



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY  
**PRISONS**

REVISION DATE  
12/20/21

PAGE NUMBER  
1 of 9

NUMBER  
**DOC 420.120**

# POLICY

TITLE

**FACILITY ACCESS SEARCHES  
AND ALLOWABLE ITEMS**

## REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:

Effective: 3/4/19  
Revised: 12/20/21

## SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:

Updated terminology throughout  
I.C.1. - Adjusted as person-centered language

## APPROVED:

Signature on file

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CHERYL STRANGE**, Secretary  
Department of Corrections

12/6/21  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

 <p>STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p> <p><b>POLICY</b></p>	<b>APPLICABILITY</b> <b>PRISONS</b>		
	<b>REVISION DATE</b> 12/20/21	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b> 2 of 9	<b>NUMBER</b> <b>DOC 420.120</b>
	<b>TITLE</b> <b>FACILITY ACCESS SEARCHES AND ALLOWABLE ITEMS</b>		

## REFERENCES:

DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; [RCW 9.94](#); [RCW 9A.04.110](#); DOC 190.500 Nicotine, Tobacco, and Vapor Products; DOC 280.100 Acceptable Use of Technology; DOC 400.100 Incident and Significant Event Reporting (RESTRICTED); DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors; DOC 420.375 Contraband and Evidence Handling (RESTRICTED); DOC 420.500 Tool Control (RESTRICTED); DOC 530.100 Volunteer Program; DOC 540.200 Movie/Video Selection; DOC 840.100 Disability Accommodation and Separation; DOC 850.010 Administrative Investigations; DOC 880.100 Corrections Training and Development

## POLICY:

- I. The Department has identified items allowed inside the secure perimeter of a Prison and has established procedures to search employees, contract staff, volunteers, and facility guests when entering a Prison to minimize the introduction of contraband and enhance safety and security.
- II. Visitors for incarcerated individuals will be searched per DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors.

## DIRECTIVE:

- I. General Requirements
  - A. Anyone entering the facility grounds of a Prison is subject to search at any time.
  - B. Information on searches and allowable items will be provided in training per DOC 880.100 Corrections Training and Development, during orientation per DOC 530.100 Volunteer Program, or during facility safety orientation.
  - C. Items that may be brought into the secure perimeter of a facility and items that are not allowed are identified in Attachment 1.
    1. Items that are considered contraband in a Prison or represent a safety issue will only be allowed past the secure perimeter when DOC 03-524 Allowable Items Exception Request has been approved and is maintained with the item.
    2. If a questionable item is found, the Shift Commander or Superintendent will be contacted to determine if the item may be brought in until a DOC 03-524 Allowable Items Exception Request can be completed and approved.

 <p>STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p> <p><b>POLICY</b></p>	<b>APPLICABILITY</b> <b>PRISONS</b>		
	<b>REVISION DATE</b> 12/20/21	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b> 3 of 9	<b>NUMBER</b> <b>DOC 420.120</b>
	<b>TITLE</b> <b>FACILITY ACCESS SEARCHES AND ALLOWABLE ITEMS</b>		

- D. Facilities will post a notice of search procedures and allowable items at all entry locations (e.g., public access, gates).
- E. At the start of a shift change, processing incoming employees/contract staff starting their shift will be a priority for Public Access employees.

## II. Routine Searches

- A. A routine search may include a metal detector, scanner (e.g., x-ray, hand-held), canine, or pat search.
- B. All hand-carried items and personal belongings will be searched for contraband prior to the entry of a Level 3 or higher facility.
  - 1. Searches may include opening containers and verifying medications are in the appropriate container. Employees will use their judgement to determine if they will open containers themselves or direct the owner to open them.
- C. First responders (e.g., Quick Response Strike Team, law enforcement, firefighters, paramedics) addressing an emergency and employees transporting restrained individuals into the facility are not subject to search when responding to an emergency.

## III. Random Searches

- A. Each Level 3 or higher facility will maintain a randomizer button near each access point to randomly assign a more thorough search of the person seeking access. Anyone entering an access point will press the button before being granted access into the facility.
  - 1. If the randomizer turns red, the person who pushed the button will:
    - a. Remove any outerwear (e.g., coat),
    - b. Empty any pockets of contents and present all personal belongings for search,
    - c. Clear the metal detector, and
    - d. Be pat searched.
  - 2. Attempts to avoid or refusal to activate the randomizer will be considered refusal to follow search processes.

## IV. Mandatory Searches



# POLICY

TITLE

## FACILITY ACCESS SEARCHES AND ALLOWABLE ITEMS

A. The Captain/Lieutenant at a Level 2 stand-alone facility will schedule a random, mandatory search be conducted each month on everyone accessing the secure perimeter of the facility.

1. Searches will be conducted at varying, high-traffic times (e.g., start/end of shift) with sufficient, qualified employees of both genders.

### V. Metal Detector

A. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will remove metal items prior to being scanned by a metal detector.

1. Items that cannot be removed (e.g., metal implants, medical devices) will be identified by the person being searched and verified through means of visual confirmation, hand-held scanner, and/or a pat search.

### VI. Pat Searches

A. When possible, pat searches will be conducted by an employee of the same gender as the person being searched.

1. If both parties consent, a cross-gender pat search may be conducted.

B. Appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) will be used during pat searches, which will include:

1. Emptying of pockets,
2. Removal of shoes and other personal items if unable to clear the metal detector,
3. A visual inspection, and
4. A physical pat/slide of hands along the clothed body.

C. If requested, a supervisor will be called to assist with the search process.

### VII. Reasonable Suspicion Searches

A. When authorized by the Shift Commander or higher authority, a search may be conducted at any time based on reasonable suspicion that result from:

1. Observations,
2. Reliable information, even when confidential,
3. Alert by a metal detector, scanning device, or canine, and/or
4. Finding contraband or indication that it may be present during the search of personal belongings.

 <p>STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p> <p><b>POLICY</b></p>	<b>APPLICABILITY</b> <b>PRISONS</b>		
	<b>REVISION DATE</b> 12/20/21	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b> 5 of 9	<b>NUMBER</b> <b>DOC 420.120</b>
	<b>TITLE</b> <b>FACILITY ACCESS SEARCHES AND ALLOWABLE ITEMS</b>		

## VIII. Office Searches

- A. Searches of employee, contract staff, or volunteer offices/work areas will be performed in the presence of at least one of the following:
1. Person assigned to the office/work area,
  2. Supervisor of the person assigned to the office/work area, and/or
  3. Second level supervisor or higher rank of the employee conducting the search.
- B. Searches of sensitive areas (e.g., Intelligence and Investigations, Records, Human Resources) will only be conducted with the assigned program area supervisor present.

## IX. Locker Searches

- A. Lockers used by employees, contract staff, and volunteers are owned by the facility and subject to search at any time when authorized by the Shift Commander or higher authority.
1. The person using the locker does not have to be present for the locker to be searched.
- B. Locker searches will be completed by at least 2 custody employees.
- C. A canine may be used to conduct or supplement a locker search.

## X. Search Processes

- A. Employees will conduct searches in a professional manner, handle personal belongings in a respectful way, and maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive and/or medical issues.
- B. Searches will not be conducted for punitive, harassment, discriminatory, or retaliatory purposes.
- C. Requests to be searched in an area and/or manner that provides privacy will be accommodated.
- D. When an employee, contract staff, volunteer, or facility guest is selected for search, all items must be presented for search and the search must be completed/items cleared before the person is allowed to leave the search area (e.g., use of restroom, return to vehicle, access locker).

 <p>STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p> <p><b>POLICY</b></p>	<b>APPLICABILITY</b> <b>PRISONS</b>		
	<b>REVISION DATE</b> 12/20/21	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b> 6 of 9	<b>NUMBER</b> <b>DOC 420.120</b>
	<b>TITLE</b> <b>FACILITY ACCESS SEARCHES AND ALLOWABLE ITEMS</b>		

- E. If an item that is legal, but considered contraband in Prisons is found, the employee will request that the person secure the item(s) in a locker or in the person's secured vehicle. The searching employee will complete DOC 21-917 Incident Report.
1. An investigation may be initiated if a person continues to be found with contraband items.
- F. If dangerous contraband is found:
1. The person will be instructed to remain in the search area.
    - a. If the person does not comply, the person will not be granted access into the secure perimeter and disciplinary action may be taken.
  2. The Shift Commander will be immediately notified and will report to the search area to review the overall search process and make a determination if:
    - a. Access will be granted, or
    - b. Law enforcement needs to be notified.
  3. Visual observation of the person will be maintained until the Shift Commander arrives.
    - a. The person will not be allowed to retain/take possession of the suspected contraband until the Shift Commander or higher authority provides authorization.
    - b. In all cases where a firearm, explosive, illegal drug, or other dangerous contraband that presents a significant risk to safety or security is discovered, law enforcement will be notified.
      - 1) The person will not be granted access to the facility and will not be able to return to facility grounds unless notified that the Superintendent has approved access.
      - 2) An investigation will be initiated.
  4. An investigation may be initiated per DOC 850.010 Administrative Investigations.

 <p>STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p> <p><b>POLICY</b></p>	<b>APPLICABILITY</b> <b>PRISONS</b>		
	<b>REVISION DATE</b> 12/20/21	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b> 7 of 9	<b>NUMBER</b> <b>DOC 420.120</b>
	<b>TITLE</b> <b>FACILITY ACCESS SEARCHES AND ALLOWABLE ITEMS</b>		

- a. An employee, contract staff, or volunteer will be placed on administrative leave or given an alternative assignment pending investigation.
- G. A refusal to participate in any search process may be considered insubordination and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, contract, or services. If a person refuses to participate in any part of the search process, access will be denied and:
1. The person will be instructed to remain in the search area.
  2. The Shift Commander will be immediately notified and will:
    - a. Report to the search area to:
      - 1) Review the steps that were taken to conduct the search.
      - 2) Verify the person is refusing a search process and attempt to clarify the reason the person is refusing.
        - a) If the person is refusing based on a medical condition, the person will be directed to Human Resources to submit an accommodation request per DOC 840.100 Disability Accommodation and Separation.
      - 3) Offer to arrange a search of the person in a private setting.
      - 4) Direct everyone involved and witnesses to complete DOC 21-917 Incident Report regarding the refusal and discuss the importance of confidentiality.
        - a) If applicable, incident reports will be released to local law enforcement.
    - b. Notify the Superintendent/Duty Officer.
      - 1) If the person found with dangerous contraband is not in the reporting structure of the Superintendent, the Superintendent will contact the appropriate Appointing Authority.
      - 2) If the person found with dangerous contraband is a volunteer, the Superintendent will contact the Correctional Program Administrator.

 <p>STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p> <p><b>POLICY</b></p>	<b>APPLICABILITY</b> <b>PRISONS</b>		
	<b>REVISION DATE</b> 12/20/21	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b> 8 of 9	<b>NUMBER</b> <b>DOC 420.120</b>
	<b>TITLE</b> <b>FACILITY ACCESS SEARCHES AND ALLOWABLE ITEMS</b>		

c. Report the incident as a Category 1 per DOC 400.100 Incident and Significant Event Reporting (RESTRICTED).

3. Visual observation of the person refusing a search process will be maintained until the Shift Commander arrives.

4. The Superintendent/Appointing Authority will consult with the Assistant Secretary for Prisons to discuss the person's status and access to Prisons. The Superintendent must authorize access to any part of the facility for persons refusing a search process.

5. An investigation will be initiated per DOC 850.010 Administrative Investigations.

H. Custody supervisors will regularly observe and test search processes to provide feedback and training to correct any deficiencies.

#### XI. Documentation

A. Searches will be documented as follows:

1. When contraband is found, it will be documented in the facility's employee search logbook and on DOC 21-917 Incident Report to include:

- a. Search start and stop time,
- b. Who conducted the searches, and
- c. Contraband found.

2. When dangerous contraband is found, a confidential report will also be submitted in IMRS and contraband will be handled per DOC 420.375 Contraband and Evidence Handling (RESTRICTED).

3. Mandatory monthly searches will be documented in the Automated Time and Labor Scheduling System (ATLAS) to include the search start/stop time and who conducted the search.

#### DEFINITIONS:

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

#### ATTACHMENTS:



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY  
**PRISONS**

REVISION DATE  
12/20/21

PAGE NUMBER  
9 of 9

NUMBER  
**DOC 420.120**

**POLICY**

TITLE

**FACILITY ACCESS SEARCHES  
AND ALLOWABLE ITEMS**

Allowable Items (Attachment 1)

**DOC FORMS:**

DOC 03-524 Allowable Items Exception Request  
DOC 21-917 Incident Report