and, if appropriate, of action taken.

III. The Department promotes Plain Talk principles which produce quality correspondence that is easy to understand.

DIRECTIVE:

I. Correspondence Guidelines

A. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will follow the Department of Corrections Correspondence Guidelines, which provides specific direction for preparing official correspondence. The Department of Corrections Correspondence Guidelines is available on InsideDOC, in the Communications section under “Agency Publications”.

1. The guidelines include formatting specifications for letters and memorandums.

2. Official correspondence will either be prepared for signature on official letterhead or delivered via email or other Department specific applications.

   a. Email is a Department approved application for both internal and external communications.

3. Correspondence to other jurisdictions or agencies reflecting the official position of the Department will be signed and/or delivered by the appropriate Appointing Authority/designee.

4. Correspondence will be responded to within 10 business days.

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.

2. Coordinating with appropriate employees, contract staff, and/or volunteers to ensure response to electronic correspondence,

3. Retaining and archiving executive level correspondence for the Department,

4. Preparing the Quarterly Correspondence Statistical Report, documenting where executive level letters are assigned and the subject matter of the letters,

5. Producing a bi-monthly list of overdue executive level correspondence, and

6. Updating the Department of Corrections Correspondence Guidelines.

III. Department Letterhead

A. The use of official Department letterhead bearing the state of Washington seal indicates the Department recognizes and approves of the material in the document. Only official letterhead will be used for both internal and external Department communications.

1. Official Department letterhead and memoranda will be used only for official business.

2. Official letterhead will not be used to communicate personal observations or opinions, or initiate personal requests unrelated to the writer’s official job, particularly to other agencies or individuals outside the Department.

3. Under no circumstance will an offender be allowed access to the official Department letterhead or memoranda for his/her use.

DEFINITIONS:

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

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None

**DOC FORMS:**

None