



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY
DEPARTMENT WIDE
OFFENDER MANUAL

REVISION DATE
1/14/14

PAGE NUMBER
1 of 5

NUMBER
DOC 850.030

POLICY

TITLE
RELATIONSHIPS/CONTACTS WITH OFFENDERS

REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:

Effective: 3/1/98 DOC 801.005
 Revised: 1/12/04 DOC 850.030
 Revised: 8/21/06
 Revised: 8/21/07
 Reviewed: 8/25/08
 Revised: 6/27/11
 Revised: 1/14/14

SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:

Policy title change
 Removed IV.B.2. allowing purchases of offender hobby craft items
 VI.A. - Added clarifying language
 Added VIII.A.1. outlining the exception process

APPROVED:

Signature on file

BERNARD WARNER, Secretary
 Department of Corrections

11/25/13

 Date Signed

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REFERENCES:

DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; [DOC 800.010 Ethics](#)

POLICY:

- I. Interactions with offenders and their immediate family or known associates by employees, contract staff, and volunteers will be conducted in a professional manner consistent with state law, prudent correctional practice, and Department policies and procedures.
- II. For the purposes of this policy, an offender is an individual who is under Department jurisdiction or has been discharged from Department jurisdiction within the last 6 months.

DIRECTIVE:

- I. Favoritism/Professionalism
 - A. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will maintain the highest standards of professionalism when dealing with offenders and their immediate family or associates and will be very aware of the appearance of improper association.
 - B. Offenders and their immediate family or associates will be treated with dignity and respect.
 - C. Reactions to offenders' needs and behaviors must be professional and not based on favoritism, biases, stereotypes, or personal judgments. Bias or harassment toward or regarding offenders or their family or associates is prohibited.
- II. Employee, Contract Staff, and Volunteer Association with Offenders
 - A. Association with offenders under Department jurisdiction, beyond that which is required in the performance of official Department duties, is prohibited in the interest of professional, unbiased service.
 - B. Personal or business communications and relationships with offenders or their known immediate family or associates are inappropriate and prohibited, except as defined in DOC 530.100 Volunteer Program or the employee/contract staff/volunteer's Position Description.
 - C. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers are cautioned that personal relationships between their immediate family and offenders or offenders' known immediate family or associates have the potential to pose conflicts and security risks at work and will be avoided when known.

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III. Reporting Requirements

- A. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will report contact with offenders or their known immediate family or associates, not authorized within official duties, to their Appointing Authority on DOC 03-039 Report of Contact/Relationship with an Offender no later than the next working day.
 1. This reporting requirement does not include casual or unintentional contacts, such as greeting an offender when passing on the street, but does apply to significant or ongoing contact.
- B. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will report to their Appointing Authority any changes to significant or ongoing contact with offenders or their known immediate family or associates on DOC 03-039 Report of Contact/Relationship with an Offender no later than the next working day.
- C. Pre-existing family or personal relationships with an offender under Department jurisdiction must be reported on DOC 03-039 Report of Contact/Relationship with an Offender as soon as the individual's status as an offender is known.
 1. The Appointing Authority has the discretion to reassign an employee or offender on a case-by-case basis to avoid potential conflicts.
 - a. Requests by the employee to voluntarily be reassigned may be considered.
 - b. Efforts to reassign the offender may be made before reassigning the employee.
 - c. Employees may be reassigned to another position, workstation, or alternate job responsibilities if their professional responsibilities would unavoidably require direct contact with the offender.
- D. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will report to their supervisor when they or their immediate family have been the victim of an offender who is under Department supervision.

IV. Messages and Articles of Property

- A. Employees, contract staff, or volunteers will not transmit messages, mail, or property for or to offenders or their known immediate family or associates, except when authorized as part of their official duties.

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B. No employees, contract staff, or volunteer will give or accept gifts/gratuities/favors, barter, or have any financial dealings with or for offenders or their known immediate family or associates.

1. Gratuities include any form of property or service, regardless of financial value.

V. Writs, Petitions, and Legal Concerns

A. Employees or contract staff will not assist, advise, or counsel offenders in their preparation of writs, appeals, or petitions for executive clemency or other legal concerns, nor should they advocate such actions in any way. They may refer offenders to the appropriate legal service agency or person for assistance in these matters.

VI. Offender Sponsorship, Verification, and References

A. Employees, contract staff, or volunteers will not provide a residence or serve as release, furlough, or personal outing sponsors for an offender, except as defined in the Offender Release Plan and with written approval from the Appointing Authority.

B. Employees, contract staff, or volunteers may verify the following offender information with prior written approval from the Appointing Authority. No other form of written or verbal reference will be provided for offenders:

1. Completed certification(s),
2. Training or program participation within the facility, and/or
3. Experience gained during incarceration, when direct observation and involvement is part of the employee/contract staff/volunteer's official duties.

VII. Expectations

A. Violation of the provisions of this policy may result in corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

VIII. Exceptions

A. Exceptions to this policy require the written approval of the Secretary/designee and must be requested by employees, contract staff, or volunteers immediately once status as an offender becomes known.

1. Exception requests will be routed to the Secretary/designee through the chain of command.

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DEFINITIONS:

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

ATTACHMENTS:

None

DOC FORMS:

[DOC 03-039 Report of Contact/Relationship with an Offender](#)