RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

	POLICY NUMBER: 1.11-4 DOC	EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/13/10	PAGE 1 OF 7
	SUPERCEDES: 1.11-3 DOC	DIRECTOR:	
SECTION: GENERAL ADMINISTRATION		SUBJECT: INMATE COMMUNICATIONS	
AUTHORITY: Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) § 42-56-10(22), Powers of the director			
REFERENCES: ACA Standard # 4-4016, (Staff/Inmate Communication); RIDOC Policy 13.10-1 DOC, Inmate Grievance Procedure; 14.01-1 DOC, Intake Committing Process; 42 U.S.C. § 15601 et seq. Prison Rape Elimination Act (P.L. 109-180)			
INMATE/PUBLIC ACCESS?	X YES		
AVAILABLE IN SPANISH?	X NO		

I. **PURPOSE:**

To establish communication that promotes interaction between Rhode Island Department of Corrections (RIDOC) personnel and the inmate population.

II. **POLICY:**

RIDOC maintains systems of communication that maximize the ability of the administration to communicate with the inmate population, ensure that all inmates understand Department rules, regulations and procedures, and allow inmates to express to the administration their individual concerns.

III. **PROCEDURES:**

A. Staff Availability

1. All staff in each facility maintains high visibility and is accessible to inmates.

2. The Director and Assistant Directors regularly tour facilities in order to maintain familiarity with daily operations and conditions of confinement.

3. All Wardens and Deputy Warden(s), conduct formal facility tours on a weekly basis. Shift Commanders tour the entire facility at least once each shift.

   All facility Administrators and Superior Officers sign logbooks in red ink in each mod on every visit.

B. Conference Hour

1. "Conference Hour" occurs at each facility at least twice a week, at a time and location designated by the facility Warden.

2. "Conference Hour" allows for inmates to communicate with facility administrators.

   a. The Warden, Deputy Warden, or facility counseling staff is available to the inmate population during designated "Conference Hours" on a regular basis whenever possible.

   b. Inmates are able to approach all staff to have questions answered and to present individual needs and concerns. Due to time constraints, more extensive issues are handled through follow-up meetings.

C. Orientation Program (Upon Admission to New Facility)

1. Each facility conducts an orientation program for or provides inmate orientation materials to newly transferred and committed inmates. This program/these materials is/are the first formal communication between staff and inmates, and gives inmates information that will familiarize them with the new facility, staff and programs.

2. The Warden designates staff from appropriate divisions, units, and/or programs to conduct portions of the orientation program related to their respective areas of responsibility. Presenters at the orientation will ordinarily include a counselor, lieutenant and/or captain and the facility manager. Other staff may be designated to attend.

3. Orientation sessions occur every two weeks, or less frequently, depending on the number of commitments to that facility.

4. Each facility develops a curriculum for an orientation program which includes, at a minimum, the following:

   a. Explanation of institutional rules and regulations (listed in the Inmate Handbook);

   b. Description of programs available, institutional activities and goals (listed in the Inmate Handbook);

   c. Review of emergency procedures;

   d. Overview of Prison Rape Elimination Act;

   e. Question and answer period.

5. Each facility shall develop a visual (video, Power Point, etc.) orientation program to be used in conjunction with staff presentations.

6. The needs of non-English speaking inmates are addressed by providing bilingual staff members and printed material, where possible, to explain the orientation program.

7. Each facility develops a form which states that each inmate has participated in the orientation program (see sample at Attachment 1).

   a. At the completion of the program, staff conducting the program instructs the inmate to sign the form, acknowledging that the inmate understood the orientation program and that the inmate will abide by the written rules and regulations of that facility.

   b. If the inmate refuses to sign the form, staff notes such on the form and then signs and dates it.

c. A copy of this form is kept in the facility inmate file.

8. This orientation program (upon admission/commitment to a new facility) is separate and distinct from the Admissions and Orientation program that is conducted at the Intake Service Center (male inmates) and the Gloria DiSandro McDonald Building (female inmates) after the inmate has been sentenced. (For more information regarding the Admissions and Orientation program, please see policy 14.01 DOC, or a successive policy.)

D. Monthly Master Schedule

1. In order to keep inmates, staff, and Department Administrators aware of programs and events within each facility, the Warden, or designee, posts a facility-specific Monthly Master Schedule of programs and events within all housing units and staff lounges.

   a. The Monthly Master Schedule is updated, as needed, by the Warden or designee, and reviewed a minimum of twice per year.

   b. The Warden, or designee, of each facility forwards a copy of the Monthly Master Schedule, including updates, to the Director, Assistant Directors, and the Chief of Information and Public Relations.

2. Examples of programs or events are:

   a. Educational programs;

   b. Substance abuse programs;

   c. Sex offender programs;

   d. Treatment programs;

   e. Counseling programs;

   f. Special interest programs;

   g. Recreational programs including organized leagues with schedule of play;

h. Single events such as special concerts and lectures;

i. Visiting times;

j. Meal times;

k. Recreation times;

l. Count times.

E. Information Update (Newsletter)

1. The Warden's designee in each facility develops and distributes timely facility information updates to the inmate population on a bi-monthly basis.

2. Articles, which are written at an easily readable level (e.g., at a 5th grade level or lower), are formulated by staff members under the direction of the Warden or designee.

3. The information update includes items of timely and immediate concern to the administration and inmate population, such as:

   a. Changes to Departmental policies and/or facility procedures;

   b. Changes in staff;

   c. Changes in Monthly Master Schedule;

   d. Changes in scheduling that may affect inmate life;

   e. Highlights of special events;

   f. Standings of on-going recreational programs;

   g. Items of interest which may impact inmate life;

   h. Suggestion box items;

   i. Message from the Warden/Deputy Warden.

4. The Administrators of Classification, Industries, Chaplaincy, Education, Food Services, the Professional Services Coordinators, the Medical Program Director, and the Clinical Director Psychologist are encouraged to submit articles for each facility's inmate newsletter.

   Articles should describe the respective Administrators' programs/services or the articles could follow an "answers to the most frequently asked questions" format.

5. The Warden's designee forwards copies to the offices of the Director, the Assistant Directors, and the Chief of Information and Public Relations.

F. Requests

Inmates communicate special requests to staff through the Departmental request slips (pink slips) or request forms (see sample at Attachment 2) developed by individual facilities.

1. Inmates submit request slips (to talk to specific staff) to the area officer.

2. The area officer forwards said slips to appropriate personnel before the end of said officer's shift.

For more information regarding inmate communications with various RIDOC staff, please see the current memorandum from the Assistant Director of Institutions & Operations at Attachment 3.

G. Inmate Grievance Procedures

Inmates may also communicate legitimate complaints and problems through the inmate grievance process as outlined in Departmental policy 13.10 DOC, or a successive policy.

H. Bulletin Boards

1. To further ensure communication between staff and inmates, each living area is provided with an informational bulletin board.

2. Standard postings on each board include the following:

   a. Name of Area Lieutenant and assigned Counselor;

b. Facility Master Schedule;

c. Living area cleaning schedule (if applicable);

d. Living area visiting schedule.

I. Other Communication Methods

All facilities may devise additional methods of communication consistent with their needs.

INMATE ORIENTATION

I have attended the _____ Security Orientation
(Print Facility Name)
Program. I acknowledge that I have received the current rules and regulations of the facility and a description of programs and services available to me.

Inmate Name: _____
(Please Print)

ID#: _____ Date: _____

Instructor Signature: _____

Title: _____ Date: _____

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
REQUEST FORM

Date:_____ To:_____

I respectfully request (state problem – be specific):_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Inmate Name:_____ ID #:_____

Work Assignment:_____ Cell #:_____

☐ ISC ☐ HSC ☐ MAX ☐ Moran MED ☐ Price MED
☐ MIN ☐ WR ☐ WOM/GM ☐ WOM/DIX ☐ COM. CONF.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Wing or Detail Officer's Comments:_____

Officer's Signature:_____

DISPOSITION OF CASE

Response:_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature:_____ Title:_____ Date:_____

***NOTE:* YOU WILL NOT BE CALLED IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO DISPOSE OF YOUR REQUEST PROPERLY WITHOUT AN INTERVIEW.**

Distribution:	Request	Response
	White – Designee	White – Inmate
	Yellow – Designee	Yellow – Associate Director
	Pink – Designee	Pink – Designee
	Salmon – Inmate	

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
INSTITUTIONS AND OPERATIONS
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: All Inmates

FROM: Nancy Bailey, Assistant Director
Institutions and Operations

DATE: November 13, 2008

SUBJECT: INMATE CORRESPONDENCE

Effective immediately, prior to writing to the Director, Assistant Directors, and the Grievance Coordinator regarding any issue you may have, you must first address your issue through the established chain of command in your facility. The chain of command for operational or inmate life issues is as follows:

1. Mod/Block Officer
2. Area Lieutenant
3. Shift Commander
4. Deputy Warden
5. Warden

The warden or designee is the final authority with respect to inmate discipline when a single infraction results in less than 3 months and 1 day of disciplinary confinement. If you request the warden's review of the hearing officer's decision, your letter should be addressed to him/her, not to the Director or me. The time required to re-direct letters you write to the Director or me may result in your letter being "out of time"; meaning—the warden may act upon your discipline without the benefit of reading your letter.

In order for your issues to be addressed by me, you must send documentation that you have utilized the chain of command in your assigned facility. **Any correspondence received without the required documentation will be returned to sender with no action taken.**

By following these guidelines your concerns/issues will be addressed by the appropriate personnel and eliminate delays in getting your concerns rectified.

NB:crc

C: File (Assistant Director Bailey/Memo/Inmate Correspondence)