



*State of North Carolina  
Department of Correction  
Division of Prisons*

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***POLICY & PROCEDURES***

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Chapter: D  
Section: .0800  
Title: **Inmate Access to Telephone**  
Issue Date: 10/12/07  
Supersedes: 07/25/05

**.0801 GENERAL**

The maintenance of family and social relationships as well as pre-release planning activities are integral parts of the overall rehabilitation process that can be strengthened through communication by telephone. In consideration of this, the Division of Prisons will establish inmate access to telephone privileges within all correctional facilities. Inmate access to telephones will vary by facility security level and inmate custody classification. In order to maintain security and ensure the safety of the institution staff and inmate population, inmate access to telephones shall be managed carefully and may be suspended if necessary.

Inmates will be notified by telephone placard and computer generated voice that all calls are subject to monitoring and/or recording. The called party will be notified by computer generated voice that all calls are subject to monitoring and/or recording and that the telephone call is being made from a prison facility.

**.0802 RESPONSIBILITY**

- (a) The Director of the Division of Prisons shall designate a staff coordinator to assist in telephone program management requirements. Coordination of telephone requirements with Department of Correction Purchasing, Division of Prisons Budget and Legal Sections, and Division operations are essential requirements.
- (b) The facility superintendent is responsible for developing specific telephone procedures that comply with the minimum standards established by this policy and procedures. The Superintendent shall designate a telephone program coordinator who is responsible for the management of the facility inmate telephone program.
- (c) Program/Case Management staff will provide assistance in the management of inmate access to telephones.

**.0803 PROCEDURES**

- (a) Availability of Telephones
  - (1) Each correctional facility should establish telephones or telephone banks in sufficient numbers so as to provide appropriate access to telephones by inmates for outgoing calls.
  - (2) Telephones are to be wall-mounted and collect only.

- (3) Inmate telephones have a master switch that enables either facility staff or the Division's Telecommunication section to render the telephones inoperable during periods of emergency or other appropriate times.
  - (4) The establishment of an appropriate number of telephones or telephone banks is authorized as a legitimate inmate welfare expenditure subject to the Division approval process.
- (b) Inmate Access
- (1) Minimum Security Facilities
    - (A) Regular population minimum custody inmates at minimum security facilities should have open access to telephones as operational considerations permit. Insofar as possible, correctional staff should routinely supervise inmate use of these telephones.
    - (B) Inmate use of telephones will be by collect call only and will be limited to ten (10) minutes. Telephones should automatically terminate the call after the time limit has expired.
    - (C) Minimum custody inmates may utilize the telephones for maintaining family ties, contacting prospective employers or, communicating with friends or relatives as a part of pre-release planning activities or other legitimate purposes that serve to better prepare the inmate for transition to the community.
  - (2) Medium/Close Security Facilities
    - (A) Regular population inmates assigned to a medium or close security facility will be provided scheduled access to telephones if requested by the inmate.
    - (B) Inmate use of telephones will be by collect call only and will be limited to ten (10) minutes. Telephones should automatically terminate the call after the time limit has expired.
    - (C) Medium and close custody inmates will be permitted a minimum of two (2) telephone calls per calendar month. Superintendents are authorized to allow more than two (2) calls per month based on facility operations and capabilities.
  - (3) Special Populations
    - (A) Protective Custody

As long as security and safety considerations permit, eligible inmates in protective custody may be permitted telephone privileges consistent with regular population medium and close custody inmates.

- (B) Death Row. Maximum Custody, Administrative Segregation. Disciplinary Segregation, Safekeepers

Inmates in these classification categories are not eligible for participation in the telephone program. Emergency telephone calls or the returning of attorney calls may be permitted at the discretion of the facility superintendent.

- (C) Mental Health In-Patient

Mental Health In-patient inmates generally should be provided telephone access consistent with facility security classification and inmate custody level. The inmate Mental Health Treatment Team generally will manage inmate telephone access.

- (D) Security Threat Group Members

Guidelines to govern the use of telephone by STG members are detailed in the Division's Security Threat Group policy in the DOP Security Manual .1700.

- (E) Other Special Populations

At the discretion of the facility superintendent, other special populations may be involved in planned telephone privileges or access may exceed the minimum standards established by this policy, as a program incentive or treatment strategy.

#### **.0804 OTHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

- (a) Inmate participation in the telephone program may be suspended through the disciplinary process as a form of punishment. In addition, the facility superintendent is authorized to terminate telephone privileges for specific abuse of telephone regulations or to maintain security of the facility and ensure the safety of staff and other inmates. The facility superintendent must document circumstances and rationale for the termination of inmate telephone privileges.
- (b) Emergency calls may be approved by the Superintendent or designee. There also may be occasions when inmates need to be allowed to make local non-collect calls for unusual circumstances such as work release, death in family and emergency situations, etc. Facilities should develop guidelines for allowing inmates to place these calls utilizing facility telephones.

- (c) Calls to attorneys may be approved by the Superintendent or designee. Calls to an attorney require documentation that identifies the person being called as an attorney. Calls to attorneys will not be monitored or recorded and will be made utilizing facility telephones.

Calls to inmates by attorneys require prior approval by the Department of Correction's Legal Section.

- (d) Inmates are not authorized to receive incoming calls on division established collect call only telephones.
- (e) Inmates shall not use the telephone for the purpose of harassing or threatening any employee of any section of the Department of Correction or Parole Commission or the public.
- (f) During emergency or unique circumstances, the facility superintendent or his designee is authorized to allow inmates to use the facility telephones. When this discretion is exercised, the use of a Division of Prisons business telephone by the inmate must be documented for auditing purposes.

*Boyd Bennett 10-12-07*

Director of Prisons

Date

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