



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY  
**PRISON**  
OFFENDER/SPANISH MANUALS

REVISION DATE  
6/11/20

PAGE NUMBER  
1 of 12

NUMBER  
**DOC 450.300**

**POLICY**

TITLE  
**VISITS FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:**

- Effective: 1/7/00
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- Revised: 9/1/16
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- Revised: 7/11/18
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- Revised: 6/11/20

**SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:**


Removed reference to "Immediate Family" from Policy Statement III. to the Definitions section.

**APPROVED:**

Signature on file

\_\_\_\_\_  
**STEPHEN SINCLAIR**, Secretary  
Department of Corrections

6/1/20  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

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## REFERENCES:


DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; [RCW 9.94.043](#); [RCW 9.94.045](#); [WAC 137-28](#); [DOC 100.560 Non-Discrimination and Accessibility for Visitors/Guests with Disabilities](#); [DOC 150.150 Visits and Tours of Department Facilities and Offices](#); [DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors](#); [DOC 460.000 Disciplinary Process for Prisons](#); [DOC 460.050 Disciplinary Sanctions](#); [DOC 590.100 Extended Family Visiting](#)

## POLICY:


- I. The Department recognizes the vital role families play in the reentry process and will support incarcerated individuals in maintaining ties with family, friends, and the community by engaging them and setting reasonable criteria for personal visits.
  - A. Visitors are encouraged to provide feedback to enhance the visit experience. Any form of retaliation toward those who provide feedback will not be tolerated.
- II. Visiting privileges will not be denied on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or physical disability.

## DIRECTIVE:

- I. General Guidelines
  - A. The Department will provide visiting opportunities and programs and a secure and welcoming visit space for incarcerated individuals and their families to provide as normal a family experience as possible by:
    1. Providing sufficient and safe space for contact visiting and, if necessary, no contact visiting consistent with custody level. Visit areas will be designed by taking the following into consideration:
      - a. Designated visit areas should include a section that has a child-friendly environment with toys and games suitable for interaction by family members of all ages.
      - b. Reasonable accommodation will be provided for visitors with disabilities per DOC 100.560 Non-Discrimination and Accessibility for Visitors/Guests with Disabilities.
        - 1) Service dogs that meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act will be allowed in visiting areas with their owner per Attachment 2.
      - c. Appropriate seating for all ages should be provided.

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- d. Space is adequately designed to permit screening and searching of both incarcerated individuals and visitors.
  - e. Space may be provided for the proper storage of visitors' coats, handbags, and other personal items not allowed into the visiting area.
2. Informing all visit employees of the importance of visiting to maintain ties with family and friends, and in some cases reunification of individuals with their families and significant others.
  3. Actively encouraging a collaborative working relationship with social service and other private community-based organizations providing transportation, housing, food, clothing, and other assistance to individuals and their families.
- B. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the visiting facility is comfortable, pleasant, and permits informal communication and limited, appropriate physical contact.
- C. The Headquarters Visit Unit will ensure:
1. All visitor information is entered in the statewide visit system, including visit application information and identified areas of concern, and
  2. Application status (i.e., pending, approved, denied, rejected) is updated as soon as possible and emailed to the applicant or sent through the United States Postal Service (USPS) when email is not an option.
- D. Each Superintendent will establish a process to ensure the following information is entered into the statewide visit system:
1. A record of each visit,
  2. A picture of each visitor at the first visit, which will be updated when his/her appearance changes or every 2 years for minors, and
  3. The Statewide Visit Specialist, Communications Director, and DOC Webmaster are notified when visit room closures occur.
- E. Extended family visiting opportunities are available per DOC 590.100 Extended Family Visiting.
- F. Video visiting opportunities are available per Attachment 1.

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## II. Eligible Visitors

- A. Visitors must be approved per the approval process and added to the incarcerated individual's approved visitor list before being allowed to visit unless authorized by the Superintendent.
  1. Professional visitors are identified as individuals working in a professional capacity (e.g., attorney, clergy, social worker not escorting a minor), are not required to be on the approved visitor list, and will request visits per DOC 150.150 Visits and Tours of Department Facilities and Offices.
- B. Approved minors (i.e., under 18 years of age and not legally emancipated) may participate in visiting an incarcerated individual when escorted by someone on that individual's approved visitor list, who is:
  1. A designated adult escort (e.g., an approved non-incarcerated parent/legal guardian, government designated escort,) listed on a notarized DOC 20-441 Parent/Guardian Consent for Minor Visit and/or Escort.
    - a. This form should be submitted before the date of the visit to the [Headquarters Visit Unit](#).
  2. Another approved minor listed on the approved visitor list when s/he is the parent of the minor and the visit is approved by the Superintendent/designee.
    - a. Unless the minor parent is legally emancipated, both the minor parent and minor child(ren) must be escorted by an approved adult on the individual's approved visitor list.
  3. Government designated escorts (e.g., guardian ad litem, court-appointed special advocate, government caseworker/visit supervisor) must submit DOC 20-182 Government Designated Escort Application to escort an approved minor. The Visit Unit will verify the authenticity of the applicant.
- C. Current and former Department employees, contract staff, and volunteers who are immediate family must attach DOC 20-450 Approval for Visits by Current/Former Employee, Contract Staff, or Volunteer to the visit application.
  1. Former Department employees, contract staff, and volunteers who are not immediate family may request visiting privileges after 3 years has elapsed from the last date of employment/work for the Department.

## III. Ineligible visitors

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- A. The following are ineligible to visit incarcerated individuals:
1. A victim of the incarcerated individual's current offense(s) or any previous adjudicated offense.
    - a. Exceptions may be granted for immediate family members by the Assistant Secretary for Prisons.
    - b. A minor may be denied due to the nature of a crime of conviction if s/he is profiled as comparable to that of a victim.
  2. Persons involved with the incarcerated individual in the commission of the offense for which s/he is incarcerated.
    - a. Exceptions may be granted by the Assistant Secretary for Prisons/Headquarters Correctional Program Administrator for immediate family members or if there is a clear demonstration the visits would benefit the incarcerated individual.
  3. Persons restricted per the Judgment and Sentence (J & S), including conditions of community supervision that prohibit contact with an individual or category of individuals.
    - a. Although supervised visits may be allowed per the J & S, supervision by facility visit employees does not constitute supervised visiting as required by court orders.
  4. Persons who have any conviction(s) for introduction of contraband into a jail or prison setting.
  5. Persons with pending charges.
  6. Current Department employees, contract staff, and volunteers who are not immediate family are not eligible for visits.
- B. Persons with felony convictions are not eligible to apply for visiting privileges for 2 years after expiration of the sentence, community supervision, or conditions of a deferred sentence with the following exceptions:
1. Immediate family members with proof of relationship may be considered for visit privileges one year from the date of closure or with permission from his/her Community Corrections Officer (CCO) after successfully completing one year of supervision.

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2. Persons on unsupervised probation/deferrals may be considered for visit privileges 2 years from the date of sentencing with permission from the court.
3. Persons who only owe Legal Financial Obligations are not subject to these requirements.

C. Persons with misdemeanor convictions are not eligible to apply for visiting privileges for 6 months after expiration of sentence.

1. Immediate family members with proof of relationship, may be considered after 3 months from the date of closure or with written permission from his/her CCO, Parole Officer, or the court after successfully completing one year of supervision.
2. Persons who only owe Legal Financial Obligations are not subject to this requirement.

#### IV. Special Visits


A. Special visits may be permitted for:

1. Visitors who travel a long distance (i.e., at least 250 miles one way) or from out of the country.
2. Individuals who use special transportation services facilitated and contracted by the Department.
3. Appointed members of local and/or statewide family councils who have missed visits due to participation in council meetings.
4. Incarcerated individuals who are in restrictive housing or hospitalized.

B. Special visits will only be approved for persons on the incarcerated individual's approved visitor list unless approved by the Superintendent/designee for extraordinary circumstances.

C. Special visits must be requested on DOC 21-787 Special Visit Request and submitted to facility visit employees as soon as possible, but no less than 5 business days before the requested date.

1. All visitors who wish to participate in the special visit must be listed on the form.
2. Visit employees will process requests before the requested visit date.

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D. The Superintendent/designee will coordinate adjustments to established times and days for individuals on the approved visitor list to accommodate special requests.

V. Approval Process

A. Each prospective visitor must apply for visiting privileges.

1. Prospective visitors will complete one of the following applicable electronic applications at [doc.wa.gov](http://doc.wa.gov):

a. DOC 20-060 Visitor Application for adult visitors

b. DOC 20-181 Minor Visitor Application for minor visitors

1) A completed and notarized copy of DOC 20-441 Parent/Guardian Consent for Minor Visit and/or Escort must be attached to the visit application for a minor(s).

2. Providing false/misleading information or failure to list all previous criminal history on the visit application may result in denial of visiting privileges.

B. Applications will be processed within 30 days of receipt.

C. National Crime Information Center (NCIC), Washington State Crime Information Center (WACIC), and District and Municipal Court Information Center (DISCIS) background checks will be conducted, and the incarcerated individual's electronic file will be reviewed to verify the applicant's identity and ensure the accuracy of the visitor's application.

1. Subsequent background checks may be run on a periodic basis.


VI. Approved Visitor List

A. There is no limit to the number of visitors an individual may have on his/her approved visitor list.

B. Visitors may only be on one approved visitor list unless they are immediate family members of more than one incarcerated individual and approved by the Statewide Visit Specialist.

1. A visit application will need to be submitted by the family member and approved for each incarcerated individual.

2. A Headquarters Visit Unit employee will complete DOC 20-438 Approval for Visits with Multiple Incarcerated Individuals and submit it to the

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Statewide Visit Specialist. Visitors will be notified via email regarding status.

3. If a child with incarcerated parents participates in visiting with both parents, an exception may be allowed for the adult accompanying the child as an escort.
- C. When an individual is transferred to another facility, his/her approved visitor list will remain active and be available in the statewide visit system.
1. Incarcerated individuals will be responsible for notifying their visitors of transfers.
  2. The receiving facility may conduct a review of each individual listed for updated law enforcement and intelligence data.
  3. When the receiving Superintendent believes visiting should be denied, the matter will be referred to the appropriate Deputy Director/designee for a final decision.
- D. Individuals will use the kiosk to view their approved visitor list.
1. For facilities without a kiosk, the Superintendent will establish a process to notify individuals regarding their approved visitor list.
- E. Visitor lists will be closed out and no longer valid when an individual is released from confinement, passes away, or is on escape status. If an individual is re-incarcerated, all visitors must go through the approval process to create a new visitor list.
- F. Applicants denied placement on an approved visitor list will be informed, in writing, of the reasons for denial.
1. When all avenues of appeal have been exhausted and the denial is being upheld, the applicant must wait 12 months after the date of the last action before reapplying for visit privileges.

## VII. Removal of Names from the Approved Visitor List

- A. An individual may remove a visitor from his/her approved visitor list by sending a written request to the Headquarters Visit Unit at PO Box 41118, Olympia, WA 98504-1118 or via kiosk.
- B. A visitor who wishes to be removed from a visitor list must send a request via email or by writing to the Headquarters Visit Unit.




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- C. If a visitor is removed from an approved visitor list, s/he must wait 90 days before being added to any visit list.
  - 1. The waiting period may be waived if the visitor has not used his/her visiting privileges within the last 90 days.
- D. Minors may be removed from a visit list if any legal parental authority requests it in writing to the Headquarters Visit Unit and attaches proof of authority (e.g., parenting plan, court documents).

#### VIII. Visit Processes

- A. Visitors and incarcerated individuals will be treated courteously. Rule enforcement will be polite and professional.
- B. Copies of the Visitor Guidelines (Attachment 2) will be available to all incarcerated individuals and visitors at the facility and at [doc.wa.gov](http://doc.wa.gov). Information will also be provided concerning transportation to the facility.
  - 1. Each facility will identify processes specific to their location in Attachment 2 to include:
    - a. Hours and days for personal visits, including appropriate arrival times.
    - b. The maximum number of visitors each individual is allowed during visiting hours and the length of visits, which may be limited only by facility schedule, space, and personnel constraints, or when there are substantial reasons to justify the limitations.
    - c. Check in/out process for visitors.
  - 2. Requests for exceptions to the Visitor Guidelines (Attachment 2) will be submitted to the appropriate Deputy Director for approval.
- C. All visitors and service dogs are subject to pat, electronic, and canine searches. Lockers used by visitors, as well as visitors' vehicles, purses, packages, briefcases, or similar containers which are brought onto facility grounds may be searched per DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors.
  - 1. All visitors should read DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors and are required to sign DOC 21-575 Acknowledgment of Visitor Search Requirements before the first visit with an incarcerated individual.

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D. In addition to brief, appropriate contact at the beginning of each visit, an incarcerated individual may have physical contact with his/her child(ren) 8 years of age and under.

1. The Superintendent may impose additional requirements that limit physical contact for a specific individual visitor.

E. Visitors with minors are responsible for ensuring the minors they escort are accompanied and supervised during the entire visit.

F. Visitors and incarcerated individuals will only bring limited items into the facility visit room and should dress appropriately per Attachment 2.

**IX. Denial, Suspension, or Termination of Visits**

A. While the Department intends to actively engage families in support of those under its jurisdiction, visiting may be denied, suspended, terminated, or restricted as a sanction for a guilty finding of visit-related infractions, violent offenses, or drug-related behavior that presents a security or safety threat.

1. Sanctions will be imposed per DOC 460.050 Disciplinary Sanctions and will be shared with affected family members.

B. Persons involved in attempting/conspiring to introduce, or aiding and abetting another to introduce contraband will have their visit privileges suspended or permanently terminated.


1. A visitor found in possession of dangerous contraband may be detained and/or searched per DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors and will have their visit privileges permanently terminated.

2. A visitor found in possession of items that are legal, but considered contraband in Prisons will have their visiting privileges suspended for 6 months. Subsequent violations will result in permanent termination of visiting privileges.


C. The Superintendent may suspend/terminate visiting privileges with a specified individual(s) as the result of a very serious violation or multiple violations.

D. The Superintendent or designee at the rank of Shift Commander or higher may deny entrance to visitors or terminate a visit in progress if:

1. There is prior knowledge leading to evidence that a visitor is attempting to smuggle contraband in or out of the facility.

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- a. Local law enforcement will be contacted and allowed to handle visitor search procedures if there is sufficient information and time to coordinate efforts.
  2. There is a disturbance or emergency situation within the facility.
  3. There is clear and present or imminent danger to the health or safety of anyone.
  4. There is reasonable suspicion to believe that criminal conduct will result if entrance is allowed.
  5. The visitor appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
  6. The individual or visitor fails to abide by Department policies or the facility's rules or procedures.
- E. The Superintendent may suspend or terminate the visiting privileges of a visitor for a serious/repeated violation of this policy or serious/repeated abuse of visit privileges on the part of the visitor or incarcerated individual.
1. The Superintendent/designee may prolong a suspension if there remains a clear and present or imminent danger to the health or safety of anyone or risk to facility security.
- F. DOC 20-454 Visitor's Notice of Suspension/Termination will be sent to the visitor within 10 days identifying the specific reason(s) for a suspension or termination.
1. The incarcerated individual may request the reason for the suspension, denial, or termination from the visitor.
- X. No Contact Provisions
- A. The Superintendent will establish procedures for no contact visiting in cases of substantiated security risk.
  - B. The Superintendent may impose no contact visit provisions for inappropriate or security threat-related behavior displayed by the incarcerated individual and/or visitor.
- XI. Appeals for Visiting Privileges
- A. A visitor may appeal an initial visit application denial in writing to the Assistant Secretary for Prisons/Headquarters Correctional Program Administrator. A

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written decision will be mailed through the USPS when email is not an option for notification to the visitor.

- B. Visitors may appeal visiting privilege restrictions/suspension/termination by writing to the facility's Superintendent, stating the circumstances and why visiting privileges should be restored. If the Superintendent upholds the decision, the visitor may appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Assistant Secretary for Prisons, who has final authority on visiting privilege appeals.

## XII. Documentation

- A. All visit-related documentation will be scanned into the incarcerated individual's electronic imaging file.
- B. The Statewide Visit Specialist will assist with document verification and processing, as necessary.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

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

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

[Video Visiting \(Attachment 1\)](#)  
[Visitor Guidelines \(Attachment 2\)](#)

### **DOC FORMS:**

[DOC 20-060 Visitor Application for adult visitors](#)  
[DOC 20-181 Minor Visitor Application for minor visitors](#)  
[DOC 20-182 Government Designated Escort Application](#)  
[DOC 20-438 Approval for Visits with Multiple Incarcerated Individuals](#)  
[DOC 20-441 Parental/Guardian Consent for Minor Visit and/or Escort](#)  
[DOC 20-450 Approval for Visits by Current/Former Employee, Contract Staff, or Volunteer](#)  
[DOC 20-454 Visitor's Notice of Suspension/Termination](#)  
[DOC 21-575 Acknowledgment of Visitor Search Requirements](#)  
[DOC 21-787 Special Visit Request](#)