



Charleston County Sheriff's Office Policy and Procedures Manual

Sheriff Carl Ritchie

17-16 Inmate Tablet Use

- ☐ NEW
- ☒ REVISED
- ☒ REVIEWED

ACA Standards Reference: N/A
CALEA Standards Reference: N/A
NCCHC Standards Reference: N/A
SCLEA Standards Reference: N/A
SC Minimum Standards: N/A

This policy dated 1/29/2025 replaces prior policies cited above and supersedes all previously issued directives.

I. Purpose:

To promote successful reintegration of inmates into their community, the Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center (SACDC) provides general population inmates the opportunity to utilize computer tablets. These tablets may be used to contact family members and friends as well as to access pre-approved content on the devices. The Detention Director, or designee, establishes the times and rules for the use of tablets. The tablet provider determines all fees associated with the use of the tablet service. These fees will be deducted from the inmate's commissary.

II. Policy:

The SACDC will consider the use of the tablet by any inmate a privilege and is not a guaranteed right. As such, inmates can have their tablet privileges suspended or revoked as a result of disciplinary action due to inappropriate use or misuse of the tablet device or its ancillary functions or due to the failure to follow communicated rules regarding the use of the device.

III. Definitions:

- A. For purposes of this procedure, the word "deputy" applies to all agency employees with a certification classification of Class I, Class II, Class III, or Reserve Deputy, as defined by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy.

The following terms are used interchangeably; however, they carry guidance to specific employees based on usage of the term:

1. Deputy, deputy sheriff, detention deputy, sworn employee, uniformed sworn employee, sworn administrative employee, and
 2. civilian, non-sworn employee.
- B. *Employee*: When used without further clarification, the term employee is inclusive of all agency members (sworn and non-sworn).
- C. *Tablet*: An electronic mobile device used by inmates for educational purposes, sending and receiving e-messages, telephone calls, ordering commissary, entering requests, filing grievances, reading books, and purchasing entertainment.

IV. Procedure:

A. General Guidelines:

1. Inmates will be issued tablets at dress out. The tablet will be logged into the inmate's property screen for tracking purposes. Inmates will be required to sign at their initial log-in a Statement of Understanding/Inmate Tablet Use to acknowledge their understanding of the general rules governing the use of inmate tablets.
2. Inmates will be provided a general overview of the tablet and will be provided with a Personal Identification Number (PIN) that allows them to access the tablet's content. Inmates will be informed that it is their responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of their pin. The SACDC will not be responsible for any costs deductions made from any inmate account.
3. Inmates will receive one pair of earbuds for the tablets at issuance. Earbuds may be purchased at the expense of the inmate and ordered through commissary for a fee. Earbuds will only be replaced in a one for one exchange. Inmates who qualify as indigent may request a pair of earbuds for the tablet through the unit detention deputy, by completing the Request for Indigent Headphones Form (SACDC form-543). The detention deputy will place the completed form in the Security mailbox. The Security Sergeant will verify the indigent status and issue qualified inmate's earbuds. The completed form will be scanned into the inmate's multimedia record for documentation and record-keeping purposes by the Security Sergeant.
4. Inmates will be advised that use of any tablet is a privilege and not a guaranteed right. As such, inmates may have their tablet privileges suspended or revoked due to disciplinary action and/or misuse of the tablet device. Inmates can also have their tablet suspended or revoked for violations resulting in the intentional damage or destruction of any tablet device (See [Policy 18-16 Inmate Disciplinary Procedures](#)).
5. Family/Friends Messaging service requires a fee to be paid and allows an inmate the ability to message (similar to text messaging) family and friends. All messaging is subject to monitoring and is governed by the same directives and content review included in both [Policy 18-20 Inmate Telephones](#) and [Policy 18-21 Inmate Correspondence](#). (NOTE: All costs, rates & fees for the privilege of using the inmate tablets and their services are solely determined and decided upon by the tablet

provider and are subject to change in accordance with FCC rules and regulations.)

8. An inmate can pay a fee (to be deducted from their commissary account) to access movies and games on their tablet. (NOTE: All costs, rates & fees for the privilege of using the educational tablets and their services are solely determined and decided upon by the tablet provider and are subject to change in accordance with FCC rules and regulations etc.)
9. Inmates will have access to read books on the tablets free of charge.
10. Facility broadcast messages may occur through the inmate tablet with the approval of the Detention Director or designee.

B. Issuing Tablets and Tablet Use:

1. Tablets can only be used by inmates during times permitted by the Detention Director or designee. Generally, inmate tablets will be issued after breakfast.
2. Inmates must be fully dressed in compliance with dress code and have their inmate wristband on to receive their assigned tablet.
3. Inmate tablets may be maintained by inmates until 11:00 p.m., at which time they will be returned to the detention deputy, logged-in, and placed in a charging station by the inmate. Detention deputies will provide inmates with a 10 - 15-minute warning that tablets are to be turned in. Inmate tablets will automatically shut down at 2300 hours. The failure of any inmate to return their tablet will be grounds for disciplinary action and can result in the suspension of tablet privileges per inmate disciplinary policies (See [Policy 18-16 Inmate Disciplinary Procedures](#)).
4. Inmates must return the same tablet they were initially issued. The failure of an inmate to return the correct tablet will result in disciplinary action and possible suspension of the inmate's tablet use.
5. Detention deputies will inspect each tablet upon return for signs of tampering, broken equipment, and required returns for service.
6. The Detention Director or designee reserves the right to deactivate tablets during emergencies, periods of inclement weather, and during times necessary to promote the overall safety and security of the

facility or routine operations.

7. Tablets are prohibited for use during meal times and when special programming is occurring in any inmate housing unit.
8. Tablets are not permitted to be taken to inmate work assignment (i.e., laundry or floor crew).
9. Inmates may use the tablets in the dayroom/recreation areas of their housing unit and in their bunk areas. Inmate tablets are not allowed to be utilized in the shower/restroom areas. Inmate will not take a tablet out of the housing unit unless the inmate is being transferred to another housing unit.
10. Inmates are prohibited from sharing, lending, or borrowing another inmate's tablet.
11. Inmates will be instructed to log-off of their tablet whenever it is not in use to prevent any unauthorized use of their assigned tablet. Any charges made to an inmate account for tablet services are the responsibility of the inmate to whom the tablet is assigned and are not the responsibility of the facility.
12. In addition, inmates who are found to have intentionally damaged or destroyed any tablet device may be subject to restitution for the repair and/or replacement of the tablet device and possible revocation of their tablet privileges.

C. Monitoring:

1. Inmates will be informed that tablet use is subject to being monitored.
2. Tablets may be utilized as a telephone. Procedures for the use of the telephone will apply when using the electronic tablet as a telephone.
3. E-Messaging services between family members and friends is subject to content review and will be monitored to promote compliance with SACDC policies, rules, and regulations and for investigative purposes. (See [Policy 18-11 Inmate Visitation](#) and [Policy 18-21 Inmate Correspondence](#))
4. Family members and friends must agree to receive e-messaging from an inmate. The facility is not responsible should any party refuse text messaging.

5. Inmates found to be using messaging services to harass or threaten others or who are found to be sending content via messaging that is in violation of inmate mail procedures will be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the procedures outlined in [Policy 18-16 Inmate Disciplinary Procedures](#) and up to possible criminal prosecution (See also [Policy 18-21 Inmate Correspondence](#)).
6. Any outside party may, at any time, request that telephone calls or messaging services be blocked from receipt by any inmate. All requests from citizens to block calls or messaging originating from the SACDC will be forwarded to the Security Captain. The SACDC is NOT responsible for any outside party that requests their calls or messaging services be blocked.

D. Complaints:

1. An outside contractor provides inmate tablets to the facility. Any complaints regarding the malfunction or inoperability of any device will be forwarded to the tablet provider for corrective action. The SACDC is NOT responsible for the operation of any tablet device. Inmate complaints regarding the operation of any tablet must be submitted in the form of a request to the Security Sergeant. Requests are to be submitted through the kiosk located in the housing unit. The provider will be responsible for rectifying any valid problems or for replacing any malfunctioning tablets per their agreement with the SACDC.
2. Any charges made to an inmate's account for tablet services are the responsibility of the inmate to whom the tablet is assigned and are not the responsibility of the SACDC.

E. Tablet Repair:

When a tablet is malfunctioning or damaged, it will be turned in to the unit detention deputy. The unit detention deputy will enter an incident report in JMS under the incident type of Equipment Failure ("EF"). At minimum, the report will describe the malfunction or circumstances of the damage, the number and serial number of the tablet, the assigned inmate name and number, the last time that particular tablet was issued to the assigned inmate and, if known, previously reported malfunctions with that tablet. The tablet will then be given to the unit detention deputy's immediate supervisor, who will forward that tablet and a copy of the report to the IT department. The affected inmate will then be issued a new tablet through dress out.

F. Tablet Return:

All tablets issued to inmates must be returned to the dress out detention deputy at the time of release. The dress out detention deputy will ensure the tablet is accounted for and ready for reissuance.