



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY
PRISON/REENTRY
FACILITY/SPANISH MANUALS

REVISION DATE
5/22/24

PAGE NUMBER
1 of 13

NUMBER
DOC 450.300

POLICY

TITLE
VISITS FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:

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- Revised: 7/11/18
- Revised: 5/7/19
- Revised: 6/11/20
- Revised: 11/30/21
- Revised: 5/22/24

SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:

Attachment 1 - Updated eligibility requirements

APPROVED:

Signature on file

CHERYL STRANGE, Secretary
Department of Corrections

5/22/24

Date Signed

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REFERENCES:

DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; [RCW 9.94.043](#); [RCW 9.94.045](#); [WAC 137-28](#); DOC 100.560 Non-Discrimination and Accessibility for Visitors/Guests with Disabilities; DOC 150.150 Visits and Tours of Department Facilities and Offices; DOC 320.255 Restrictive Housing; DOC 390.300 Victim Services Program; DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors; DOC 460.050 Disciplinary Sanctions; DOC 460.135 Disciplinary Procedures for Work Release; DOC 530.100 Volunteer Program; DOC 590.100 Extended Family Visiting; DOC 850.030 Relationships/Contacts with Individuals; [Facility-Specific Visit Guidelines](#); [Video Visit Expectations](#); [Visitor Guidelines for Reentry Centers](#)

POLICY:

- I. The Department recognizes the vital role family and friends play in providing meaningful connection during confinement and throughout the reentry process. The Department will support incarcerated individuals in maintaining prosocial ties with family, friends, and the community by engaging them and setting reasonable criteria for personal visits.
 - A. Visitors are encouraged to provide feedback to enhance the visit experience. Any form of retaliation toward those who provide feedback will not be tolerated.
- II. The Department prohibits discrimination or unfair/illegal treatment on the basis of genetic information (e.g., national origin, ancestry, race, color), religion/creed, age, gender, gender expression, marital status or status as a state registered domestic partner, pregnancy, sexual orientation, or political views, immigration/citizenship status, veteran/military status, or the presence or history of a physical/mental/sensory disability in any activity or its operations.
- III. Additional extended family visit opportunities are available per DOC 590.100 Extended Family Visiting.

DIRECTIVE:

- I. General Requirements
 - A. Visitors and incarcerated individuals will be treated courteously. Rule enforcement will be polite and professional.
 - B. Eligible visitors must be approved per the approval process and added to the incarcerated individual's approved visit list before being allowed to visit.
 1. Eligibility requirements are identified in Eligibility Requirements for Visitors (Attachment 1).

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2. The Superintendent/Reentry Center Community Corrections Supervisor (CCS) or their designee may make one-time allowances for visitors not approved through the Statewide Visit Unit under special circumstances.
- C. Visitation opportunities in Prisons will be provided for in-person, video, and/or no contact options appropriate for various circumstances based on eligibility and safety for those participating.
1. Individuals housed in maximum custody may receive visits per DOC 320.255 Restrictive Housing.
 2. Video visit opportunities may be authorized in Prisons using the vendor contracted to provide the service at the visitor's expense. Video visits will be conducted per Video Visit Expectations posted to the Department's public website.
- D. Visit opportunities in Reentry Centers will be provided for in-person, based on eligibility and safety in any activity or its operations.
- E. Facilities will provide in-person visit opportunities and programs in a secure and welcoming visit space for incarcerated individuals and their family and friends to provide as normal a family experience as possible through:
1. Reasonable efforts made to ensure the visit area is comfortable, pleasant, and permits informal communication and limited, appropriate physical contact.
 2. Providing sufficient and safe space for in-person visits and, if necessary, no contact visits consistent with custody level. Visit areas will be designed taking the following into consideration:
 - a. Designated visit areas will include a section that has a child-friendly environment with toys and games suitable for interaction by family members of all ages.
 - b. Reasonable accommodation will be provided for visitors with disabilities per DOC 100.560 Non-Discrimination and Accessibility for Visitors/Guests with Disabilities.
 - c. Appropriate seating for all ages will be provided.
 - d. In Prisons, space is adequately designed to allow for appropriate space that permits screening and searching of both incarcerated individuals and visitors.

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- e. Space may be provided for the proper storage of visitors' coats, handbags, and other personal items not allowed into the visit area.
- 3. Ensuring employees are aware of the importance of positive visit environments to maintain ties with family and friends, and the reunification of individuals with their families and significant others.
- F. The Statewide Visit Unit will ensure:
 - 1. All visitor information is entered in the statewide visit system, including visit application information and identified areas of concern.
 - 2. Application status (i.e., pending, approved, denied, rejected) is updated as soon as possible and emailed to the applicant or sent through the United States Postal Service (USPS) when email is not an option.
 - 3. When available, a picture of each visitor is added to the visitor profile.
- G. Each Superintendent/CCS will establish a local process to ensure the following information is entered into the statewide visit system:
 - 1. Documentation of each visit, to include any positive or negative observations or issues addressed during the visit.
 - a. Visitors will be provided notice of any negative entries that address corrective action or conversations with employees/contract staff.
 - 2. When an official photo is not yet in the system, a picture of each visitor will be taken at the first visit and updated when the visitor's appearance changes or every 2 years for minors.
 - 3. The Statewide Visit Specialist, Communications Director, and DOC Webmaster will be notified when visit room closures are planned or occur unexpectedly at a Prison to allow for internal and external stakeholder notifications to be posted.
- H. All visitors are expected to adhere to Department policies, including attachments and guidelines.
- I. If an individual's Judgment and Sentence allows for visitation, visits may be considered but are not guaranteed.
- J. All visit-related documentation will be scanned into the incarcerated individual's electronic imaging file.

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K. More information can be found on the Family & Visitors section of the Department's external website.

II. Special Visits

A. Special visits will only be approved for persons on the incarcerated individual's approved visit list unless approved by the Appointing Authority/CCS or designee for extraordinary circumstances.

1. Special visits may be limited due to operational, safety, and/or security concerns.

B. In Prisons, special visits must be requested on DOC 21-787 Special Visit Request and submitted to facility visit employees as soon as possible, but no less than 5 business days before the requested date.

1. All visitors who wish to participate in the special visit must be listed on the form.

2. Facility visit employees will process requests before the requested visit date.

C. Special visits may be permitted for:

1. Visitors who travel a long distance (i.e., at least 250 miles one way) or from out of the country.

2. Elected/appointed members of local and/or statewide family councils who have missed visits due to participation in council meetings.

3. Incarcerated individuals who are in restrictive housing or hospitalized.

D. The Superintendent/CCS or their designee will coordinate adjustments to established times and days for individuals on the approved visit list to accommodate special requests.

III. Approval Process

A. Each Prison/Reentry Center prospective visitor must apply for visit privileges, regardless of age.

1. Prospective visitors will complete one of the following applicable electronic applications on the Department's external website at doc.wa.gov:

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- a. DOC 20-060 Visitor Application for adult visitors
- b. DOC 20-181 Minor Visitor Application for minor visitors
 - 1) A completed DOC 20-441 Parent/Guardian Consent for Minor Visit and/or Escort must be attached to the visit application for a minor(s).
- 2. Providing false/misleading information or failure to list all previous criminal history on the visit application may result in denial of visit privileges.
- 3. International visitors must:
 - a. Provide a copy of their passport photo page, and
 - b. Request a copy of their criminal history from their local jurisdiction be forwarded to the Statewide Visit Unit.
 - 1) The Statewide Visit Unit must receive the criminal history from the local jurisdiction before visit privileges will be considered.
- B. Applications should be processed within 30 business days of receipt but may be delayed due to a high volume of applications or when an application requires further review from the Visit Multi-Disciplinary Team (VMDT), or other additional review.
 - 1. To ensure timelines are met, inquiries regarding the status of a visit application will only receive a response when the application has been in process for more than 8 weeks.
- C. Criminal history background checks will be conducted, and the incarcerated individual's electronic file will be reviewed to verify the applicant's identity and ensure the accuracy of the visitor's application.
 - 1. Subsequent background checks will be conducted on a periodic basis.

IV. Visit Multidisciplinary Team

- A. The VMDT has been established and will meet monthly to review:
 - 1. Eligibility when an application is submitted:
 - a. For a minor(s) to visit an individual who has a current or prior adjudicated offense against a minor (e.g., sexual/violent offense against a minor).

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- 1) If the Judgment and Sentence states no contact with minors, the application will be denied by processing employees.
 - 2) When the court authorizes visits, the Department may still deny visits on a case-by-case basis after conducting a full review of available information.
 - b. For a minor and escorting adult, where the adult has other children that have been victimized by the individual they want to visit.
 2. Current visitor eligibility when the facility requests assistance in determining suitability.
- B. The VMDT will be chaired by the Statewide Visit Specialist and consist of at least one representative from the following, as applicable:
1. Victim Services
 2. Sex Offender Treatment Program
 3. Department of Children, Youth, and Families
 4. Community Corrections Division
 5. Indeterminate Sentence Review Board
 6. Law Enforcement Notification
 7. Reentry Center
- C. Additional documentation may be required from the applicant and/or incarcerated individual for VMDT review (e.g., parenting plan, custody documents, releases).
- V. Approved Visit List
- A. There is no limit to the number of visitors an individual may have on the approved visit list.
 - B. Visitors may only be on one approved visit list unless they are immediate family members of more than one incarcerated individual and approved by the Statewide Visit Specialist.
 1. A visit application must be submitted by the family member for each incarcerated individual.
 2. A Statewide Visit Unit employee will complete DOC 20-438 Approval for Visits with Multiple Incarcerated Individuals and submit it to the Statewide Visit Specialist for consideration. Visitors will be notified via email regarding status.

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3. If a child with incarcerated parents participates in visiting with both parents, an exception may be allowed for the adult accompanying the child as an escort.
- C. When an individual is transferred to another facility, the approved visit list will remain active and be available in the statewide visit system.
1. Incarcerated individuals will be responsible for notifying their visitors of transfers.
 2. The receiving facility may conduct a review of each individual listed for updated law enforcement and intelligence data.
 3. When the receiving Superintendent/CCS believes visits should be denied, the matter will be referred to the appropriate Deputy Assistant Secretary, Reentry Center Operations Administrator, or their designee for a final decision.
- D. Individuals may use the kiosk or request a printed list from an employee to view their approved visit list.
- E. Visit lists will be closed out and no longer valid when an individual is released from confinement, passes away, or is on escape status. If an individual is re-incarcerated, all visitors must go through the approval process to create a new visit list.
- F. Applicants denied placement on an approved visit list will be informed, in writing, of the reasons for denial.
1. Individuals must receive the details of a denial from the visitor.
- VI. Removal of Names from the Approved Visit List
- A. An individual may remove a visitor from the approved visit list by sending a written request to the Statewide Visit Unit at PO Box 41118, Olympia, WA 98504-1118 or via kiosk.
1. Removal requests received by facility employees will be forwarded to the Statewide Visit Unit.
 2. If a visitor is removed from a visit list and submits a new application, the Statewide Visit Unit will send a kiosk message to the individual asking if the individual wants the application to be processed. The individual must verify in writing for the application to be proceed.

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- B. Visitors are encouraged to request removal from a visit list if they no longer want to participate in visits.
- C. A visitor who wishes to be removed from a visit list must send a request via email or by writing to the Statewide Visit Unit.
- D. If a visitor is removed from an approved visit list, the visitor must wait 90 days before being added to the same or any other visit list.
 - 1. The waiting period may be waived when the visitor has not visited in person within the last 90 days.
- E. Minors may be removed from a visit list if any legal parental authority requests it in writing to the Statewide Visit Unit and attaches proof of authority (e.g., parenting plan, court documents).
- F. Visitors will be removed from the visit list if they have not visited in person or via a video visit in the last 5 years or are deceased.

VII. Visit Processes

- A. Visit personnel will document visitor observations, as appropriate, in the statewide electronic visit system.
 - 1. Visitors will be provided notice of any negative entries that address corrective action or conversations with employees/contract staff.
- B. Copies of the Visitor Guidelines will be available to incarcerated individuals at the facility and visitors may access them on the Department's external website.
 - 1. The Correctional Program Administrator/designee will provide the guidelines to Prisons to incorporate processes specific to their location.
 - a. Each Prison will send their guidelines to be reviewed and approved by the Correctional Program Administrator/designee each time they are updated before posting to their facility's web page on the Department's external website.
 - 2. Requests for exceptions to the visitor guidelines will be submitted to the Senior Director for Correctional Operations, who will submit requests to the appropriate Assistant Secretary for final approval.
- C. All visitors and service dogs are subject to pat, electronic, and canine searches. Lockers used by visitors, as well as visitors' vehicles, purses, packages,

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briefcases, or similar containers which are brought onto facility grounds may be searched.

1. All Prison visitors should read DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors and are required to sign DOC 21-575 Acknowledgment of Visitor Search Requirements before the first visit with an incarcerated individual.

D. In addition to brief, appropriate contact at the beginning of each visit, an incarcerated individual may have physical contact with the individual's child(ren) 8 years of age and under.

1. The Superintendent/CCS may impose additional requirements that limit physical contact for a specific visitor.
2. Depending on circumstances (e.g., pandemic), physical contact may not be allowed.

E. Visitors with minors are responsible for ensuring the minors are accompanied and supervised during the entire visit.

VIII. Denial, Suspension, or Termination of Visits

A. While the Department intends to actively engage families in support of those under its jurisdiction, visit privileges may be denied, suspended, terminated, or restricted as a sanction for a guilty finding of visit-related infractions, violent offenses, or drug-related behavior that presents a security or safety threat.

1. Sanctions will be imposed per DOC 460.050 Disciplinary Sanctions or DOC 460.135 Disciplinary Procedures for Work Release and will be shared with affected family members.
 - a. Individuals sanctioned to a loss of visits will have a restriction placed in the statewide visit system documenting a start and end date and what type of visits are suspended.
 - 1) If the associated infraction is dropped or reduced, the visit suspension for a visitor may remain in place, as appropriate.
2. An individual's sanction and visitor's suspension may vary in duration and the type of visitation privilege(s) loss will be related to the violation behavior (e.g., introduction of contraband during in-person visit, sexually suggestive during a video visit).

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- B. Persons identified as being involved in attempting/conspiring to introduce, or aiding and abetting another to introduce contraband, in any way, will have their visit privileges suspended or terminated.
1. In Prisons, a visitor found in possession of:
 - a. Dangerous contraband may be detained and/or searched per DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors and will have their visit privileges terminated.
 - b. Items that are legal but considered contraband in Prisons may have their visit privileges suspended for 6 months. Subsequent violations will result in termination of visit privileges.
 2. In Reentry Centers, visitors will be asked to leave the facility and law enforcement may be called, if appropriate.
- C. The Superintendent/CCS may suspend/terminate visit privileges with a specified individual(s) as the result of a very serious violation or multiple violations.
- D. The Superintendent or designee at the rank of Shift Commander or higher in Prisons and employees/contract staff in Reentry Centers may deny entrance to visitors or terminate a visit in progress if:
1. There is prior knowledge leading to evidence that a visitor is attempting to smuggle contraband in or out of the facility.
 - a. Local law enforcement will be contacted and allowed to handle visitor search procedures if there is sufficient information and time to coordinate efforts.
 2. There is a disturbance or emergency within the facility.
 3. There is clear and present or imminent danger to the health or safety of anyone.
 4. There is reasonable suspicion to believe that criminal conduct will result if entrance is allowed.
 5. The visitor appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
 - a. Facility employees/contract staff will notify local law enforcement per local procedures.

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6. The individual or visitor fails to abide by Department policies or the facility's rules or procedures.
 7. A minor being escorted by an adult is not supervised or is causing disruptions to a visit.
- E. The Superintendent/CCS may suspend or terminate the visit privileges of a visitor for a serious/repeated violation of this policy or serious/repeated abuse of visit privileges on the part of the visitor or incarcerated individual.
1. The Superintendent/CCS or their designee may prolong a suspension if there remains a clear and present or imminent danger to the health or safety of anyone or risk to facility security.
- F. DOC 20-454 Visitor's Notice of Suspension/Termination will be sent to the visitor within 10 days identifying the specific reason(s) for a suspension or termination.
1. The incarcerated individual must request the reason for the suspension or termination from the visitor.
- IX. No Contact Provisions in Prisons
- A. The Superintendent will establish procedures for no contact visits in cases of substantiated security risk.
 - B. The Superintendent may impose no contact visit provisions for inappropriate or security threat-related behavior displayed by the incarcerated individual and/or visitor.
- X. Appeals
- A. A visitor may appeal an initial visit application, denial visit privilege restrictions/suspensions/terminations, and/or VMDT decisions in writing to the Headquarters Correctional Program Administrator. A written decision will be mailed through the USPS when email is not an option for notification to the visitor.
 1. The appropriate Assistant Secretary or their designee has final authority on visit privilege appeals.
 2. Visitors who receive notification that their opportunities for appeal have been exhausted may resubmit an application after one year to be considered for restoration of modified or full visit privileges.

DEFINITIONS:

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The following words/terms are important to this policy and are defined in the glossary section of the Policy Manual: Dangerous Contraband, Immediate Family. Other words/terms appearing in this policy may also be defined in the glossary.

ATTACHMENTS:

Eligibility Requirements for Visitors (Attachment 1)

DOC FORMS:

- DOC 20-060 Visitor Application for adult visitors
- DOC 20-181 Minor Visitor Application for minor visitors
- DOC 20-182 Government Designated Escort Application
- DOC 20-438 Approval for Visits with Multiple Incarcerated Individuals
- DOC 20-441 Parental/Guardian Consent for Minor Visit and/or Escort
- DOC 20-450 Approval for Visits by Current/Former Employee, Contract Staff, or Volunteer
- DOC 20-454 Visitor's Notice of Suspension/Termination
- DOC 21-575 Acknowledgment of Visitor Search Requirements
- DOC 21-787 Special Visit Request