

WAC 137-48-040 Restriction of incoming and/or outgoing mail.

(1) Incoming mail to inmates may be disapproved for receipt for any one of the following reasons:

(a) The mail threatens illegal activity, including but not limited to, threats of physical harm, blackmail or extortion.

(b) The mail threatens the safety and security of the institution, including but not limited to, mail concerning sending contraband escape plans, security devices, or mail that is in a code, a foreign language that cannot be interpreted, does not contain a return address, contains gang symbols, plans for activities in violation of institutional rules or contains information which, if communicated, would create a risk of violence and/or physical harm.

(c) The mail is susceptible to the introduction of contraband, including but not limited to, altered publications, mail with unknown substances on or in it, mail purported to be legal mail that is general correspondence, cash or checks, postage stamps, stickers, photos wherein the nonphoto side is or can be separated, publications not mailed directly from vendor, items not ordered and approved through institution channels, greeting cards that are padded, laminated/layered or musical.

(d) Any mail or publication that is deemed to be a threat to legitimate penological objectives, including but not limited to, sexually explicit materials.

(e) The mail contains inmate to inmate correspondence that has not been approved by the superintendent in compliance with department policy.

(f) The mail contains items identified by the department secretary or designee as not authorized, including but not limited to, multiple copies of documents, mailings soliciting or offering games of chance, clippings from books or magazines.

(g) The mail is from an individual with whom contact is restricted in compliance with the judgment and sentence, a no contact order, department policy.

(2) Outgoing mail from inmates of institutions may be disapproved for mailing for any one of the following reasons:

(a) For any one of the reasons set forth in WAC 137-48-040(1).

(b) The mail is addressed to a minor whose parents or guardian have objected in writing to such correspondence.

(c) An individual or their guardian who previously has been sent obscene or threatening mail by the inmate has complained or has asked that such mail not be received.

(d) The mail solicits money or goods from a person or organization other than the immediate family of the inmate without the permission of the superintendent. The above provisions may not be construed to preclude the purchase of noncontraband goods or payment for such goods which have been approved by the superintendent or his/her designee.

(e) The outside of the mail (envelope or package) does not contain a return address as defined in WAC 137-48-020.

(3) No mail is to be restricted for the reason that it appeals to a particular ethnic, racial, or religious group, or that it contains critical opinions of departmental policy or departmental employees, unless the mail is also judged to be a threat to legitimate penological objectives.

(4) In addition to those reasons cited in this section, packages sent either to or from an inmate are subject to the following restrictions:

(a) An inmate may receive one gift package not to exceed fifteen pounds in weight on a quarterly basis. Quarterly periods shall consist of December through February, March through May, June through August, and September through November. Rules governing the contents of quarterly packages shall be developed specifically by each institutional superintendent and approved by staff designated by the secretary. The superintendent may allow exceptions from the one gift package limitation and weight limitation provided that appropriate contraband controls are maintained.

(b) The contents of the quarterly package shall be restricted to those items that are otherwise not available to the inmate through the institutional store or other purchasing outlet provided by the institution. A replacement package may be sent during the same quarter for damaged packages that are returned to the sender by the inmate.

(c) Prepaid merchandise approved by the superintendent or designee and ordered by the inmate from any wholesaler or retailer shall not be considered one of the quarterly packages.

(d) Inmates may mail packages containing materials which have been sent to him or her in the institution or gifts consisting of his or her own hobby craft or curio work. Packages must be made and mailed at the inmate's expense.

(e) Newly admitted inmates at any department of corrections operated reception center will not receive packages while assigned to the reception center.

[WSR 05-13-004, § 137-48-040, filed 6/2/05, effective 7/2/05. WSR 91-23-103, § 137-48-040, filed 11/20/91, effective 1/1/92. Statutory Authority: RCW 72.01.090. WSR 86-21-058 (Order 86-06), § 137-48-040, filed 10/14/86. Statutory Authority: RCW 72.08.380, 72.09.050 and 72.12.140. WSR 83-20-036 (Order 83-09), § 137-48-040, filed 9/27/83. Formerly WAC 275-96-021 and 275-96-022.]

Reviser's note: Under RCW 34.05.030 (1)(c), as amended by section 103, chapter 288, Laws of 1988, the above section was not adopted under the Administrative Procedure Act, chapter 34.05 RCW, but was published in the Washington State Register and codified into the Washington Administrative Code exactly as shown by the agency filing with history notes added by the code reviser's office.