

Correspondence

970.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose is to establish and implement written policy and procedures for the sending and receiving of correspondence by youth housed in juvenile facilities.

970.1.1 DEFINITION

Definition related to this policy includes:

Privileged Mail - Mail between youth and any court, attorney, government or public officer, Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) personnel, probation or parole officers or administrators of grievance systems.

970.2 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

- Board of State and Community Corrections Title 15 § 1375;
- Juvenile Facility Services Policy:Grievance Procedure;
- Welfare and Institutions Code §§ 209, 210 & 885.

970.3 POLICY

Youth shall be advised of the correspondence policy during the admittance process. Youth are encouraged to maintain communication with their families and the community by sending and receiving mail.

970.4 AUTHORIZED CORRESPONDENCE

There is no limitation on the volume of mail a youth may send or receive. Staff shall ensure youth have several opportunities to write letters each week. This shall be indicated on the monthly programming calendar for each living unit. Letter writing materials, including paper, pencils and envelopes shall be supplied by the juvenile facility. Youth may send unlimited letters per week, postage free.

970.5 UNAUTHORIZED CORRESPONDENCE

Incoming/outgoing packages or parcels shall not be allowed. Youth may not enter into subscriptions.

Youth shall not be permitted to send/receive mail from another Riverside County Probation Juvenile Facility. Mail received from another facility shall be returned to sender. Staff shall review addressees to avoid the sending of mail to another facility.

Youth shall not be permitted any material that:

- (a) Contains instructions for the manufacturing of drugs,explosives,or other unlawful substances;
- (b) Advocates violence within the juvenile facility;

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- (c) Advocates racial, gender, religious or national hatred;
- (d) Advocates criminal behavior;
- (e) Advocates behavior against juvenile facility staff/rules;
- (f) Sexually explicit material; or
- (g) Gang-related material.

970.6 MAIL INSPECTION

Processing of incoming and outgoing mail should be as expeditious as possible.

An Incoming/Outgoing Mail Log (attachment) shall be maintained by the control center staff with the following information regarding each piece of mail:

- (a) Name of sender;
- (b) Name of recipient;
- (c) Date mail is sent/received; and
- (d) Disposition of mail (returned to sender, contraband found, etc.).

970.6.1 PRIVILEGED MAIL

Youth may correspond confidentially with state and federal courts, any member of the State Bar or holder of public office and the BSCC. Authorized juvenile facility staff may open and inspect such privileged mail only to search for contraband; the search shall be conducted in the presence of the youth.

970.6.2 NON-PRIVILEGED MAIL

All other incoming and outgoing mail may be read by the unit supervising probation officer (SPO) or designee only when there is reasonable cause to believe facility safety and security, public safety or youth safety are jeopardized.

All envelopes shall be free of inappropriate images/slogans such as gang-related or sexually explicit drawings. Mail displaying inappropriate images/slogans shall be returned to the sender. All stamps/stickers shall be removed from all mail prior to delivery to a youth.

All mail shall be opened and searched for contraband in the presence of the youth. Any inserts, attachments or drawings included in the mail shall be reviewed by staff in front of the youth. Staff shall confiscate any items that are considered contraband such as gang-related or sexually explicit photos or items otherwise prohibited in the facility. Such items found in incoming mail shall be confiscated and returned to the sender and a Notice of Correspondence Rejection form (attachment) shall be given to both the sending party and the youth.

Outgoing mail, other than privileged mail, shall be searched by staff for contraband. Staff shall verify the youth's correct name and appropriate return address is listed on the envelope. The envelope shall then be sealed by the youth in the presence of staff. Outgoing privileged mail shall

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be placed in an envelope and sealed by the youth in the presence of staff. Staff shall initial across the seal on the back of the envelope after the mail has been inspected.

970.6.3 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) Post the address format for the youths' use and ensure all envelopes are addressed correctly.
- (b) Take outgoing mail to the appropriate location at least once per shift.
- (c) Forward all juvenile facility mail addressed to staff to that staff's immediate supervisor for review.
- (d) Deliver all incoming mail to the youth before the end of the shift unless the mail is subject to further review by the unit SPO or designee.

970.7 MAIL REVIEW STATUS

A youth may be placed on mail review status only by an SPO. Staff shall immediately refer a youth who appears to fit the following criteria for mail review status to an SPO, who shall make that determination. Placement on mail review status shall be based on evidence the youth's mail either:

- (a) Advocates the direct furtherance of a specific criminal act;
- (b) Advocates or encourages specific acts of violence or contains threats of suicidal intent;
- (c) Advocates or plans for escape;
- (d) Contains contraband; or
- (e) Promotes the furtherance of gang-related activities.

When considering placing a youth on mail review status, the SPO shall review the youth's past behavior and any special circumstances such as, but not limited to: gang affiliation, escapes/escape attempts, suicide attempts, incidents of violence, substance abuse history, etc.

The SPO shall notify the youth of their placement on mail review status and provide them with a copy of the Notice of Mail Review Status form (attachment) indicating reasons for the decision.

The decision to place a youth on mail review status may be grieved by the youth pursuant to Juvenile Facility Services Policy: Grievance Procedure. The youth may choose to have their mail returned to the sender unopened rather than have it opened and read by staff. The youth shall be present when their mail is read by staff.

An SPO must re-evaluate youth for inclusion on mail review status upon each re-entry to the juvenile facility. An SPO shall review the youth's mail review status every thirty days and may approve the removal of the youth from mail review status. All mail review status updates shall be documented in the Juvenile and Adult Management System (JAMS) under the youth's detention contacts.

A log of all youth who are placed on mail review status shall be maintained in the control center. The log shall include:

- (a) Name and client identification number (CID) of youth;

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- (b) Date placed on mail review status;
- (c) Date removed from mail review status;
- (d) Justification for placement and removal of mail review status; and
- (e) Name of the SPO that authorized placement on/removal from mail review status.

970.8 WITHHOLDING MAIL

Mail which has any of the characteristics cited in section 970.7 of this policy, shall be withheld. Withheld incoming mail shall be returned to the sender. Withheld outgoing mail shall be returned to the youth.

Whenever mail is withheld, both the sender and the youth shall be promptly notified via the Notice of Correspondence Rejection form (attachment). This form shall include an explanation of the basis for the decision and a notification of the appeal process. The names of the youth and sender shall appear on the forms. The youth shall sign this form acknowledging his/her mail is being withheld. All correspondence rejections sent shall be documented in the Juvenile and Adult Management System (JAMS) under the youth's detention contacts.

The author of withheld correspondence shall be notified of the right to appeal the decision to the facility manager(s). The decision to withhold mail may be grieved by the youth pursuant to Juvenile Facility Services Policy: Grievance Procedure.

970.8.1 FORWARDING MAIL

Mail received after a youth has been released shall be forwarded to the youth's last known address. If this is not possible, it shall be returned to the sender or to the Post Office.

970.9 COPIES OF YOUTH'S MAIL

No original, copy, excerpt, or summary of personal correspondence to or from a youth shall be made or placed in a youth's file unless such correspondence is, or has been, the subject of:

- (a) Legal determinations and actions affecting the youth;
- (b) Disciplinary determinations and actions affecting the youth; or
- (c) Criminal investigation and actions affecting the youth.

Date(s) revised:

03/07/2019

03/07/2016

12/07/2010

08/19/2010

05/15/2009

Created: 03/01/2000

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Attachments:

1. [Notice of Mail Review Status](#)
2. [Notice of Correspondence Rejection \(Sending Party\)](#)
3. [Notice of Correspondence Rejection \(Youth\)](#)
4. [Incoming/Outgoing Mail Log](#)



RIVERSIDE COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

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NOTICE OF MAIL REVIEW STATUS

- Indio Juvenile Hall
- Riverside Juvenile Hall
- Southwest Juvenile Hall
- Alan M. Crogan - Youth Treatment and Education Center

YOUTH NAME/CID:		DATE:	
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REASON FOR REVIEW OF MAIL:

I understand all my mail, other than privileged mail, will be read by staff. However, I may choose to have any incoming mail, other than privileged mail, returned to sender unopened, rather than have it opened and read by staff. I have a right to appeal this decision to the Facility Manager, if I believe this review is improper, by filing a Grievance form per Juvenile Facility Services Policy: Grievance Procedure.

I understand 30 days from this date this notice will be reviewed by the Facility Manager or Supervising Probation Officer (SPO).

I HAVE RECEIVED THIS NOTICE: _____
Signature of Youth Date

I HAVE NOTIFIED THE YOUTH: _____
SPO Signature Date

Youth refused to sign but was notified on this date: _____
SPO Signature Date



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NOTICE OF CORRESPONDENCE REJECTION
(Youth)

- Indio Juvenile Hall
Riverside Juvenile Hall
Southwest Juvenile Hall
Alan M. Crogan - Youth Treatment and Education Center

TO:

Your correspondence from _____ dated _____
was found to be unacceptable because _____

If you believe that this rejection was improper, you have the right to appeal this decision to the Facility Manager by filing a Grievance form per Juvenile Facility Services Policy: Grievance Procedure.

I HAVE RECEIVED THIS NOTICE:
Signature of Youth Date

I HAVE NOTIFIED THE YOUTH:
SPO Signature Date

Youth refused to sign but was notified on this date:
SPO Signature Date

