REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:

Effective: 1/7/00
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Revised: 2/2/15

SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:

Numerous changes, including new form usage. Read carefully!

APPROVED:

Signature on File

BERNARD WARNER, Secretary
Department of Corrections 12/19/14
Date Signed
POLICY:

I. The Department recognizes the vital role families play in the re-entry process and will support offenders in maintaining ties with family, friends, and the community by setting reasonable criteria for personal visits.

II. The Department recognizes the need to engage community stakeholders, partners, and offender families in the re-entry process.

III. For the purposes of this policy, immediate family will be defined as spouse/state registered domestic partner, parent, stepparent, sibling, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, child, stepchild, grandparent, grandchild, and as documented in the offender’s central file, person(s) acting in place of a parent and/or foster children.

DIRECTIVE:

I. General Guidelines

A. The Department will provide visiting opportunities, visit programs, and a secure and welcoming visit space for offenders and their families by:

1. Providing sufficient and safe space for regular visiting, consistent with custody level. Visiting areas and programs should provide as normal a family experience as possible.

   a. [4-4156] Space is provided for contact visiting and, if necessary, no contact visiting.

   b. 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.

   c. Reasonable accommodation will be provided for visitors with disabilities per DOC 100.560 Non-Discrimination and Accessibility for Visitors/Guests with Disabilities.
1) Service animals that meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act will be allowed in visiting areas with their owner. The owner must accompany and supervise the animal during the entire visit per the Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2).

d. Appropriate seating for all ages should be provided.

e. [4-4156] There is adequately designed space to permit screening and searching of both offenders and visitors. 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 offenders 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 offenders and their families.

B. Visitors and offenders will be treated courteously. Rule enforcement will be polite and professional.

C. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the visiting facility is comfortable, pleasant, and permits informal communication and limited, appropriate physical contact. [4-4499-1]

D. The Superintendent will establish the following:

1. Process to ensure the Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2) are implemented,

2. Hours and days for personal visits, including appropriate arrival times,

3. Approval process for adding names to visitor lists,

4. Check in process for visitors, [4-4503]

5. Procedures for no contact visiting in cases of substantiated security risk, [4-4499-1]

6. Process to ensure all visitor information is entered in the Statewide Visit System including, at a minimum:
a. Visit application information
b. Record of each visit
c. Picture of visitor at the first visit, which will be updated when his/her appearance changes or every 2 years for minors

7. Process to notify the Statewide Visit Specialist when visit room closures occur, and

8. Other processes and information deemed necessary for pleasant, positive visits, taking into account safety and security issues.

E. The Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2) and information on transportation options will be provided to the offender in facility orientation per DOC 310.000 Orientation for Offenders.

F. Visitors will only bring limited items into the facility visit room, as outlined in Attachment 2.

1. Copies of the Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2) will be available to all visitors at the facility and at http://www.doc.wa.gov. Information will also be provided concerning transportation to the facility. [4-4504]

2. Requests for exceptions to the Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2) will be submitted to the appropriate Deputy Director for approval.

G. [4-4498] The number of visitors an offender may receive and the length of visits may be limited only by facility schedule, space, and personnel constraints, or when there are substantial reasons to justify the limitations.

H. Visitors 18 years of age and older must present current photo identification per the Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2).

I. All visit related documentation will be scanned into the offender’s electronic imaging file.

J. The Statewide Visit Specialist will assist with document verification and processing, as necessary.

K. Extended Family Visiting opportunities are available per DOC 590.100 Extended Family Visiting

L. Video visiting opportunities are available per Attachment 1.
II. Special Visits

A. [4-4500] Special visits may be permitted for:

1. Visitors who travel a long distance (i.e., at least 300 miles one way),
2. Visitors who travel from out of country,
3. Individuals who utilize Department facilitated, special transportation services (i.e., Matthew House or Prisoners for Christ),
4. Appointed members of local and/or statewide family councils who have missed visits due to participation in council meetings,
5. Offenders who are in disciplinary status or are hospitalized, and
6. Professional visits between offenders and their attorneys, clergy, social service agency representatives, etc.

B. [4-4500] Except for professional visitors, special visits will only be approved for individuals who are on the offender’s approved visitor list.

1. Special visits must be requested on DOC 21-787 Special Visit Request and submitted to the offender’s Counselor. For professional visits, either the offender or the professional may complete the form. All visitors who wish to participate in the special visit must be listed on the form.
2. Requests for special visits should be submitted as soon as possible before the requested visit date, but no less than 5 calendar days before the requested date. Employees will process requests before the requested visit date.
3. The Superintendent/designee (e.g., Visit Program Supervisor) will coordinate adjustments to established times and days for individuals on the approved visitor list to accommodate special requests.
4. The Superintendent/designee may grant special visits by individuals not on the offender’s approved visitor list and other exceptions.

C. Special visits will be subject to regular Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2).

III. Approval Process

A. The approval process must be completed before a name is placed on an offender’s approved visitor list.
B. Each prospective adult visitor, and the non-incarcerated parent/legal guardian of each prospective visitor under 18 years of age, must complete a visit application.

1. The prospective visitor may submit DOC 20-060 Visitor’s Application to the facility where the offender is housed or may complete the electronic visit application at http://www.doc.wa.gov/family/visits.asp.

C. For minors (i.e., individuals under 18 years of age), the non-incarcerated parent/legal guardian must complete DOC 20-446 Parent/Guardian Approval for Visiting. This form must be notarized. If the non-incarcerated parent/legal guardian will not be attending the visits, s/he must designate an escort for the minor using DOC 20-441 Parental/Guardian Approval for Minor Visitor Escort.

1. Parentage must be established for all minors over 2 months of age by providing a copy of the minor’s birth certificate. Copies will not be returned to the sender.

   a. Infants under 2 months of age will be allowed to visit without a birth certificate. This 2 month period should be documented in the Statewide Visit System for tracking purposes.

2. The Superintendent/designee, in consultation with the Statewide Visit Specialist, may consider alternate forms of parental documentation in exceptional cases where a birth certificate is not available for a minor born outside of the U.S.

   a. If a copy of the birth certificate cannot be obtained, alternate documentation may be submitted. The documentation must be accompanied by a sworn affidavit from the parent stating the minor’s birth date and place and that the minor is his/her child. Documentation may include:

      1) Orders entered by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement recognizing the minor is allowed in the U.S. as a result of his/her relationship to the refugee parent,

      2) Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) records showing family identity for the purposes of calculating support and entitlement payments, or

      3) A certified copy of an asylum or refugee application bearing the minor’s name.
b. The Assistant Secretary for Prisons/designee must approve any exceptions to these requirements.

3. Legal guardianship of all minors must be verified by providing a copy of the filed court order establishing legal guardianship. If there is no legal guardian or non-incarcerated parent, the Superintendent may accept a notarized Power of Attorney signed by the incarcerated parent and the individual granted custody of the minor.

D. Applications will be processed within 21 calendar days of receipt.

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

1. Subsequent background checks may be run when there is concern of new criminal activity or other concerns that would impact visitation.

F. When an offender transfers to another facility before the visit application has been approved or denied, the facility that originally received the application will complete the process.

IV. Approved Visitor List

A. There is no limit to the number of visitors an offender may have on his/her approved visitor list, except at Washington Corrections Center (WCC) Reception Diagnostic Center, which will have a limit of 5 individuals.

B. Each facility will identify the maximum number of visitors each offender is allowed during visiting hours.

C. Individuals may only be on one offender’s approved visitor list, except immediate family members of more than one offender. If a child with incarcerated parents participates in visiting with both parents, the Superintendent may allow an exception for the adult guardian accompanying the child as an escort.

1. To be added to more than one approved visitor list, the immediate family member must be approved for visits by the Superintendent of each facility using DOC 20-438 Approval for Visits with Multiple Offenders.

2. The facility receiving the subsequent request will gather the completed forms and submit them to the Statewide Visit Specialist, who will work with the Superintendents to process the request.
D. When an offender is transferred to another facility, his/her approved visitor list will remain and be available in the Statewide Visit System.

1. Offenders 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.
   a. If new information is discovered, the visit approval may be denied.
   b. If there is no new information, the individual will be approved.

3. When the receiving Superintendent believes visiting should be denied, the matter will be referred to the Assistant Secretary for Prison for final decision.

E. Offenders will use KIOSK to view their approved visitor list.

1. For facilities without KIOSK, the Superintendent will establish a process to notify offenders regarding their approved visitor list.

F. When an offender is released from confinement, his/her approved visitor list will be closed out. If an offender is re-incarcerated, s/he must go through the approval process to create a new visitor list.

V. Minors

A. Individuals under 18 years of age must be accompanied during the entire visit by their non-incarcerated parent/legal guardian or a designated escort (i.e., an adult approved by the Superintendent/designee who is on the offender’s approved visitor list or is a volunteer sponsor or sponsoring organization staff, and who has notarized written approval from the non-incarcerated parent/guardian).

1. An individual under 18 years of age may authorize his/her own child to participate in visiting privileges. Unless legally emancipated, the minor parent and his/her child must both be escorted to the visit by an adult.

B. At the Superintendent/designee’s discretion, exceptions may be granted authorizing a minor to be accompanied by an adult other than the parent/legal guardian/designated escort if:

1. The non-incarcerated parent/legal guardian requests the exception in writing utilizing DOC 20-441 Parental/Guardian Approval for Minor Visitor Escort,
a. The form should be submitted before the date of the visit. However, the Superintendent/designee may allow it to be submitted at the time of the visit.

2. The individual accompanying the minor is on the offender's approved visitor list, or

3. There is no legal guardian or non-incarcerated parent (e.g., a minor who has been legally emancipated).

C. Visitors with minors are responsible for ensuring that the minors are supervised at all times.

D. DSHS social workers authorized to escort minors to visit offenders are identified through the Statewide Visit System. The list of approved social workers is maintained by the Statewide Visit Specialist.

E. In addition to brief, appropriate contact at the beginning of each visit, an offender may have physical contact with his/her child(ren) 8 years of age and under per the Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2).

1. The Superintendent may impose additional requirements that limit physical contact for an individual offender/visitor.

VI. Who May Not Visit

A. The following may not visit Prison offenders:

1. Minor aged victims of the offender, unless they have written approval from the Children's Administration and/or sentencing court, the Superintendent, and the appropriate Deputy Director/designee.

2. Domestic violence victims of the offender, either in the offense for which the offender is currently incarcerated or any other adjudicated offense.

3. Other adult victims of the offender, determined on a case-by-case basis.

4. Individuals associated with the offender in the commission of the offense for which s/he is incarcerated. Exceptions may be granted by the Superintendent for immediate family members or if there is a clear demonstration the visits would benefit the offender.

5. Individuals restricted per the Judgment and Sentence, including conditions of community supervision that prohibit contact with an individual or category of individuals. While supervised visits may be allowed per the
Judgment and Sentence, supervision by facility visiting employees does not constitute supervised visiting as required by court orders.

6. Individuals prohibited from visiting per DOC 450.050 Prohibited Contact.

7. Individuals who have any conviction(s) for introduction of contraband into a jail or prison setting.

B. Individuals with criminal records will not automatically be excluded from visiting. In determining whether to approve a person with a criminal record, the nature and extent of his/her total criminal record, including recent criminal activity, unresolved court issues, and warrant status, will be weighed carefully against the benefits of visiting. The Superintendent/designee will retain final authority to review, assess, and approve/deny applications. Failure to list previous criminal convictions on DOC 20-060 Visitor's Application may result in denial of visiting privileges.

C. Offenders on community supervision or individuals with pending charges will not be granted permission to visit. Exceptions may be made for immediate family members, who may be allowed to visit once a month by special approval from the Superintendent. It will be the responsibility of the immediate family member to provide a letter from his/her Community Corrections Officer recommending visiting privileges along with the completed visitor's application.

1. Offenders only owing Legal Financial Obligation are not subject to these requirements.

D. Ex-felons will not be granted permission to visit for 2 years after expiration of sentence, except immediate family members, who may be considered after one year. Immediate family members who were granted an exception during their period of supervision may be allowed to continue with Superintendent approval. Ex-misdemeanants will not be granted permission to visit for 6 months after expiration of sentence, except immediate family members, who may be considered after 3 months.

VII. Current and Former Employees/Contract Staff/Volunteers

A. Current Department employees, contract staff, and volunteers who wish to visit an offender require written approval from their Appointing Authority and the Superintendent using DOC 20-450 Approval for Visits by Current/Former Employee, Contract Staff, or Volunteer.
B. Former Department employees, contract staff, or volunteers who wish to visit an offender require written approval from the Superintendent using DOC 20-450 Approval for Visits by Current/Former Employee, Contract Staff, or Volunteer.

1. The employee, contract staff, or volunteer will not be permitted to visit if there is evidence that s/he was involved in any inappropriate behavior with any offender before leaving the Department.

C. If possible, such visits should not occur at the facility where the employee, volunteer, or contract staff works or worked.

VIII. Denial of Placement on an Offender’s Approved Visitor List

A. Visiting privileges will not be denied on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or physical disability.

B. Individuals denied placement on an offender’s approved visitor list will be informed, in writing, of the reasons for denial.

IX. Denial or Termination of Visits

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

1. The following infractions may result in suspension, restriction, or denial of visit privileges and will be shared with affected family members. Sanctions will be imposed per DOC 320.150 Disciplinary Sanctions:

   a. 501 - Committing homicide
   b. 502 - Aggravated assault on another offender
   c. 511 - Aggravated assault on a visitor or community member
   d. 521 - Taking or holding any person hostage
   e. 601 - Possession, manufacture, or introduction of an explosive device or any ammunition, or any components of an explosive device or ammunition
   f. 602 - Possession, manufacture, or introduction of any gun, firearm, weapon, sharpened instrument, knife, or poison or any component thereof
   g. 603 - Possession, introduction, use or transfer of any narcotic, controlled substance, illegal drug, unauthorized drug, mind altering substance, or drug paraphernalia
   h. 604 - Aggravated assault on a staff member
i. 611 - Sexual assault on a staff member  
j. 633 - Assault on another offender  
k. 635 - Sexual assault on another offender  
l. 650 - Rioting  
m. 651 - Inciting others to riot  
n. 704 - Assault on a staff member  
o. 711 - Assault on a visitor or community member  
p. 752 - Receiving a positive test for use of unauthorized drugs,  
    alcohol, or other intoxicants

B. The Superintendent/designee 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. 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  
   any visitor, offender, or others.

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 offender or visitor fails to abide by the facility rules, policy, or Visitor's  
   Guidelines (Attachment 2).

C. The Superintendent may terminate the visiting privileges of a visitor for a serious/  
repeated violation of this policy or the Visitor's Guidelines (Attachment 2) or  
serious/repeated abuse of visiting on the part of the visitor or offender.

D. A letter will be sent to the offender and visitor within 15 calendar days identifying  
the specific reason(s) for the denial/termination (e.g., criminal history, no  
approved escort, investigation, current or past employee, etc.).

X. Suspension of Visiting Privileges

A. A visitor's visiting privileges may be suspended for a violation of this policy or the  
Visitor's Guidelines (Attachment 2) on the part of the visitor or offender.
1. A letter will be sent to the offender and visitor within 15 calendar days identifying the specific reason(s) for the suspension.

B. An offender’s visiting privileges with all visitors may be suspended after a finding of guilt pursuant to a regular disciplinary hearing for violation of this policy or the Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2).

C. The Superintendent may prolong a suspension if there remains a:

1. Clear and present or imminent danger to the health or safety of any visitor, offender, or others, or

2. Risk to facility security.

XI. No Contact Provisions

A. The Superintendent may impose no contact visit provisions for inappropriate or security threat related behavior displayed by the offender and/or visitor.

XII. Appeals for Visiting Privileges

A. A visitor may appeal visiting privilege restrictions, in writing, to the Superintendent. The appeal should state the circumstances surrounding the suspension, denial, termination, or no contact provision, and state why visiting privileges should be restored. The Superintendent will respond with a written decision.

B. If the Superintendent upholds the decision on appeal, the visitor may appeal the Superintendent’s decision to the Assistant Secretary for Prisons, who will have final approval on visiting privilege appeals.

XIII. Removal of Names from the Approved Visitor List

A. An offender who wishes to remove a visitor from his/her approved visitor list must submit a written request (i.e., kite or letter) for removal to the Superintendent/designee.

1. To resume visits with the removed visitor, the offender must submit a written request, which will be scanned into his/her electronic imaging file.

B. A visitor who wishes to be removed from an offender’s approved visitor list must submit a written request to the Superintendent/designee.
C. An individual removed from an approved visitor list must wait 90 calendar days before applying to visit the same or another offender. The Superintendent may waive the waiting period if the visitor:

1. Has never visited the offender, or
2. Has not participated in a visit in over 90 calendar days.

XIV. Search of Visitors

A. [4-4503] All visitors 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 the facility grounds may be searched per DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors.

B. 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 offender.

C. A visitor found in possession of contraband may be suspended or terminated from visit privileges.

1. If the contraband is an illegal item, local law enforcement will be notified, and the visitor may be detained and/or searched per DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors.

XV. Offender Dress Standards

A. Offenders will wear state issued clothing (e.g., t-shirts, khakis, undergarments, with or without sweatshirt) to visiting.

B. The only jewelry permitted in visiting is a wedding ring, if married, and religious medallion. Offenders will not be allowed to wear watches in visiting.

DEFINITIONS:

Words/terms appearing in this policy may be defined in the glossary section of the Policy Manual.

ATTACHMENTS:

Video Visiting (Attachment 1)
Visitor’s Guidelines (Attachment 2)
DOC FORMS:

DOC 20-060 Visitor’s Application
DOC 20-438 Approval for Visits with Multiple Offenders
DOC 20-441 Parental/Guardian Approval for Minor Visitor Escort
DOC 20-446 Parent/Guardian Approval for Visiting
DOC 20-450 Approval for Visits by Current/Former Employee, Contract Staff, or Volunteer
DOC 21-575 Acknowledgment of Visitor Search Requirements
DOC 21-787 Special Visit Request